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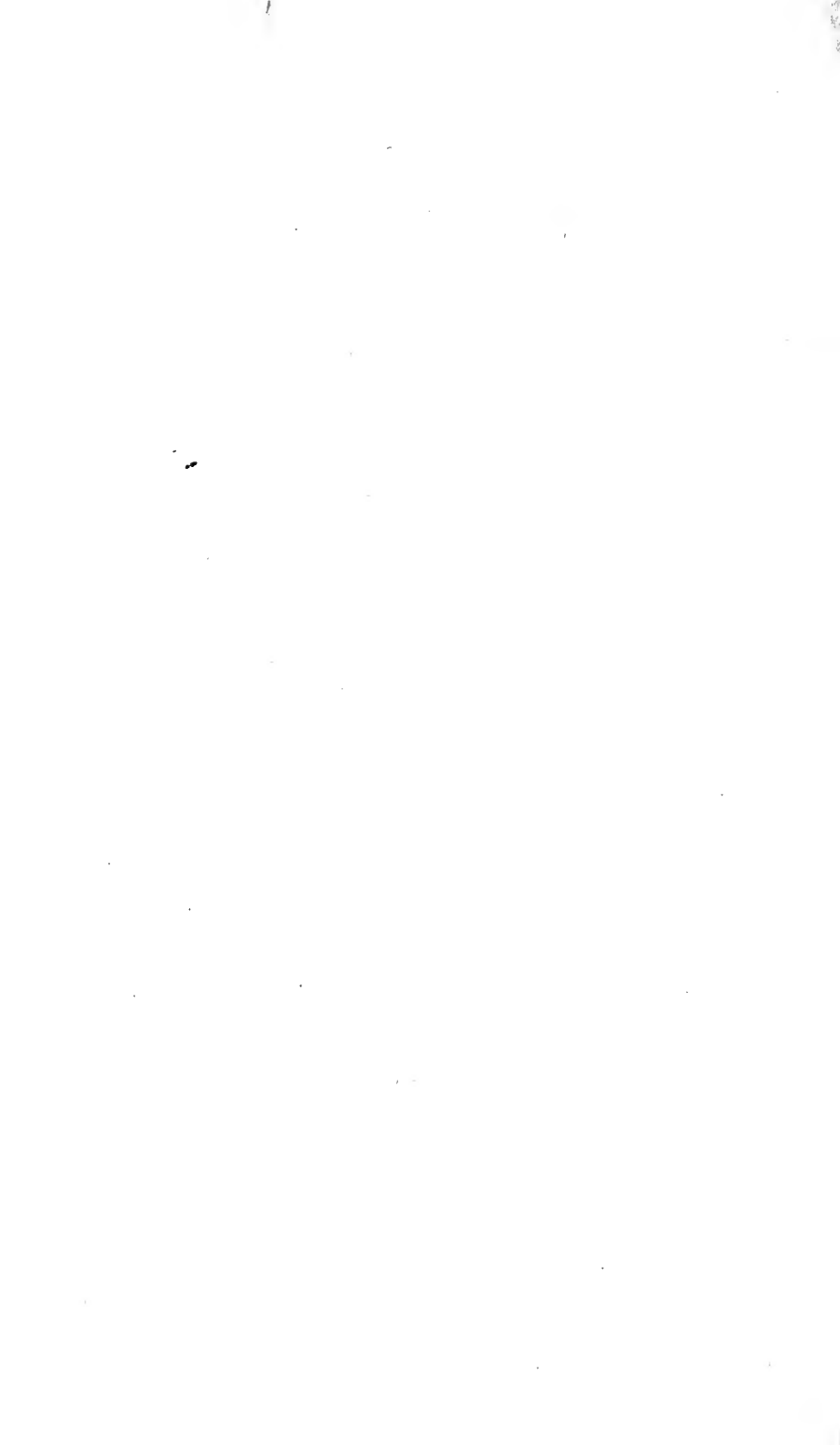
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SACRED LITERATURE:
SHEWING THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES
TO BE SUPERIOR TO THE MOST CELEBRATED
WRITINGS OF ANTIQUITY,
BY THE TESTIMONY OF
ABOVE FIVE HUNDRED WITNESSES,
AND ALSO BY
A COMPARISON OF THEIR SEVERAL KINDS
OF COMPOSITION.

IN TWELVE BOOKS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
EPISTLES AND EXTRACTS,
FROM SOME OF THE MOST
EARLY OF THE CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

THE WHOLE

Intended not only to recommend the BIBLE as superior to
all other Books, but as a moral and theological Repository
for Christians of every Rank and Degree.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

By the Rev^d. DAVID SIMPSON, M. A.

V O L. II.

B I R M I N G H A M:

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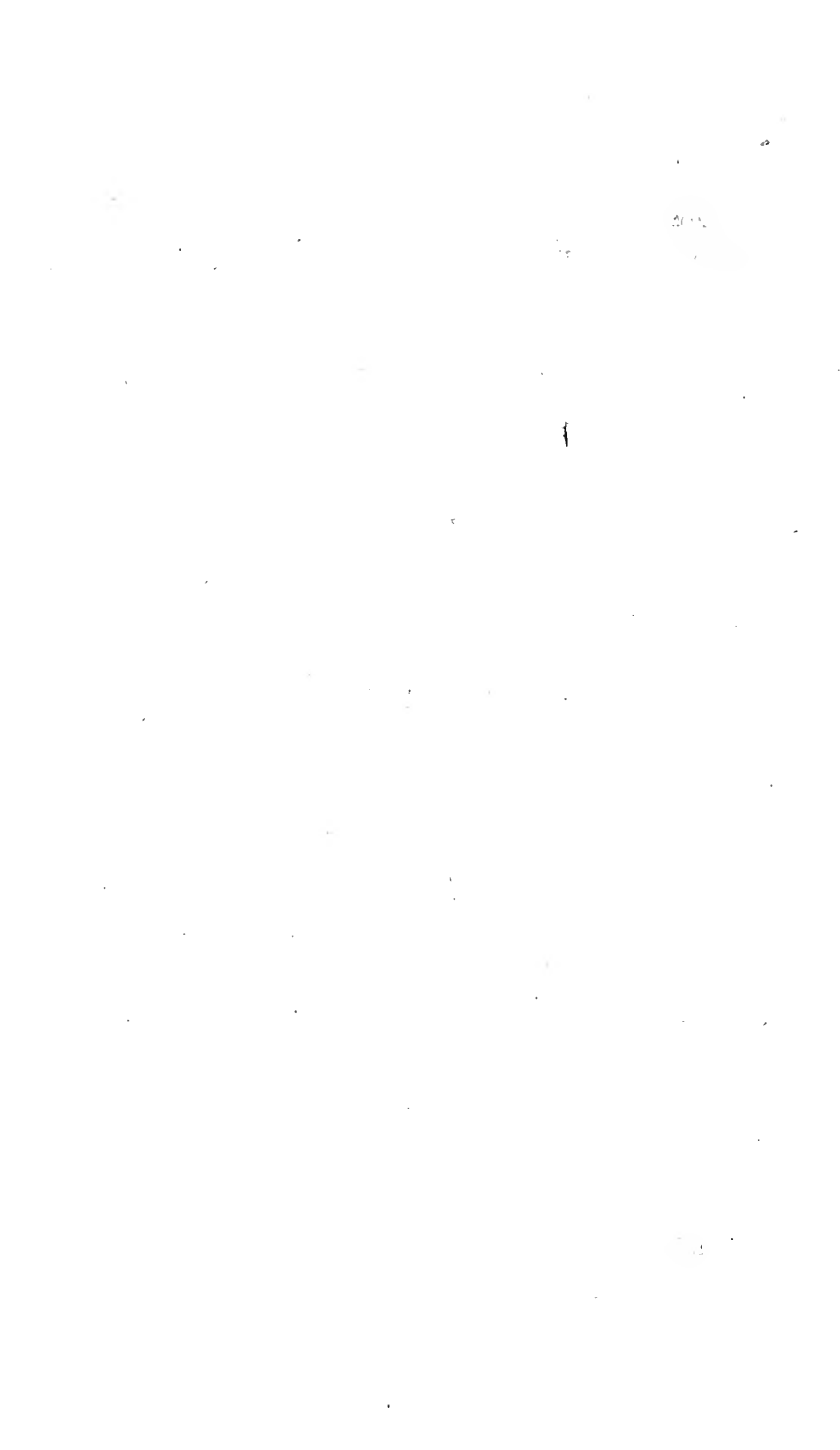


B O O K III.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE BEAUTIES OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

THE intention of the last book was to establish the absolute truth and authority of the Holy Scriptures. In this we proceed to shew, that the Divine Writings are not only true and authentic, but that they are transcendently excellent; that they abound with all kinds of literary beauties; that they are infinitely superior, in every respect, to the most celebrated and admired compositions of ancient Greece and Rome. And while we are endeavouring to display the supreme perfection of the Word of God, by a collection of sacred and learned criticisms, we could wish the numerous and respectable names here introduced, to be considered also, as so many additional testimonies to its infallible truth, as well as illustrations of its inimitable beauties.





SACRED LITERATURE.

BOOK III.

Illustrations of the Beauties of the Holy Scriptures.

1. LONGINUS,

THE best critic of the Heathen world, with a spirit of impartiality which does him honour, has celebrated the eloquence of Moses, the man of God, in his golden treatise on the Sublime. His words are these: So likewise the Jewish legislator, no ordinary person, having conceived a just idea of the power of God, has nobly expressed it in the beginning of his law. “And God said”—What? “Let there be light, and there was light: Let the earth be, and the earth was.”

2. ST. CYRIL, OF ALEXANDRIA.

WHOEVER looks into the sublimity of St. John's notions, the sharpness of his reasons, and the quick inferences of his discourses, constantly succeeding and following one upon another, must needs confess, that his Gospel exceeds all admiration.

Cave's Life of St. John.

3. DR. FIDDES.

IN the character of plainness, if we consider along with it, the form and dignity of expression, several writings of

the Old Testament, and in a manner all the writings of the New, exceed whatever has been at any time published by profane authors. How insipid are all the flowing elegancies of Plato, the smooth, though elaborate periods of Cicero, and the pointed aphorisms of Seneca, in comparison only of those beauties which strike us in the simple narration of the interview Joseph had with his brethren at the time of discovering himself to them; and in that of the Prodigal son? There is such a clearness and evidence in the narrations of the evangelists, that they seem not only to speak, but present things to our eyes.

Speculative Theology.

4. DR. LIGHTFOOT.

IT became the Holy Ghost, the penner of Scripture, to write in a majesty, that the wits and wisdom of all the men in the world should bow before it. As is the man, so is his strength, do they say; and as is the writer, so is his style and strength of writing. If Pericles, the orator at Athens, spoke lightning and thunder, as it was commonly said of him because of the stateliness and awe of his oratory, certainly it is no wonder if the great God of glory speak thunder and lightning out of mount Sinai. If the Holy Ghost wrote the Scriptures, we must needs conclude, that he wrote them like the Holy Ghost, in a divine majesty.—

How plain, as to the general, is the history in Scripture? How plain the commands, exhortations, threatenings, promises, comforts, that are written there? Take a sunbeam and write, and is it possible to write clearer?

The text of the gospel hath none more plain interpreters than the Jewish writers; no writings are of so great benefit as the Rabbins for understanding the true meaning of the Scriptures. Christians, by their skill and industry, may render them more usefully serviceable to their studies, and most eminently tending to the illustration and interpretation of the New Testament.—

There are divers things in the New Testament, which we must be beholden to the Rabbins for the understanding of, or else we know not what to make of them.—It is well known to the studious how much light hath been held out by some learned men towards the explication of abundance of difficulties in the Scriptures, by the discovery of the Jewish customs and antiquities, to which the New Testament speaketh and alludeth exceeding copiously and frequently.

Works, passim.

5. REV.

5. REV. CHARLES LESLIE.

THE Heathen orators have admired the sublime of the style of our Scriptures. No writing in the world comes near it, even with all the disadvantage of our translation, which, being obliged to be literal, must lose much of the beauty of it. The plainness and succinctness of the historical part, the melody of the psalms, the instruction of the proverbs, the majesty of the prophets, and above all, the easy sweetness in the New Testament, where the glory of heaven is set forth in a grave and moving expression, which yet reaches not the height of the subject; not like the flights of rhetoric, which set out small matters in great words; but the Holy Scriptures touch the heart; raise expectation, confirm our hope, strengthen our faith, give peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which is inexpressible. *Works.*

6. DR. DAVID HUNTER.

THE credibility of the history of Jesus Christ is the foundation of all our enquiries on the subject of his religion. It has employed the pens of many able writers, both in ancient and in modern times.—But to stop here, is not doing entire justice to the subject. There are unquestionably more elevated lights in which the religion of Jesus may be held out to the observation of the world. To say that the structure is solid, is not enough: viewed with attention it must appear also to be beautiful and sublime. Even after the most exact survey, we shall be obliged to confess, that there are beauties which remain still to be unfolded, and sublimities which it is almost impossible to reach.—The doctrine of Jesus is distinguished by its simplicity.—On the most sublime subjects, he talks with a simplicity, which shews they were familiar to him.—In the doctrine of Jesus there is a fulness which satisfies, and a variety which charms. Other systems, compared with it, are like streams of water, or small veins of ore. His doctrine is like the fountain which never runs dry, or like the rich mine which has never been exhausted. In the productions of human wisdom, there is either an emptiness, or some mortifying defect. But the doctrine of Jesus is commensurate to our largest ideas, or rather exceeds them.—It is the sublime of his doctrine which charms and elevates, which warms our affections, while it excites our admiration. In short, with truth it may be asserted, that it is in every respect suitable to the sublime idea of the Son of God from heaven instructing mankind.

Observations on the History of Jesus Christ, passim.

7. BUDÆUS.

7. BUDÆUS.

EXISTIMO tropos oratorios multo sublimiores, efficacioresque in sacra lectione inveniri, quam in prisorum Græcorum et Latinorum monumentis, posseque oratoriam phrasin fieri ea lectione multo locupletiolem.

8. DR. GARNER.

WHERE do figures flash so bright upon the eye as in the sky-descended volume? What exalted heights Mosaic diction sometimes soareth on imagination's wings? What a glow of colouring warms the leaves of the distinguished son of patience; the sacred Odes; the pages of the man of wisdom? On the tree of prophetic language, behold, behold rhetorical blossoms hang, full-blown, in large, in numerous clusters! The style burns with intense fire. It oft arouseth like the thunder's bellowing peal.

Hear the great Messenger of heaven speak, with matchless energy! Hark! Now, he strikes by force of metaphor; now, he imparts momentous truths, in pleasing form of similitude. Now, he animates his discourse by interrogations; now, he presents most interesting scenes, as it were, to our very view: now, in a sentence, he, pathetic, repeats a word; now, he introduceth several passages with the same word: now he closeth them with the same word; words that shut a sentence, open, now, the next. Now, his language mounts on bold hyperboles pinions; now exploding all conjunctions, he giveth his expression vehemence: now, he warms by affecting address to inanimate objects; now, he represents them as persons. Now, he exhibits things in the agreeable light of contrast; his style conveying, now, what wears the face of incompatibility; but quite consistent to reflection's eye; now, melting in a tide of pity, he pauseth, abrupt, leaving the sympathetic mind to conjecture the remainder.

Eye likewise the apostolic pages: see them strewed with flowers of figures! How strongly metaphorical the language of eloquent Paul! How striking his apostrophes! He personifies; he exclaims; he compares; he contrasts; he interrogates; he replies. Sometimes he addresseth in a beautiful chain of repetition: sometimes he strikes the mind more forcibly, making his discourse rush upon her with greater impetuosity, by omission of languid copulatives.

James too, powerful, impresseth by this figure. He wakes attention by a similar beginning of several sentences. Expressive his metaphors: he engageth, he throws light upon
his

his reasoning by frequent similitudes. He introduceth what is inanimate, as bursting into voice.

Peter's style sometimes ascends in pleasing, continued gradation. It laughs with comparisons; it beams with rays of metaphor; it exhibits strong description.

Jude's pencil colours with the paint of glowing metaphor.

John's pages, as they flame with united blaze of numerous other figures, so they are fraught with strokes of most vivid imagery. The grand, awful transactions of universal judgment; the dread-awakening, painted torture, deep stung with which irreclaimable vice must drag on a sad, sad eternity; the future felicity of virtue, ravishing, ever-enduring, desire-kindling, all these objects they display in most lively, heart-affecting colours, placing them full in the very eye.

Portrait of Oratory.

9. MAUCLERC, D. M.

THE narration in all the historical parts of the New Testament is very short, naked, and simple, nothing but bare matters of fact being related, just as they happened without any interposition of the author. There is no preparation of events, no artful transitions or connections, no set characters of persons to be introduced, or reflections upon past actions, and the authors of them; no excuses or apologies for such things as a writer might probably foresee would shock or disturb his readers; no colours, artifices, or arguments to set off a doubtful action, and reconcile it to some other, or to the character of the person that did it. The faults and infirmities of those persons the authors would seem to recommend, are fairly recorded without any mitigation or abatement, and the crimes of their enemies barely told without any aggravation. And one particular excellency of the style of Scripture above all other books is, that the constant phrase of the sacred dialect is to attribute all events, excepting sin only, to God.

Christian's Magazine.

10. SOAME JENYNS, ESQ.

IF any one can doubt of the superior excellence of the Christian religion above all which preceded it, let him but peruse with attention those unparalleled writings in which it is transmitted to the present times, and compare them with the most celebrated productions of the Pagan world; and if he is not sensible of their superior beauty, simplicity, and originality, I will venture to pronounce, that he is as deficient in taste as in faith; and that he is as bad a critic as a

Christian:

Christian: For in what school of antient philosophy can we find a lesson of morality so perfect as Christ's sermon on the mount? From which of them can we collect an address to the Deity so concise, and yet so comprehensive, so expressive of all that we want, and all that we could deprecate, as that short prayer, which he formed for, and recommended to his disciples? From the works of what sage of antiquity can he produce so pathetic a recommendation of benevolence to the distressed, and enforced by such assurances of a reward, as in our Saviour's account of the proceedings at the last day? By which of their most celebrated poets are the joys reserved for the righteous in a future state, so sublimely described, as by this short declaration, that they are superior to all description. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Where amidst the dark clouds of Pagan philosophy can he shew us such a clear prospect of a future state, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment, as in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians? Or from whence can he produce such cogent exhortations to the practice of every virtue, such ardent incitements to piety and devotion, and such assistances to attain them, as those which are to be met with throughout every page of these inimitable writings? To quote all the passages in them relative to these subjects, would be almost to transcribe the whole; it is sufficient to observe, that they are every where stamped with such apparent marks of supernatural assistance, as render them indisputably superior to, and totally unlike all human compositions whatever; and this superiority and dissimilarity is still more strongly marked by one remarkable circumstance peculiar to themselves, which is, that whilst the moral parts, being of the most general use, are intelligible to the meanest capacities, the learned and inquisitive throughout all ages, perpetually find in them inexhaustible discoveries, concerning the nature, attributes, and dispensations of Providence.

View of the internal Evidence of Christianity.

II. REV. S. PARR, L. L. D.

SOLOMON, in the nine first chapters of his proverbs, has admitted into his diction many of the ornaments which poetry furnishes, in splendor of metaphor, and in luminousness of description: But in the subsequent part of the work, he descends to an humbler style, preserving, however, at the same time, that acuteness of sentiment, and that neatness
of

of phraseology, which are characteristic of proverbial composition.

Of the esteem in which that composition was holden in ancient times, we shall not think lightly, when we recollect, that proverbs were pronounced by the priest at the oracle, and by the legislator in the forum; that they were ambitiously seized by the lyric and by the epic muse in their most rapid career, and their sublimest soarings; and that the title of wisdom was eminently appropriated to that kind of instruction, which, in brief and detached sentences, pointed out what the duty of man required him to perform, and his interest to pursue. Hence the Greek writers have carefully preserved to us those moral aphorisms that immortalized the seven sages of Greece; and hence, too, from the same habits of thinking, and in the same form of expression Solomon is emphatically described as 'the wise man.' He had certainly looked abroad with a piercing and comprehensive eye, on the great chain of external causes, which determine the happiness or misery of mankind. He had deeply explored the most secret recesses of the human heart. He had surveyed attentively the complicated springs of our actions, and that strange mixture of good and evil, of wisdom and folly, which produces an endless diversity in the human character. With the sagacity, therefore, which marks exalted genius, and with that simplicity, which arises from a distinct conception of subjects in themselves both dark and intricate, he lays down many useful regulations for our behaviour; and while his precepts are delivered to us in familiar language, while they lie level to common apprehensions, and seem to arise out of the ordinary occurrences of life, they are known by more discerning and more exact enquirers, not only to rest upon the solid basis of experience, but to proceed from those habits of patient and profound observation, without which the most ingenious theory is but a shining trifle. Over writings in the learned languages, both prosaic and poetical, many proverbial passages are scattered, which amuse and interest every judicious reader, by the brightness of the expression, and the justness of the sentiment. We have indeed no collection, made by any Roman writer, of moral sayings, at once venerable for their antiquity, and celebrated for their popularity. But as to the Greeks, some collections of this kind have escaped the ravages of time; and whatever imperfections we, who are enlightened by religion and philosophy, may spy out in these rude efforts of ancient morality, we may yet find in them many vestiges of good sense, and even of good writing;

writing; many remarks which demand the praise of penetration; many admonitions which denote an honest and amiable concern for the improvement and welfare of the species. Yet, in number, in variety, in profoundness of thought, and impurity of principle, the most excellent of these old moralists, is far exceeded by the royal preacher.

I lately saw with very high satisfaction a criticism, which, indeed, had often occurred to my own mind, and which is now supported by an authority, under which I am happy to fortify my opinion against rash contradiction and petulant derision. The writer of that criticism tells us, that, having read the offices of Tully, when he was a boy, he had not, till it was late in life, resumed and examined them; but this neglect he ingenuously condemns, not only for want of curiosity, but for want of judgment. In the composition, which from its supposed plainness was not very attractive to a juvenile mind, he now discovered many graces which had passed before unnoticed. In the thought, which to a superficial and hasty reader once appeared obvious and trite, he perceived marks of a most cultivated and most vigorous understanding. In passages, which related to common life and common topics, he found instructions of the very highest importance. These observations you will permit me to apply to the writings of Solomon, which we are ourselves accustomed to read when boys, and which we may continue to read with increasing pleasure and increasing advantage, when arrived at those years, or, I should say rather, at that discretion, which can alone entitle us to be considered as men. What is familiar, is therefore not respected, because, it was, perhaps, at first known without exertion, and is now remembered without praise. Hence it is that those rules which the experience of successive generations has accumulated, and which our own unprejudiced reflections have approved, are yet permitted to have little weight with us, because our vanity has little share in retaining or inculcating them. But to obviate this wide-spread and dangerous infatuation, I have endeavoured to rescue proverbial writings from the obscurity and discredit into which they, in these very polished times, have fallen; and, indeed, were I to calculate exactly the intellectual merits of Solomon, were I to overcome incredulity, and to repel contempt, by setting before you a series of all the excellencies which may be found in his writings, I will venture to say, that, in point of correct and profound observation, that for curious descriptions of character, and nice evolutions of passion, they would appear worthy of being contrasted with

with the most laboured and most successful researches of moralists both ancient and modern.

Discourse on Education.

12. ABBÉ FLEURY.

AMONG the Jews none but the priests and prophets undertook to compose, especially history.—And we see in Scripture history the character of their authors. It appears that they were very serious, and very wise men; old and of great experience, and well informed of what passed. There is neither vanity, nor flattery, nor affectation in them to shew their wit: whereas all these foibles are to be discovered in the Greeks; every one of whom had liberty to write, and most of them aimed at nothing but their own glory, or that of their nation. The Hebrew historians do not set down their own names, nor do they ever conceal any circumstance that appears disadvantageous to themselves, or their sovereigns. They that wrote the history of David have been as particular in the account of his great crime as in any other of his actions.

They make neither preface nor transition, they only relate facts in as clear a manner as possible, without any mixture of reasoning or reflections. But if we examine well, we shall find that they chose the facts, which are proper for their purpose, with wonderful judgment, and this makes their stories very short; though, upon important occasions, they enter into the most exact detail, and set the action before the reader's eyes in very lively colours. It is plain they leave out reflections and exaggerations on purpose, by their knowing so well how to apply them in discourses where they have a mind to work upon the passions. So Moses, in Deuteronomy, makes use of the strongest and most expressive figures to magnify and expatiate upon what he had only plainly related in the preceding books. Thus the prophet Isaiah barely relates the defeat of Sennacherib after having exaggerated, when he foretold it, in a style that is really poetical.

The Hebrews were not less to be admired in all their other ways of writing. Their laws are written with clearness and brevity. Their maxims of morality are contained in short sentences, adorned with agreeable figures, and expressed in a concise style; for all this serves to make them remembered. In fine, the poetry is sublime, the descriptions lively, the metaphors bold, the expressions noble, and the figures wonderfully varied. But it would require whole books to treat
of

of their eloquence and poetry in such a manner as they deserve.

Short History of the Israelites.

13. JOHN HAWKSWORTH, L. L. D.

To the Adventurer.

Sir,

IN the library of the Benedictine Monks at Lyons, has lately been discovered a most curious manuscript of the celebrated Longinus. As I know you will eagerly embrace every opportunity of contributing to promote, or rather revive, a reverence and love for the Sacred Writings, I send the following extract, translated from this extraordinary work :

My dear Terentianus,

YOU may remember, that in my treatise on the sublime, I quoted a striking example of it from Moses, the Jewish lawgiver ; “ Let there be light, and there was light.” I have since met with a large volume translated into Greek by the order of Ptolemy, containing all the religious opinions, the civil laws and customs, of that singular and unaccountable people. And, to confess the truth, I am greatly astonished at the incomparable elevation of its style, and the supreme grandeur of its images ; many of which excel the utmost efforts of the most exalted genius of Greece.

At the appearance of God, the mountains, and the forests do not only tremble, as in Homer, but are “ melted down like wax at his presence.” He rides not on a swift chariot over the level waves, like Neptune, but “ comes flying upon the wings of the wind ; while the floods clap their hands, and the hills and forests, and earth and heaven, all exult together before the Lord.” And how dost thou conceive, my friend, the exalted idea of the universal presence of the infinite Mind can be expressed, adequately to the dignity of the subject, but in the following manner?— “ Whither shall I go from thy presence ? If I climb up into heaven, thou art there ! If I go down to hell, lo, thou art there also ! If I take wings and fly towards the morning, or remain in the uttermost parts of the western ocean ; even there also”—the poet does not say I shall find thee, but far more forcibly and emphatically—“ thy right hand shall hold me.” With what majesty and magnificence is the Creator of the world, before whom the whole universe is represented as nothing, nay, less than nothing and vanity, introduced making the following sublime inquiry ? “ Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand ? And
“ meted

“ meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the
“ dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the moun-
“ tains in scales and the hills in a balance !” Produce me,
Terentianus, any image or description in Plato himself, so
truly elevated and divine ? Where did these barbarians learn
to speak of God, in terms that alone appear worthy of him ?
How contemptible and vile are the deities of Homer and
Hesiod, in comparison of this Jehovah of the illiterate Jews ;
before whom, to use this poet’s own words, “ all other gods
“ are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small
“ dust of the balance.”

Had I been acquainted with this wonderful volume, while
I was writing my treatise of the Pathetic, I could have en-
riched my work with many strokes of eloquence, more irre-
sistibly moving than any I have borrowed from our three
great Tragedians, or even from the tender Simonides him-
self. The same Moses I formerly mentioned, relates the
history of a youth sold into captivity by his brethren, in a
manner so deeply interesting, with so many little strokes of
nature and passion, with such penetrating knowledge of the
human heart, with such various and unexpected changes of
fortune, and with such a striking and important discovery,
as cannot be read without astonishment and tears ; and which
I am almost confident, Aristotle would have preferred to the
story of his admired Oedipus, for the artificial manner in
which the recognition is effected, emerging gradually from
the incidents and circumstances of the story itself, and not
from things extrinsic and unessential to the fable.

In another part we are presented with the picture of a man
most virtuous and upright, who, for the trial and exercise of
his fortitude and patience, is hurled down from the summits
of felicity, into the lowest depths of distress and despair.
Were ever sorrow, and misery, and compassion, expressed
more forcibly and feelingly, than by the behaviour of his
friends, who, when they first discovered him in his altered
condition, destitute, afflicted, tormented, “ sat down with
“ him upon the ground seven days and seven nights ; and
“ none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief
“ was very great.” Let us candidly confess, that this noble
passage is equal, if not superior, to that celebrated descrip-
tion of parental sorrow in Æschylus, where that venerable fa-
ther of tragedy, whose fire and enthusiasm sometimes force
him forwards to the very borders of improbability, has in
this instance justly represented Niobe sitting disconsolately
three days together upon the tomb of her children, covered
with

with a veil, and observing a profound silence. Such silences are something more affecting, and more strongly expressive of passion, than the most artful speeches. In Sophocles, when the unfortunate Deianira discovers her mistake in having sent a poisoned vestment to her husband Hercules, her surprise and sorrow are unspeakable, and she answers not her son who acquaints her with the disaster, but goes off the stage, without uttering a syllable. A writer unacquainted with nature and the heart, would have put into her mouth twenty iambs, in which she would bitterly have bewailed her misfortunes, and informed the spectators that she was going to die.

In representing likewise the desolation and destruction of the cities of Babylon and Tyre, these Jewish writers have afforded many instances of true pathos. One of them expresses the extreme distress occasioned by a famine, by this moving circumstance: "the tongue of the sucking child cleaveth to the roof of his mouth for thirst; the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them; the hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children:" which tender and affecting stroke reminds me of the picture of a sacked city by Aristides the Theban, on which we have so often gazed with inexpressible delight: that great artist has expressed the concern of a bleeding and dying mother, lest her infant, who is creeping to her side, should lick the blood that flows from her breast, and mistake it for her milk.

In the ninth book of the Iliad, Homer represents the horrors of a conquered city, by saying, that her heroes should be slain, her palaces overthrown, her matrons ravished, and her whole race enslaved. But one of these Jewish poets, by a single circumstance, has far more emphatically pointed out the utter desolation of Babylon: "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a single person than the golden wedge of Ophir."

What seems to be particularly excellent in these writers, is their selection of such adjuncts and circumstances upon each subject, as are best calculated to strike the imagination and embellish their descriptions. Thus, they think it not enough to say, "that Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, shall never be more inhabited;" but they add a picturesque stroke, "neither shall the Arabian pitch his tent there; the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant places."

You have heard me frequently observe, how much visions, or images by which a writer seems to behold objects that are absent, or even non-existent, contribute to the true sublime.

For

For this reason I have ever admired Minerva's speech in the fifth book of the Iliad, where she tells her favourite Diomedes, that she will purge his eyes from the mists of mortality, and give him power clearly to discern the gods that were at that time assisting the Trojans, that he might not be guilty of the impiety of wounding any of the celestial beings, Venus excepted. Observe the superior strength and liveliness of the following image: "Jehovah," the tutelar God of the Jews, "opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw; and behold the mountain was full of horses, and chariots of fire round about him!"

Do we start, and tremble, and turn pale, when Orestes exclaims, that the furies are rushing forward to seize him? And shall we be less affected with the writer, who breaks out into the following question? "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosrah; this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" It is the avenging God of the oppressed Jews, whom the poet imagines he beholds, and whose answer follows, "I that am mighty to save."—"Wherefore," resumes the poet, "art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine vat?"—"I have trodden the wine press alone," answers the God, "and of the people there were none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment."—Another writer, full of the idea of that destruction with which his country was threatened, cries out, "How long shall I see the standard, and hear the found of the trumpet!" And to represent total desolation, he imagines he sees the universe reduced to its primitive chaos: "I beheld the earth, and lo! it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light."

Above all, I am marvellously struck with the beauty and boldness of the Protopopœias, and the rich variety of comparisons, with which every page of these extraordinary writings abound. When I shall have pointed out a few of these to your view, I shall think your curiosity will be sufficiently excited to peruse the book itself from which they are drawn. And do not suffer yourself to be prejudiced against it by the reproaches, raillery, and satire, which I know my friend and disciple Porphyry is perpetually pouring upon the Jews. Farewel.

To the Adventurer.

Sir,

LONGINUS proceeds to address his friend Terentianus in the following manner:

It is the peculiar privilege of poetry, not only to place material objects in the most amiable attitudes, and to clothe them in the most graceful dress, but also to give life and motion to immaterial beings; and form, and colour, and action, even to abstract ideas; to embody the virtues, the vices, and the passions; and to bring before our eyes, as on a stage, every faculty of the human mind.

Prosopopœia, therefore, or personification, conducted with dignity and propriety, may be justly esteemed one of the greatest efforts of the creative power of a warm and lively imagination. Of this figure many illustrious examples may be produced from the Jewish writers I have been so earnestly recommending to your perusal; among whom, every part and object of nature is animated, and endowed with sense, with passion, and with language.

To say that the lightning obeyed the commands of God, would of itself be sufficiently sublime; but a Hebrew bard expresses this idea with far greater energy and life: “Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are!” And again, “God sendeth forth light, and it goeth; he calleth it again, and it obeyeth him with fear.” How animated, how emphatical, is this unexpected answer, “Here we are!”

Plato, with a divine boldness, introduces in his *Crito*, the laws of Athens pleading with Socrates, and dissuading him from an attempt to escape from the prison in which he was confined: and the Roman rival of Demosthenes has made his country tenderly expostulate with Cataline, on the dreadful miseries which his rebellion would devolve on her head. But will a candid critic prefer either of these admired personifications, to those passages in the Jewish poets, where Babylon, or Jerusalem, or Tyre, are represented as sitting on the dust, covered with sackcloth, stretching out their hands in vain, and loudly lamenting their desolation? Nay, farther, will he reckon them even equal to the following fictions? Wisdom is introduced, saying of herself, “When God prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a circle upon the face of the deep, when he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandments, when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight,

“delight, playing always before him.” Where, Terentianus, shall we find our Minerva speaking with such dignity and elevation? The goddess of the Hebrew bard, is not only the patroness and inventress of arts and learning, the parent of felicity and fame, the guardian and conductress of human life; but she is painted as immortal and eternal, the constant companion of the great Creator himself, and the partaker of his counsels and designs. Still bolder is the other *Prosopopœia*: “Destruction and death say,” of wisdom, “we have heard the fame thereof with our ears.” If pretenders to taste and judgment censure such a fiction as extravagant and wild, I despise their frigidity and gross insensibility.

When Jehovah is represented as descending to punish the earth in his just anger, it is added, “Before him went the pestilence.” When the Babylonian tyrant is destroyed, “the fir-trees rejoice at his fall, and the cedars of Lebanon,” saying, “Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us.” And at the captivity of Jerusalem the very ramparts and the walls lament, “they languish together.” Read likewise the following address, and tell me what emotion you feel at the time of perusal: “O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest and be silent.” Are you not amazed and delighted, my friend, to behold joy, and anguish, and revenge, ascribed to the trees of the forest, to walls, and warlike instruments?

Before I conclude these observations I cannot forbear taking notice of two remarkable passages in the Hebrew writers, because they bear a close resemblance with two in our own tragedians.

Sophocles, by a noble *Prosopopœia*, thus aggravates the misery of the Thebans, visited by a dreadful plague—Hell is enriched with groans and lamentations. This image is heightened by a Jewish author, who describes Hell or Hades, as an enormous monster, who hath extended and enlarged himself, and opened his insatiable mouth without measure.

Cassandra, in Eschylus, struck with the treachery and barbarity of Clytemnestra, who is murdering her husband Agamemnon, suddenly exclaims in a prophetic fury, shall I call her the direful mother of hell! To represent the most terrible species of destruction, the Jewish poet says, “The first born of death shall devour his strength.”

Besides the attribution of person and action to objects immaterial or inanimate, there is still another species of the *Prosopopœia* no less lively and beautiful than the former, when

a real person is introduced speaking with propriety and decorum. The speeches which the Jewish poets have put into the mouth of their Jehovah, are worthy of the greatest and incomprehensible Majesty of the all-perfect Being. Hear him asking one of his creatures, with a lofty kind of irony, "Where wast thou, when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereon are the foundations thereof fastened, or who laid the corner stone? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth as if it had issued out of the womb? When I brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall the pride of thy waves be stayed." How can we reply to these sublime enquiries, but in the words that follow? "Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth."

I have in a former treatise observed to you, that Homer has degraded his gods into men; these writers alone have not violated the Divine Majesty by inadequate and indecent representations, but have made the great Creator act and speak, in a manner suitable to the dignity of his nature, as far as the grossness of mortal conceptions will permit. From the sublimity and spirituality of their notions, so different in degree and kind from those of the most exalted philosophers, one may perhaps be inclined to think their claim to a divine inspiration reasonable and just, since God alone can describe himself to man.

I had written thus far, when I received dispatches from the empress Zenobia, with orders to attend her instantly at Palmyra; but am resolved, before I set out, to add to this letter a few remarks on the beautiful comparisons of the Hebrew poets.

The use of similes in general consists in the illustration or amplification of any subject, or in presenting pleasing pictures to the mind by the suggestion of new images. Homer and the Hebrew bards disdain minute resemblances, and seek not an exact correspondence with every feature of the object they introduce. Provided a general likeness appears, they think it sufficient. Not solicitous for exactness, which in every work is the sure criterion of a cold and creeping genius, they introduce many circumstances that perhaps have no direct affinity to the subject, but taken altogether contribute to the variety and beauty of the piece.

The

The pleasures of friendship and benevolence are compared to the perfumes that flow from the sentiments usually poured on the priest's head, which run down to his beard, and even to the skirts of his cloathing. The sun rising and breaking in upon the shades of night, is compared to a bridegroom issuing out of his chamber; in allusion to the Jewish custom, of ushering the bridegroom from his chamber at midnight with great solemnity and splendor, preceded by the light of innumerable lamps and torches. How amiably is the tenderness and sollicitude of God for his favourites expressed! "As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead them!" On the other hand, how dreadfully is his indignation described, "I will be unto them as a lion, as a leopard by the way I will observe them. I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and I will rent the caul of their heart." A little afterwards the scene suddenly changes, and divine favour is painted by the following similitudes: "I will be as the dew unto Judea; he shall grow as the lily; his branches shall spread, and his beauties shall be as the olive tree, and his smell like mount Libanus." Menander himself, that just characteriser of human life, has not given us a more apt and lively comparison than the following: "As the climbing a sandy way is to the feet of the aged, so is a wife full of words to a quiet man." Nor has one of our Grecian poets spoken so feelingly, so eloquently, or so elegantly of beauty, as king Solomon of his mistress, or bride, in images perfectly original and new: "Thy hair," says he, "is as a flock of goats that appear from mount Gilead; thy teeth are like a flock of sheep, that are even shorn, which come up from the washing;" by which similitude their exact equality, evenness and whiteness, are justly represented. "Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men;" that is straight and tall, adorned with golden chains and the richest jewels of the East. "Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies;" the exquisite elegance and propriety of which similitude need not be pointed out, and cannot be excelled.

I have purposely reserved one comparison for a conclusion, not only for the sake of its beauty and justness, but because it describes a friendship so different from the constancy which, I hope, will ever be the character of yours and mine. "My

“brethren,” says the writer, “have dealt deceitfully with me. They are like torrents which when swollen and increased with winter showers and the meltings of the ice, promise great and unfailing plenty of waters; but in the times of violent heats, suddenly are parched up and disappear. The traveller in the deserts of Arabia seeks for them in vain; the troops of Sheba looked, the caravans of Tema waited for them; they came to the accustomed springs for relief; they were confounded, they perished with thirst.”

In giving you these short specimens of Jewish poesy, I think I may compare myself to those spies which the above-mentioned Moses dispatched, to discover the country he intended to conquer; and who brought from thence, as evidences of its fruitfulness, the most delicious figs and pomegranates, and a branch with one cluster of grapes “so large and weighty,” says the historian, “that they bore it between two upon a staff.” Farewel. *Adventurer.*

14. SIR RICHARD STEEL.

I AM very confident, whoever reads the gospels, with an heart as much prepared in favour of them, as when he sits down to Virgil or Homer, will find no passage there which is not told with more natural force, than any episode in either of those wits, who were the chief of mere mankind.

The last thing I read was the 24th chapter of St. Luke, which gives an account of the manner in which our blessed Saviour, after his resurrection, joined with two disciples on the way to Emmaus, as an ordinary traveller, and took the privilege, as such, to enquire of them what occasioned a sadness he observed in their countenances; or whether it was from any public cause. Their wonder that any man so near Jerusalem should be a stranger to what had passed there; their acknowledgment to one they met accidentally, that they had believed in this prophet; and that now, the third day after his death, they were in doubt as to their pleasing hope, which occasioned the heaviness he took notice of, are all represented in a style, which men of letters call the great and noble simplicity. The attention of the disciples, when he expounded the scriptures concerning himself; his offering to take his leave of them, their fondness of his stay, and the manifestation of the great guest, whom they had entertained while he was yet at meat with them, are all incidents which wonderfully please the imagination of a Christian reader; and give to him something of that touch of mind which the
brethren

brethren felt, when they said one to another, “ Did not
“ our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the
“ way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures ?”

THE greatest pleasures the imagination can be entertained
with are to be found in Sacred Writ, and even the style of the
Scriptures is more than human.

I WAS just now reading David's lamentation over Saul and
Jonathan; and that divine piece was peculiarly pleasing to
me, in that there was such an exquisite sorrow expressed in
it, without the least allusion to the difficulties from which
David was extricated by the fall of those great men in his
way to empire. When he receives the tidings of Saul's
death, his generous mind has in it no reflection upon the
merit of the unhappy man who was taken out of his way,
but what raises his sorrow, instead of giving him consolati-
on.

“ The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how
“ are the mighty fallen !”

“ Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of
“ Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest
“ the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.”

“ Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither
“ let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: for
“ there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away; the
“ shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with
“ oil.”

“ Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their
“ lives, and in their death they were not divided: they
“ were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.”

“ Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed
“ you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments
“ of gold upon your apparel.”

How beautiful is the more amiable and noble part of Saul's
character, represented by a man, whom that very Saul pur-
sued to death ! But when he comes to mention Jonathan, the
sublimity ceases; and not able to mention his generous
friendship, and the most noble instances ever given by man,
he sinks into a fondness that will not admit of high language,
or allusions to the greater circumstances of their life, and
turns only upon their familiar converse.

“ I am

“ I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.”

In the mind of this admirable man, grandeur, majesty, and wordly power were despicable considerations, when he cast his eye upon the merit of him who was so suddenly snatched from him: and when he began to think of the great friendship of Jonathan, his panegyric is uttered only in broken exclamations, and tender expressions of how much they both loved, not how much Jonathan deserved.

To Nestor Ironside, Esq.

Oxford, June 16, 1713.

Sir,

THE classical writers, according to your advice, are by no means neglected by me, while I pursue my studies in divinity. I am persuaded, that they are fountains of good sense and eloquence; and that it is absolutely necessary for a young mind to form itself upon such models: for, by a careful study of their style and manner, we shall at least avoid those faults into which a youthful imagination is apt to hurry us; such as luxuriance of fancy, licentiousness of style, redundancy of thought, and false ornament.—It is very difficult, I believe, to express violent motions, which are very fleeting and transitory, either in colours or words. In poetry, it requires great spirit in thought, and energy in style; which we find more of in the eastern poetry, than either the Greek or Roman. The great Creator, who accommodated himself to those he vouchsafed to speak to, hath put into the mouths of his prophets such sublime sentiments and exalted language, as must abash the pride and wit of man. In the book of Job, the most ancient poem in the world, we have such paintings and descriptions as I have spoken of in great variety. I shall at present make some remarks on the celebrated description of the Horse in that holy book, and compare it with those drawn by Homer and Virgil.

Homer hath the following similitude of an horse twice over in the Iliad: which Virgil hath copied from him; at least he hath deviated less from Homer, than Mr. Dryden hath done from him.

- ‘ Freed from his keepers, thus with broken reins,
- ‘ The wanton courser prances o’er the plains;
- ‘ Or in the pride of youth o’erleaps the mounds,
- ‘ And saunters the females in forbidden grounds:

‘ Or

- ‘ Or seeks his wat’ring in the well-known flood,
- ‘ To quench his thirst, and cool his fiery blood :
- ‘ He swims luxuriant in the liquid plain,
- ‘ And o’er his shoulders flows his waving mane ;
- ‘ He neighs, he snorts, he bears his head on high,
- ‘ Before his ample chest the frothy waters fly.’

Virgil’s description is much fuller than the foregoing ; which, as I said, is only a simile ; whereas Virgil professes to treat of the nature of the horse. It is thus admirably translated :

- ‘ The fiery courser, when he hears from far
- ‘ The sprightly trumpets, and the shouts of war,
- ‘ Pricks up his ears, and trembling with delight,
- ‘ Shifts pace, and paws ; and hopes the promis’d fight.
- ‘ On his right shoulder his thick mane reclin’d,
- ‘ Ruffles at speed, and dances in the wind.
- ‘ His horny hoofs are jetty black, and round ;
- ‘ His chine is double ; starting, with a bound
- ‘ He turns the turf, and shakes the solid ground. }
 ‘ Fire from his eyes, clouds from his nostrils flow :
- ‘ He bears his rider headlong on the foe.’

Now follows that in the book of Job ; which, under all the disadvantages of having been written in a language little understood, of being expressed in phrases peculiar to a part of the world whose manner of thinking and speaking seems to us very uncouth, and above all, of appearing in a prose translation, is nevertheless so transcendently above the Hea-then descriptions, that hereby we may perceive how faint and languid the images are which are formed by mortal authors, when compared with that which is figured, as it were, just as it appears in the eye of the Creator. God speaking to Job, asks him :

- “ Hast thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grass-hopper? The glory of his nostrils is terrible. He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.”

Here are all the great and sprightly images that thought can form of this generous beast, expressed in such force and vigour

vigour of style, as would have given the great wits of antiquity new laws for the sublime, had they been acquainted with these writings. I cannot but particularly observe, that whereas the classical poets chiefly endeavour to paint the outward figure, lineaments, and motions; the sacred poet makes all the beauties to flow from an inward principle in the creature he describes, and thereby gives great spirit and vivacity to his description. The following phrases and circumstances seem singularly remarkable:

“Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?” Homer and Virgil mention nothing about the neck of the horse, but his mane. The sacred author, by the bold figure of “thunder,” not only expresses the shaking of that remarkable beauty in the horse, and the flakes of hair which naturally suggest the idea of lightning; but likewise the violent agitation and force of the neck, which in the oriental tongues had been flatly expressed by a metaphor less than this.

“Canst thou make him afraid as a grass-hopper?” There is a twofold beauty in this expression; which not only marks the courage of this beast, by asking, if he can be scared? but likewise raises a noble image of his swiftness, by insinuating, that if he could be frightened, he would bound away with the nimbleness of a grass-hopper.

“The glory of his nostrils is terrible.” This is more strong and concise than that of Virgil, which yet is the noblest line that ever was without inspiration:

Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem.
And in his nostrils rolls collected fire.

“He rejoiceth in his strength—He mocketh at fear—Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet—He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha”——are signs of courage, as I said before, flowing from an inward principle. There is a peculiar beauty in his “not believing it is the sound of the trumpet:” that is, he cannot believe it for joy: but when he is sure of it, and is amongst the trumpets, he saith, “Ha, ha;” he neighs, he rejoices. His docility is elegantly painted, in his being unmoved at “the rattling quiver, the glittering spear and the shield;” and is well imitated by Oppian, who undoubtedly read Job as well as Virgil, in his poem upon hunting:

- How firm the manag'd war-horse keeps his ground,
- Nor breaks his order, though the trumpet found!
- With fearless eye the glittering host surveys,
- And glares directly at the helmets blaze:
- The master's word, the laws of war he knows,
- And when to stop, and when to charge the foes.

“He

“ He swalloweth the ground,” is an expression of prodigious swiftness, in use among the Arabians, Job’s countrymen, at this day. The Latins have something like it :

Latumque fuga consumere campum. NEMESIAN.

In flight th’ extended champaign to consume.

Carpere prata fuga. VIRGIL.

In flight to crop the meads.

———— Campumque volatu

Cum rapuere, pedum vestigia quæras SIL. ITAL.

When in their flight the champaign they have snatch’d,

↳ No track is left behind.

It is indeed the boldest and noblest of images for swiftness; nor have I met with any thing that comes so near it, as Mr. Pope’s in Windsor forest :

‘ Th’ impatient courser pants in every vein,
 ‘ And pawing, seems to beat the distant plain ·
 ‘ Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost,
 ‘ And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost.’

“ He smelleth the battle afar off,” and what follows about the shouting, is a circumstance expressed with great spirit by Lucan :

‘ So when the ring with joyful shouts rebounds,
 ‘ With rage and pride th’ imprison’d courser bounds :
 ‘ He frets, he foams, he rends his idle rein ;
 ‘ Springs o’er the fence, and headlong seeks the plain.’

I am, Sir,

Your ever obliged Servant,
 JOHN LIZARD.

TO one who regards things with a philosophical eye, and hath a soul capable of being delighted with the sense that truth and knowledge prevail among men, it must be a grateful reflection to think, that the sublimest truths, which among the Heathens only here and there one of brighter parts and more leisure than ordinary could attain to, are now grown familiar to the meanest inhabitants of these nations.

Whence came this surprizing change, that regions formerly inhabited by ignorant and savage people, should now outline ancient Greece, and the other eastern countries, so renowned of old, in the most elevated notions of theology and morality? Is it the effect of our own parts and industry? Have our common mechanics more refined understandings than the ancient philosophers? It is owing to the God of truth, who came down from heaven, and condescended to become himself our teacher. It is as we are Christians, that we

we profess more excellent and divine truths than the rest of mankind.

If there be any of the free-thinkers who are not direct atheists, charity would incline one to believe them ignorant of what is here advanced. And it is for their information that I write this paper; the design of which is, to compare the ideas that Christians entertain of the being and attributes of a God, with the gross notions of the Heathen world. Is it possible for the mind of man to conceive a more august idea of the Deity than is set forth in the Holy Scriptures? I shall throw together some passages relating to this subject, which I propose only as philosophical sentiments, to be considered by a free-thinker.

“ Though there be that are called gods, yet to us there is
 “ but one God. He made the heaven, and heaven of hea-
 “ vens, with all their host; the earth and all things that are
 “ therein; the seas, and all that is therein. He said, Let
 “ them be, and it was so. He hath stretched forth the hea-
 “ vens. He hath founded the earth, and hung it upon
 “ nothing. He hath shut up the sea with doors, and said,
 “ Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther; and here shall
 “ thy proud waves be staid. The Lord is an invisible spirit,
 “ in whom we live, and move, and have our being. He is
 “ the fountain of life. He preserveth man and beast. He
 “ giveth food to all flesh. In his hand is the soul of every
 “ living thing, and the breath of all mankind. The Lord
 “ maketh poor, and maketh rich. He bringeth low, and
 “ lifteth up. He killeth and maketh alive. He woundeth,
 “ and he healeth. By him kings reign, and princes decree
 “ justice; and not a sparrow falleth to the ground without
 “ him. All angels, authorities, and powers, are subject to
 “ him. He appointeth the moon for seasons, and the sun
 “ knoweth his going down. He thundereth with his voice,
 “ and directeth it under the whole heaven, and his light-
 “ ning unto the ends of the earth. Fire and hail, snow and
 “ vapour, wind and storm, fulfil his word. The Lord is
 “ king for ever and ever, and his dominion is an everlasting
 “ dominion. The earth and the heavens shall perish; but
 “ thou, O Lord, remainest. They all shall wax old as doth
 “ a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and
 “ they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy
 “ years shall have no end. God is perfect in knowledge;
 “ his understanding is infinite. He is the Father of lights.
 “ He looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the
 “ whole heaven. The Lord beholdeth all the children of
 “ men

“ men from the place of his habitation, and considereth all
 “ their works. He knoweth our down-sitting and up-rising.
 “ He compasseth our path, and counteth our steps. He is
 “ acquainted with all our ways; and when we enter our
 “ closet, and shut our door, he seeth us. He knoweth the
 “ things that come into our mind, every one of them:
 “ and no thought can be with-holden from him. The Lord
 “ is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his
 “ works. He is a father of the fatherless, and a judge of
 “ the widow. He is the God of peace, the Father of mer-
 “ cies, and the God of all comfort and consolation. The
 “ Lord is great, and we know him not; his greatness is un-
 “ searchable. Who but he hath measured the waters in the
 “ hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a
 “ span? Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power,
 “ and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty. Thou
 “ art very great, thou art clothed with honour. Heaven is
 “ thy throne, and earth is thy footstool.”

Can the mind of a philosopher rise to a more just and
 magnificent, and at the same time a more amiable idea of
 the Deity, than is here set forth in the strongest images, and
 most emphatic language? And yet this is the language of
 shepherds and fishermen. The illiterate Jews, and poor per-
 secuted Christians, retained these noble sentiments; while
 the polite and powerful nations of the earth were given up
 to that sottish sort of worship, of which the following
 elegant description is extracted from one of the inspired
 writers.

“ Who hath formed a God, or molten an image that is
 “ profitable for nothing? The smith with the tongs, both
 “ worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers,
 “ and worketh it with the strength of his arms; yea, he is
 “ hungry, and his strength faileth; he drinketh no water,
 “ and is faint. A man planteth an ash, and the rain doth
 “ nourish it. He burneth part thereof in the fire. He
 “ roasteth roast; he warmeth himself; and the residue there-
 “ of he maketh a god. He falleth down unto it, and wor-
 “ shippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me,
 “ for thou art my God. None considereth in his heart, I
 “ have burnt part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked
 “ bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and
 “ eaten it; and shall I make the residue thereof an abomi-
 “ nation? Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?

In such circumstances as these, for a man to declare for
 free-thinking, and disengage himself from the yoke of idola-
 try,

try, were doing honour to human nature, and a work well becoming the greatest asserters of reason. But in a church, where our adoration is directed to the Supreme Being, and where is nothing, either in the object or manner of worship, that contradicts the light of nature; there, under the pretence of free-thinking, to rail at the religious institutions of their country, sheweth an undistinguishing genius, that mistakes opposition for freedom of thought.

Tatler and Guardian, passim.

15. JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQ.

THERE is a certain coldness and indifference in the phrases of our European languages, when they are compared with the oriental forms of speech; and it happens very luckily that the Hebrew idioms run into the English tongue with a particular grace and beauty. Our language has received innumerable elegancies and improvements from that infusion of Hebraisms which are derived to it out of the poetical passages of Holy Writ. They give a force and energy to our expressions, warm and animate our language, and convey our thoughts in more ardent and intense phrases, than any that are to be met with in our own tongue.

There is something so pathetic in this kind of diction, that it often sets the mind in a flame, and makes our hearts to burn within us. How cold and dead does a prayer appear, that is composed in the most elegant and polite forms of speech, which are natural to our tongue, when it is not heightened by that solemnity of phrase which may be drawn from the Sacred Writings. It has been said by some of the ancients, that if the gods were to talk with men, they would certainly speak in Plato's style; but I think we may say with justice, that when mortals converse with their Creator, they cannot do it in so proper a style as in that of the Holy Scriptures.

If any one would judge of the beauties of poetry that are to be met with in the Divine Writings, and examine how kindly the Hebrew manners of speech mix and incorporate with the English language, after having perused the book of psalms, let him read a literal translation of Horace or Pindar. He will find in these two last such an absurdity and confusion of style, with such a comparative poverty of imagination, as will make him very sensible of what I have been here advancing.—

IT was a very common inquiry among the ancients, why the number of excellent orators, under all the encouragements the most flourishing states could give them, fell so far short of the number of those who excelled in all other sciences. A friend of mine used merrily to apply to this case an observation of Herodotus, who says, that the most useful animals are the most fruitful in their generation; whereas the species of those beasts that are fierce and mischievous to mankind are but scarcely continued. The historian instances in a hare, which always either breeds or brings forth; and a lioness, which brings forth but once, and then loses all power of conception. But, leaving my friend to his mirth, I am of opinion, that in these latter ages we have greater cause of complaint than the ancients had. And since that solemn festival is approaching, which calls for all the power of oratory, and which affords as noble a subject for the pulpit as any revelation has taught us, the design of this paper shall be to shew, that our moderns have greater advantages towards true and solid eloquence, than any which the celebrated speakers of antiquity enjoyed.

The first great and substantial difference is, that their common places, in which almost the whole force of amplification consists, were drawn from the profit or honesty of the action, as they regarded only this present state of duration. But Christianity, as it exalts morality to a greater perfection, as it brings the consideration of another life into the question, as it proposes rewards and punishments of a higher nature, and a longer continuance, is more adapted to affect the minds of the audience, naturally inclined to pursue what it imagines its greatest interest and concern. If Pericles, as historians report, could shake the firmest resolutions of his hearers, and set the passions of all Greece in a ferment, when the present welfare of his country, or the fear of hostile invasions, was the subject; what may be expected from that orator, who warns his audience against those evils which have no remedy, when once undergone, either from prudence or time? As much greater as the evils in a future state are than these at present, so much are the motives to persuasion under Christianity greater than those which mere moral considerations could supply us with. But what I now mention relates only to the power of moving the affections. There is another part of eloquence, which is indeed its master-piece; I mean the marvellous or sublime. In this the Christian orator has the advantage beyond contradiction. Our ideas are
so

so infinitely enlarged by revelation, the eye of reason has so wide a prospect into eternity, the notions of a Deity are so worthy and refined, and the accounts we have of a state of happiness or misery so clear and evident, that the contemplation of such objects will give our discourse a noble vigour, an invincible force, beyond the power of any human consideration. Tully requires in his perfect orator, some skill in the nature of heavenly bodies, because, says he, his mind will become more extensive and unconfined; and when he descends to treat of human affairs, he would both think and write in a more exalted and magnificent manner. For the same reason that excellent master would have recommended the study of those great and glorious mysteries, which revelation has discovered to us; to which the noblest parts of this system of the world are as much inferior, as the creature is less excellent than its Creator. The wisest and most knowing among the Heathens had very poor and imperfect notions of a future state. They had indeed some uncertain hopes, either received by tradition, or gathered by reason, that the existence of virtuous men would not be determined by the separation of soul and body: but they either disbelieved a future state of punishment and misery; or upon the same account that Apelles painted Antigonus with one side only towards the spectator, that the loss of his eye might not cast a blemish upon the whole piece: so these represented the condition of man in its fairest view, and endeavoured to conceal what they thought was a deformity to human nature. I have often observed, that whenever the above-mentioned orator in his philosophical discourses is led by his argument to the mention of immortality, he seems like one awaked out of sleep: roused and alarmed with the dignity of the subject, he stretches his imagination to conceive something uncommon, and, with the greatness of his thoughts, casts, as it were, a glory round the sentence. Uncertain and unsettled as he was, he seems fired with the contemplation of it. And nothing but such a glorious prospect could have forced so great a lover of truth, as he was, to declare his resolution never to part with his persuasion of immortality, though it should be proved to be an erroneous one. But had he lived to see all that Christianity has brought to light, how would he have lavished out all the force of eloquence in those noblest contemplations, which human nature is capable of, the resurrection and the judgment that follows it? How had his breast glowed with pleasure, when the whole compass of futurity lay open and exposed to his view!

view! How would his imagination have hurried him on in the pursuit of the mysteries of the incarnation! How would he have entered, with the force of lightning, into the affections of his hearers, and fixed their attention, in spite of all the opposition of corrupt nature, upon those glorious themes, which his eloquence had painted in such lively and lasting colours!

This advantage Christians have, and it is with no small pleasure I lately met with a fragment of Longinus, which is preserved, as a testimony of that critic's judgment, at the beginning of a manuscript of the New Testament in the Vatican library. After that author has numbered up the most celebrated orators among the Grecians, he says, Add to these Paul of Tarsus, the patron of an opinion not fully proved. As a Heathen he condemns the Christian religion; and, as an impartial critic, he judges in favour of the promoter and preacher of it. To me it seems that the latter part of his judgment adds great weight to his opinion of St. Paul's abilities, since, under all the prejudice of opinions directly opposite, he is constrained to acknowledge the merit of that apostle. And no doubt, such as Longinus describes St. Paul, such he appeared to the inhabitants of those countries, which he visited and blessed with those doctrines, he was divinely commissioned to preach. Sacred story gives us, in one circumstance, a convincing proof of his eloquence, when the men of Lystra called him Mercury, "because he was the chief speaker," and would have paid divine worship to him, as to the God who invented and presided over eloquence. This one account of our apostle sets his character, considered as an orator only, above all the celebrated relations of the skill and influence of Demosthenes and his contemporaries. Their power in speaking was admired, but still it was thought human. Their eloquence warmed and ravished the hearers, but still it was thought the voice of man, not of God. What advantage then had St. Paul above those of Greece or Rome? I confess I can ascribe this excellence to nothing but the power of the doctrines he delivered, which may have still the same influence on the hearers; which have still the power, when preached by a skilful orator, to make us break out in the same expressions, as the disciples, who met our Saviour in their way to Emmaus, made use of; "Did not our hearts burn within us, when he talked to us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" I may be thought bold in my judgment by some; but I must affirm, that no other orator has left us

so visible marks and footsteps of his eloquence as our apostle. It may perhaps be wondered at, that in his reasonings upon idolatry at Athens, where eloquence was born and flourished, he confines himself to strict argument only; but my reader may remember what many authors of the best credit have assured us, that all attempts upon the affections and strokes of oratory were expressly forbidden by the laws of that country, in courts of judicature. His want of eloquence therefore here, was the effect of his exact conformity to the laws. But his discourse, on the resurrection, to the Corinthians, his harangue before Agrippa, upon his own conversion, and the necessity of that of others, are truly great, and may serve as full examples to these excellent rules on the sublime, which the best of critics have left us. The sum of all this discourse is, that our clergy have no farther to look for an example of the perfection they may arrive at, than to St. Paul's harangues; that when he, under the want of several advantages of nature, as he himself tells us, was heard, admired, and made a standard to succeeding ages, by the best judge of a different persuasion in religion; I say, our clergy may learn, that however instructive their discourses are, they are capable of receiving a great addition; which St. Paul has given them a noble example of, and the Christian religion has furnished them with certain means of attaining to.

Spectator.

16. ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

BUT what then do you think of St. Paul? He did not make it his study to obtain the art of eloquence; neither did he at all dissemble his want of it, but expressly confesses, that he was rude and unskilful in speech; and that too, when he was writing to the Corinthians, who highly valued themselves on account of this faculty, and indeed excelled in it.—That is the very thing which hath ruined many, by rendering them more negligent and remiss in their application to the study of the true doctrine.

Supposing the apostle, however, to have been as incapable in this respect, as they themselves would represent him, yet what is that to the men of this age? For, truly, he was endued with a much more powerful and excellent faculty than the art of oratory; which was, that his bare presence, even though he was silent all the while, was terrible to evil spirits. Nay, the greatest assemblies now, with all their prayers and tears, are not able to perform those things which were effected only by the handkerchief of that apostle. He

raised

raised the dead by his prayers, and wrought such other miracles, that the Heathen spectators took him for a god. Nay, before he departed this life, he was thought worthy to be caught up to the third heaven, and there to hear such words, as it was not lawful for human ears to be acquainted with. But the men of this present age, how is it that they do not tremble, to compare themselves with so excellent a person? For not to insist any longer on his miracles, if we carry our thoughts to the life of this blessed saint, and take a view of his angelical conversation, we shall still find him triumphant no less in this respect, than before on the account of his miracles.

And, indeed, who can recount the excellencies of this holy man? His zeal, his meekness, his continual dangers, his assiduous cares, and incessant anxiety for the churches; his tender compassion for weak brethren; his innumerable afflictions, his various persecutions, and his daily deaths? What part of the universe is there, either by land or sea, that is a stranger to the labours of this righteous person? Even desert places have known him, and hospitably received him in the midst of dangers. What sort of ensnaring stratagems are there, which were not practised upon him? In respect of all which, he might be justly said to pass through a whole course of victory. In a word, he was indefatigable in his encounters, and never gave out, till he came off conqueror.

How was it, I would ask, that this blessed apostle confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, when he had not as yet begun to work miracles? By what means was he too hard for the Grecians? And what was the cause for which he was sent to Tarsus? Was it not, because he had vanquished them by the force of his arguments, and had driven them to such extremities, that, not being able to bear the foil, they resolved to murder him. Neither is there room to object, that it was the glory of those mighty works which he wrought that rendered him wonderful in the eyes of the people, and that they who disputed with him were overpowered by the prodigious opinion men had of him on that account; for, hitherto, he conquered by dint of argument only. How else was it, that he contended so earnestly, and disputed at Antioch so warmly, against those that were for following the Jewish ceremonies? And Dionysius, the Areopagite, an inhabitant of that most superstitious city, Athens, by what means was he, with his wife, persuaded to adhere to this holy apostle? Was it not by the efficacy of

that sermon which he made *there*? Or, when Eutychus fell down out of the window, what was the occasion of that accident? Was it not his long attendance, even until midnight, to St. Paul's preaching? How do we find him employed at Thessalonica, at Corinth, at Ephesus, and at Rome itself? Did he not, in all those places, spend whole days and nights in expounding to his auditors the Holy Scriptures, in their order? To what purpose should I mention his encounters with the Stoics and Epicureans? For, indeed, should I descend to every particular, I must extend my discourse to an unreasonable length.

It appears, then, that, both before his miracles and afterwards, St. Paul made much use of eloquence. With what face, therefore, will any one dare to pronounce him ignorant or unskilful, whose sermons and disputations were so exceedingly admired by all that heard them? Let any one tell me, what was the reason why the people of Lycaonia took him for Mercury: for that Paul and Barnabas were thought to be Gods, was owing to their miracles; but that St. Paul, particularly, was taken for Mercury, was not owing to them, but to his excellent faculty of speaking.

In what else did this blessed saint excel the rest of the apostles; and how comes he more especially to be in the mouths of all men throughout the whole world? How is it that he is admired beyond all the rest, not by us only, but by Jews and Gentiles also? Is it not for the excellence of his epistles, by which he became useful not only to the Christians of that age, but to all others from that time to this, and will continue to be so to all that shall be hereafter, even unto the coming of Christ? So that he will not cease to be of singular benefit to mankind as long as mankind itself shall remain upon the earth. For, indeed, his most excellent writings are, as it were, a strong fortification, erected for the defence of all the churches in the world, as he himself, like a brave warrior, doth, as it were, stand in the midst, "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; casting down imaginations, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God." And all this he doth by those admirable epistles of his, which are so replete with divine wisdom. *On the Priesthood.*

17. THE REV. DAVID FORDYCE, D. D.

IT were impossible to enumerate here all the different ways in which the Sacred Writings may be applied by a preacher; they contain such a number and variety of surprising

prizing and interesting facts, equally instructive and entertaining; of real and supposed characters, both good and bad; of affecting representations of the nature and life of man; of discoveries relating to spiritual and eternal things, wonderfully awakening and elevating to the human mind; of sentences and sayings, the most pungent to the heart and conscience; of promises unspeakably soothing and transporting on one hand, and of threatenings no less awful and tremendous on the other; of parables or allegories, generally founded on the most common occurrences of life or objects of nature, strongly marked, and wrought with a divine simplicity, and therefore inexpressibly beautiful and touching; of imagery more rich, more sublime, more strong, more tender, than is to be found in any other composition, how admired soever; not to speak of all the divinity of rhetorical figures; occasionally introduced with admirable propriety, grace, and energy. Oh, my brethren, what a treasure of heavenly eloquence have we here! How happy should we be, had we hearts to value and heads to improve it!

Eloquence of the Pulpit.

18. PERE BOHOURS.

THE Holy Scripture is a foundation of noble thoughts, great and sublime, such as these: "I am he that is:—The Lord shall reign in all eternity and beyond:—Let there be light, and there was light:—The earth was silent at his presence:—The sea saw the Lord, and fled:—The earth and heaven fled before the presence of him that sat upon the throne."—Those terms of silence and flight have something very energetical, which paint the thing both lively and nobly.—I have never seen any pictures like those which David made of a turn of fortune: "I myself have seen the ungodly in great power, and flourishing like a green bay tree: I went by, and lo, he was gone: I sought him but his place could no where be found." Observe how far David goes: all that poets have said of the decay of Troy, of Rome, and of Carthage, is, that nothing was left but the places where those famous cities were situated: but here, the very place where the impious was, in the highest pitch of fortune, is no more.

Art of Criticism.

19. DR. MEAD.

HAVING from my earliest childhood entertained a strong passion for learning, after I had chosen the art of medicine for my profession, I still never intermitted my literary

studies ; to which I had recourse, from time to time, as to refreshments, strengthening me in my daily labours, and charming my cares. Thus, among other subjects, I frequently read the Holy Scriptures, as becomes a Christian ; and next to those things which regard eternal life, and the doctrine of morality, I usually gave particular attention to the histories of diseases, and the various ailments therein recorded. It is manifest the Christian religion requires of all its members, in a most especial manner, to practise every act of humanity and benevolence towards each other. The book of Job may justly be esteemed the most ancient of all books, of which we have any certain account. That it is metrical, as well as David's Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song, is generally allowed ; and the persons of the drama are God, Satan, Job, and his wife, his three friends, and Elihu. Nor indeed, in my opinion, can there be found, in this kind of writing, any thing more admirable, and better adapted to move the passions than this piece ; whether we regard the sublimity and elegance of style, the description of natural things, or, in fine, the propriety of the characters ascribed to all the persons concerned in it ; all which circumstances are of the greatest moment in a dramatic performance.

Works, passim.

20. REV. MR. BURG H.

ST. PAUL, the greatest and most general propagator of Christianity, could be no mean orator, who confounded the Jews at Damascus ; made a prince, before whom he stood to be judged, confess, that he had almost persuaded him to become a convert to a religion every where spoken against ; threw another into a fit of trembling as he sat upon his judgment-seat ; made a defence before the learned court of Areopagus, which gained him for a convert a member of the court itself ; struck a whole people with such admiration, that they took him for the god of eloquence ; and gained him a place in Longinus' list of famous orators. Few of mankind have able heads. All have hearts ; and all hearts may be touched, if the speaker is master of his art. The business is not so much, to open the understanding, as to warm the heart. There are few, who do not know their duty. To allure them to the doing of it, is the difficulty. Nor is this to be effected by cold reasoning. Accordingly, the Scripture orators are none of them cold. Their addresses are such as hardly any man can utter without warmth. " Hear, O heavens ! give ear, O earth !—To thee, O man, I call ;
" my

“ my voice is to the fons of men!—As I live, faith the
 “ Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ;
 “ but rather that he turn from his wickedness and live.
 “ Turn ye, turn ye ; why will ye die ?—O Jerufalem, Je-
 “ rufalem ! thou that killest the prophets, and stoneft them
 “ that are fent unto thee ! how often would I have gathered
 “ thy children, as a hen gathereth her brood under her
 “ wings, and ye would not !” *Art of Speaking.*

21. POPE GANGANELLI.

WHOEVER does not find in the Holy Scriptures, and the works of the Fathers, wherewithal to affect his hearers, is not worthy of mounting the pulpit. There cannot be finer images of the greatness and mercy of God, than in the psalms and spiritual songs. There cannot be more affecting histories than those of Joseph, of Moses, and of the Maccabees. There cannot be more striking examples of the Divine Justice, than the punishment of Nadab and Abihu, or of Belshazzar, who saw a dreadful hand writing in tremendous characters his condemnation on the wall. In all the books of the world you cannot find such strains of eloquence as the reflections of Job ; all attempts to paraphrase only enervate them. Delightful discourses may be composed by selecting some of the most beautiful passages in Scripture, and adapting them to the subject. St. Paul, the most pathetic and sublime of all preachers, employed only the language of the Scriptures in his epistles, and they are admirable. The Gospel, when meditated upon with due respect, shews itself to be the language of God ; it is quite simple, all is within the reach of every capacity, and all is divine. I expressly recommend to you to read St. Paul's epistles. Your constant manual ought to be the psalter, as dictated by the Holy Spirit ; a work which warms the soul while it enlivens the mind, and which for the true sublime, surpasses all the orators or poets that ever wrote. *Letters.*

22. FENELON.

IN order to perceive the eloquence of the Holy Scripture, nothing is more useful than to have a just taste of the ancient simplicity ; and this may best be obtained by reading the most ancient Greek authors. I say the most ancient : for those Greeks, whom the Romans so justly despised and called Græculi, were then entirely degenerate. You ought to be perfectly acquainted with Homer, Plato, Xenophon, and

and the other earliest writers. After that, you will be no more surpris'd at the plainness of the Scripture-style ; for in them you will find almost the same kind of customs, the same artless narrations, the same images of great things, and the same movements. The difference betwixt them, upon comparison, is much to the honour of the Scripture. It surpasses them vastly in native simplicity, liveliness, and grandeur. Homer himself never reached the sublimity of Moses's songs ; especially the last, which all the Israelitish children were to learn by heart. Never did any ode, either Greek or Latin, come up to the loftiness of the Psalms ; particularly that which begins thus ; " The mighty God, even the Lord hath " spoken," surpasses the utmost stretch of human invention. Neither Homer, nor any other poet, ever equalled Isaiah describing the majesty of God, in whose sight " the nations " of the earth are as the small dust ; yea, less than nothing " and vanity ;" seeing " it is he that stretcheth out the " heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent " to dwell in." Sometimes this prophet has all the sweetness of an eclogue, in the smiling images he gives us of peace ; and sometimes he soars so high as to leave every thing below him. What is there in antiquity that can be compared to the lamentations of Jeremiah, when he tenderly deplores the miseries of his country ? Or to the prophecy of Nahum, when he foresees, in spirit, the proud Nineveh fall under the rage of an invincible army ? We fancy that we see the army, and hear the noise of arms and chariots. Every thing is painted in such a lively manner as strikes the imagination. The prophet far outdoes Homer. Read likewise Daniel denouncing to Belshazzar the divine vengeance ready to overwhelm him ; and try if you can find any thing in the most sublime originals of antiquity that can be compared to those passages of Sacred Writ. As for the rest of Scripture, every portion of it is uniform and constant ; every part bears the peculiar character that becomes it ; the history, the particular detail of laws, the descriptions, the vehement and pathetic passages, the mysteries, and prophecies, and moral discourses ; in all these there appears a natural and beautiful variety. In short, there is as great a difference betwixt the Heathen poets and the prophets, as there is betwixt a false enthusiast and the true. The Sacred Writers, being truly inspired, do, in a sensible manner, express something divine ; while the others, striving to soar above themselves, always shew human weakness in their loftiest flights. The second book of Maccabees, the book of Wisdom, especially at the
end,

end, and Ecclesiasticus, in the beginning, discover the gaudy swelling style that the degenerate Greeks had spread over the east, where their language was established with their dominion. But it would be in vain to enlarge upon all these particulars; it is by reading that you must discover the truth of them. The simplicity of our Saviour's style is also intirely according to the ancient taste. It is agreeable both to Moses and the prophets, whose expressions Christ often uses. But though his language be plain and familiar, it is however figurative and sublime in many places. I could easily shew, by particular instances, that we have not a preacher of this age who is so figurative in his most studied sermons as Jesus Christ was in his most popular discourses. I do not mean those that St. John relates, where almost every thing is sensibly divine; I speak of his most familiar discourses, recorded by the other Evangelists. The apostles wrote in the same manner, with this difference, that Jesus Christ, being master of his doctrine, delivers it calmly. He says just what he pleases; and speaks with the utmost easiness of the heavenly kingdom and glory, as of his Father's house. All those exalted things that astonish us, were natural and familiar to him: he is born there, and only tells us what he saw. On the contrary, the apostles sunk under the weight of the truths that were revealed to them. They wanted words, and are not able to express their ideas. Hence flow those digressions and obscure passages in St. Paul's writings, and those transpositions of his thoughts, which shew his mind was transported with the abundance and greatness of the truths that offered themselves to his attention. All this irregularity of style shews that the Spirit of God forcibly guided the minds of the apostles. But notwithstanding these little disorders of their style, every thing in it is noble lively, and moving. As for St. John's Revelation, we find in it the same grandeur and enthusiasm that there is in the prophets. The expressions are oftentimes the same; and sometimes this resemblance of style gives a mutual light to them both. You see therefore that the eloquence of Scripture is not confined to the books of the Old Testament, but is likewise to be found in the New. Poetry is a more serious and useful art than common people imagine. Religion consecrated it to its own use from the very beginning of the world. Before men had a text of Divine Scripture, the sacred songs they learned by heart preserved the remembrance of the creation, and the tradition of God's wonderful works. Nothing can equal the magnificence and transport of the songs of Moses.

The

The book of Job is a poem full of the noblest and most majestic figures. The song of Solomon gracefully and tenderly expresses the mysterious union of God with the soul of man, which becomes his spouse. The psalms will be the admiration and comfort of all ages, and all nations that know the true God. The whole Scripture is full of poetry, even in those places where there is not the least appearance of versification.

Dialogues on Eloquence.

23. REV. EDWARD YOUNG, L. L. D.

THE speech of the Almighty in the thirty eighth and following chapters of Job, is by much the finest part of the noblest, and most ancient poem in the world. Bishop Patrick says, its grandeur is as much above all other poetry, as thunder is louder than a whisper.

Paraphrase on Job.

24. DR. DELANY.

I AM sensible, that the Jews are generally considered as an illiterate, barbarous people; and the charge is so far just, that they despised the learning of other nations; but this, by no means infers them either ignorant or barbarous. In their own they appear to me in a very different light. I am well satisfied that the Bible is the fountain-head of all true politeness, and what is properly called good breeding among mankind.—I have often thought, that a history of David's piety, in all the various events of his life, could it be regularly pursued, and clearly connected, would, under the conduct of a masterly pen, make one of the most curious and entertaining, as well as useful relations, the world ever beheld.—Let others find their account, and found their fame, in reviling the divine dispensations recorded in the Scriptures; be it ever my glory to reverence them! To reverence them in the silence of my closet, and to publish that reverence to the world, without any view to the wages either of vanity or wealth!—If the effects of the sole and separate power of noble music are so great, what might not be hoped from it, when it is built upon, and supported by, the noblest, the sublimest, the most heavenly strains of divine poetry, by which the world was ever delighted, informed, or amended! And such, beyond all controversy, or pretence of a rational doubt, are the sacred hymns and psalms of David.

I know but one description in the compass of Heathen poetry that deserves once to be named with David's tempest in the eighteenth psalm; and that is Virgil's noble description,

tion, in the first of his *Georgics*, and to me the noblest effort of his genius. David's stands thus:

“ In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God. He heard my voice out of his temple; my cry in his presence entered into his ears. And the earth trembled and shook, and the foundations of the mountains trembled and were tossed, because he was wroth. Smoke ascended from his nostrils, and fire devoured from his mouth; coals were kindled at it. And he bowed the heavens, and came down; and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and flew; and flew swift on the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him the darkness of waters in the clouds of heaven. At the brightness before him his clouds passed away; hail-stones and coals of fire. And the Lord thundered in the heavens, and the Most High gave his voice; hail-stones and coals of fire. And he sent out his arrows, and tore and dispersed them; and multiplied his lightnings, and confounded them. The beds of the waters appeared; the foundations of the world were uncovered, at thy rebuke, O Lord; at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.”

Virgil's tempest is well known:

*Sæpe etiam immensum cœlo venit agmen aquarum,
Et scedam glomerant tempestatem imbris atris
Collectæ ex alto nubes. Ruit arduus æther,
Et pluviam ingenti fata læta boumque labores
Diluit. Impletur fossæ, et cava flumina crescunt
Cum sonitu, fervetque fretis spirantibus æquor.
Ipse pater, mediâ nimborum in nocte, corusca
Fulmina molitur dextra. Quo maxima motu
Terra tremit: fugere feræ; et mortalia corda
Per gentes humilis stravit pavor. Ille flagranti
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit. Ingeminant austris, et densissimus imber
Nunc nemora ingenti vento, nunc litera plangit.*

These noble lines are thus translated with uncommon spirit, closeness, and justness, by an anonymous author in a work intitled *Virgil's Husbandry; or An Essay on the Georgics*, 1725.

Oft from above descends a troop of floods;
Oft gather from the deep the thick'ning clouds;
Down rush the skies, and with impetuous rain
Wash out the ox's toil, and sweep away the grain:
The dikes are fill'd, no bounds the torrents keep;
And with the breathing furies boils the deep:

Amidst

Amidst a night of clouds, his glitt'ring fire,
 And rattling thunder, hurls th' eternal Sire :
 Far shakes the earth ; beasts fly, and mortal hearts
 Pale fear dejects : He, with refulgent darts,
 Or Rhodope, or Athos lofty crown,
 Or steep Ceraunia's cliffs, strikes headlong down :
 The rains condense, more furious auster roars ;
 Now, with vast winds the woods, now, lashes he the shores.

Mr. Dryden's translation is more diffuse ; but the reader will perceive how much he thought some of David's ideas would adorn it :

And oft whole fleets descend of fluicy rain,
 Suck'd by the spongy clouds from off the main :
 'The lofty skies at once come pouring down,
 The promis'd crop, and golden labours, drown.
 The dikes are fill'd, and with a roaring sound
 The rising rivers float the nether ground ;
 And rocks the bellowing voice of boiling seas rebound. }
 The Father of the Gods his glory shrouds,
 Involv'd in tempests, and a night of clouds ;
 And from the middle darkness, flashing out
 By fits, he deals his fiery bolts about.
 Earth feels the motions of her angry god ;
 Her intrails tremble, and her mountains nod : }
 And flying beasts in forests seek abode :
 Deep horror seizes every human breast ;
 Their pride is humbled, and their fear confess'd :
 While he from high his rolling thunder throws,
 And fires the mountains with repeated blows :
 The rocks, are from their old foundations rent ;
 The winds redouble, and the rains augment :
 The waves on heaps are dash'd against the shore,
 And now the woods, and now the billows roar.

The reader hath now both descriptions before him. I shall beg leave to point out the beauties of them ; and when I have done so, he will determine for himself which ought to have the preference.

“ He heard my voice out of his temple.” Can there be a nobler idea, than to consider the heavens as the temple of God ! This temple encompasses the universe, and there the whole creation are in the presence of their maker.

“ He was wroth, and the earth trembled and shook.—He bowed the heavens, and came down.—He rode upon a cherub.—He flew upon the wings of the wind.—He made darkness his pavilion.—At the brightness before him his clouds passed away.”

The

The grandeur of these ideas is much easier conceived than explained.

What poetry ever equalled the magnificence of this style! What ideas of the Divinity does it inspire! What must we think of that mighty Being, at whose wrath the earth trembles, and the heavens are humbled at his feet! Angels and winds his vehicles! His voice is thunder; and lightnings the kindling of his breath! His Majesty veiled in darkness; and yet even so, the clouds passing away, at the glory that went before him.

In Virgil, Jupiter, in the dark center of his showers, deals about his thunders with his flaming right hand: earth trembles at the mighty motion; the beasts of the forests fly; and humble fear prostrates the haughty heart of man.

Nothing can be more nobly terrible, than the former part of this description, nor more affecting and touching than the last! For my own part I never read it but my blood was curdled, and my pride quelled.

He goes on:—He (that is, Jupiter) beats down Atho or Rhodope, or the lofty Ceraunian promontory, with his red-hot bolts:—The winds double, and the showers thicken; the forests and the shores resound.

You see the lightnings fly, in this description. You hear the rattling of the thunder, in that noble line;

Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit.—

You hear the crash of the falling mountains; the thickening shower patters in your ears, and the tempest roars.

All this is unquestionably noble;—but the reader will observe this essential and truly poetic difference between the two descriptions; that in Virgil, every thing but the thunder is natural action, and even that is acted and wielded with dreadful force; the effect of which motion is an earthquake.

In David the whole universe is animated at the presence of God, affrighted at his wrath, and obedient to his beck!
“ God is angry; and the earth trembles; and coals kindle
“ at his breath; and hail-stones fly before him.”

Virgil's Jupiter wields his thunders: Jehovah commands his, and they obey. Jupiter deals about his bolts in the attitude of an heated hero; or, to speak more properly, a giant of resistless strength! Jehovah but sends out his arrows; they know what to do; they tear and disperse, and his lightning confounds.

Jupiter is angry, and he beats down a mountain! Jehovah is wroth and the earth feels it; and the “ foundations
“ of

“ of the mountains are tossed to and fro,” tremble and shake like the joints of an affrighted man! At one blast of his breath the ocean opens to her deepest channels; and the foundations of the earth are bared before him.

In a word; Virgil's description is truly noble; but David's beyond all expression grand!

To all this may be added, that David wrote first; and if Ovid read Moses, possibly Virgil read David. I believe he read David, because I am sure he read Isaiah.

This, at least, must be allowed, that earthquakes are not the natural effects of thunder. They are united in David's description, and so they are in Virgil's: they are the effect of God's wrath, in David; they are the effects of the angry motion of Jupiter's right hand, in Virgil.

It must be owned, that Virgil's Jupiter, in a night of clouds, is very like David's Jehovah, incompassed with darkness in the waters of the clouds of heaven! In this, indeed, Jehovah has the advantage, that his glory cannot be wholly shrouded; some gleams of it still flash out as he passes, and dispel the clouds.

The painting in the 12 and 13 verses of this psalm, is, to my imagination, by much the finest I ever saw in poetry:—
 “ At the brightness before him his clouds passed away; hail-
 “ stones and coals of fire.—And the Lord thundered in the
 “ heavens, and the Most High gave his voice; hail-stones
 “ and coals of fire.” The poet was too transported to wait for auxiliary verbs, and connecting particles! The description is to me a noble picture, in which the gusts of hail, and flashes of fire, burst out from the clouds with as much spirit and force as in a real tempest. *Life of David.*

25. BISHOP GASTRIL.

HAD the Scriptures exhibited religion to us in that regular form and method to which other writers have reduced it, there would, to me at least, have been wanting one great proof of the authority of those writings; which being penned at different times, and upon different occasions, and containing in them a great variety of wonderful events, surprising characters of men, wise rules of life, and new unheard-of doctrines, all mixed together with an unusual simplicity and gravity of narration, do, in the very frame and composure of them, carry the marks of their divine original. *Preface to Christian Institutes.*

26. REV. WILLIAM SMITH, D. D.

THE pathetic without grandeur is preferable to that which is great without passion. Whenever both unite, the passage will be excellent; and there is more of this in the book of Job, than in any other composition in the world.

When a writer applies to the more tender passions of love and pity, when a speaker endeavours to engage our affections, or gain our esteem, he may succeed well, though there may be nothing grand in what he says. Nay, grandeur sometimes would be unseasonable in such cases, as it strikes always at the imagination.

There is a deal of this sort of pathetic in the words of our Saviour to the poor Jews, who were imposed upon and deluded into fatal errors by the Scribes and Pharisees, who had long been guilty of the heaviest oppressions on the minds of the people: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 11. 28-30.

So again in Mat. 23. 37. after taking notice of the cruelties, inhumanities, and murders, which the Jewish nation had been guilty of towards those, who had exhorted them to repentance, or would have recalled them from their blindness and superstition to the practice of real religion and virtue, he on a sudden breaks off with,

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

The expression here is vulgar and common, the allusion to the hen, taken from an object which is daily before our eyes; and yet there is as much tenderness and significance in it, as can any where be found in the same comparisons.

I beg leave to observe further, that there is a continued strain of this sort of pathetic in St. Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20. What an effect it had upon his audience is plain from the 36 and 38 verses. It is scarce possible to read it seriously without tears.

The Deity is described, in a thousand passages of Scripture, in greater majesty, pomp, and perfection, than that in which Homer arrays his Gods. The books of Psalms and

Job

Job abound in such divine descriptions. That particularly in the 18 Psalm, verse 7-10, is inimitably grand.

So again, psalm 77. 16-19. "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and were afraid; the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water, the air thundered, and thine arrows went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was heard round about; the lightnings shone upon the ground, the earth was moved and shook withal. Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known."

And, in general, wherever there is any description of the works of omnipotence, or the excellence of the divine Being, the same vein of sublimity is always to be discerned. I beg the reader to peruse in this view the following psalms. 46, 68, 76, 96, 97, 104, 114, 139, 148, as also the 3 chapter of Habakkuk, and the description of the son of God in the 19 chapter of Revelations.

Instances of majestic simplicity and unaffected grandeur, are to be met with in great plenty through the Sacred Writings. Such are the following: "Let there be light, and there was light.—He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.—Lazarus, come forth.—Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.—I will, be thou clean.—Peace, be still.—Hitherto shalt thou pass, and no farther: Here shall thy proud waves be stopped."

There is a description of a tempest in the 107 psalm, which runs in a very high vein of sublimity, and has more spirit in it than the applauded descriptions in the authors of antiquity; because, when the storm is in all its rage, and the danger becomes extreme, almighty power is introduced to calm at once the roaring main, and give preservation to the miserable distressed. It ends in that fervency of devotion, which such grand occurrences are fitted to raise in the minds of the thoughtful: "He commendeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted away because of trouble. They reel to and fro like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad, because they be quiet; so he bringeth them into their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"—

No author amplifies in so noble a manner as St. Paul. He rises gradually from earth to heaven, from mortal man to God himself: "For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's," 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22.—So also Rom. 8. 29, 30, and 38, 39. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

A sublimer image can no where be found than in the song of Deborah, after Sisera's defeat, where the vain glorious boasts of Sisera's mother, when expecting his return, and, as she was confident, his victorious return, are described.

"The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattices, Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot? Her wife ladies answered her; yea, she returned answer to herself: Have they not sped? Have they not divided the prey, to every man a damsel or two? To Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?"

Ghosts are very frequent in English tragedies; but ghosts, as well as fairies, seem to be the peculiar province of Shakspeare. In such circles none but he could move with dignity. That in Hamlet is introduced with the utmost solemnity, awful throughout, and majestic. At the appearance of Banquo, in Macbeth, the images are set off in the strongest expression, and strike the imagination with high degrees of horror, which is supported with surprising art through the whole scene.

There is a fine touch of this nature in Job 4. "In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake: then a spirit passed before my face, the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was
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“ before mine eyes—there was silence—and I heard a voice,
 “ saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall
 “ a man be more pure than his maker? Behold, he put no
 “ trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:
 “ how much less in them that dwell in houses of clay, whose
 “ foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the
 “ moth? They are destroyed from morning to evening;
 “ they perish for ever without any regarding it. Doth not
 “ their excellency, which is in them, go away? They die,
 “ even without wisdom.”

Longinus’ observations upon a solemn oath of Demosthenes are judicious and solid: but there is one infinitely more solemn and awful in the 22 chapter of Jeremiah: “ But
 “ if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith
 “ the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation.” Also in Gen. 22 chapter: “ And the Angel of the Lord
 “ called out of heaven unto Abraham 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, and 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.”

Is not a discourse enlivened, strengthened, and thrown more forcibly along by question and interrogation? A noble instance we have of this in Deborah’s words in the person of Sisera’s mother, before mentioned. Nor can I in this place pass by a passage in the historical part of Scripture; I mean the words of Christ, in this figure of self-interrogation and answer: “ What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A
 “ reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to
 “ see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that
 “ wear soft clothing are in king’s houses. But what went
 “ ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and
 “ more than a prophet.”

That the sense receives strength, as well as beauty, from this figure, is no where so visible, as in the poetical and prophetic parts of Scripture. Numberless instances might be easily produced, and we are puzzled how to pitch on any in particular, amidst so fine variety, lest the choice might give room to call our judgment in question, for taking no notice of others, that perhaps are more remarkable.

Any

Any reader will observe, that there is a poetical air in the predictions of Balaam in the 23 of Numbers, and that there is particularly an uncommon grandeur in the 19 verse: “ God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or, hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”

What the cause of this grandeur is, will immediately be seen, if the sense be preserved, and the words thrown out of interrogation:

“ God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent. What he has said, he will do; and what he has spoke, he will make good.”

The difference is so visible, that it is needless to enlarge upon it.

How artfully does St. Paul in the 26 of Acts transfer his discourse from Festus to Agrippa. In the 26 verse he speaks of him in the third person. “ The king,” say he, “ knoweth of these things, before whom I also speak freely:”— Then in the following he turns short upon him, “ King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?” And immediately answers his own question, “ I know that thou believest.” The smoothest eloquence, the most insinuating complaisance, could never have made such impression on Agrippa, as this unexpected and pathetic address.

To these instances may be added the whole 38 chapter of Job; where we behold the Almighty Creator expostulating with his creature, in terms which express at once, the majesty and perfection of the one, the meanness and frailty of the other. There we see, how vastly useful the figure of interrogation is, in giving us a lofty idea of the Deity; whilst every question awes us into silence, and inspires a sense of our own insufficiency.—

Amongst the various and beautiful instances of an assemblage of figures, which may be produced, and which so frequently occur in the best writings, one, I believe, has hitherto not been taken notice of; I mean the four last verses of the 24 Psalm: “ Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is the King of Glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battles. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts; he is the King of Glory.”

There are innumerable instances of this kind in the poetical parts of Scripture, particularly, in the Song of Deborah, and the Lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan. There is scarce one thought in them, which is not figured; nor one figure which is not beautiful.

To leave out the copulatives in many cases is reckoned an excellence by Longinus. And no writer ever made a less use of them than St. Paul. His thoughts poured in so fast upon him, that he had no leisure to knit them together, by the help of particles, but has by that means given them weight, spirit, energy, and strong significance: “But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right-hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well-known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” 2 Cor. 6. Here is but one sentence, of near thirty different members, which are all detached from one another; and if the copulatives be inserted after the Isocratean manner, the strength will be quite impaired, and the sedate grandeur of the whole grow flat and heavy.—

The eloquence of St. Paul, in most of his speeches and argumentations, bears a very great resemblance to that of Demosthenes, as described by Longinus. Some important point being always uppermost in his view, he often leaves his subject, and flies from it with brave irregularity, and as unexpectedly returns again to his subject, when one would imagine that he had entirely lost sight of it. For instance, in his defence before King Agrippa, Acts 26. when, in order to wipe off the aspersions thrown upon him by the Jews, that he was a turbulent and seditious person, he sets out with clearing his character, proving the integrity of his morals, and his inoffensive unblameable behaviour, as one, who hoped, by those means, to attain that happiness of another life, for which the twelve tribes served God continually in the temple: on a sudden he drops the continuation of his defence, and cries out, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you,

“ you, that God should raise the dead?” It might be reasonably expected, that this would be the end of his argument; but by flying to it, in so quick and unexpected a transition, it catches his audience before they are aware and strikes dumb his enemies, though they will not be convinced. And this point being once carried, he comes about again as unexpectedly, by, “ I verily thought with myself,” &c. and goes on with his defence, till it brings him again to the same point of the resurrection, “ Having therefore obtained “ help,” &c.—

We have an instance of the figure called gradation in the 5 chapter of Romans. It is continued throughout the chapter, but the branches of the latter part appear not plainly, because of the transpositions: “ Therefore, being justified “ by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord “ Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith unto “ this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the “ glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribula- “ tions also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; “ and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope “ maketh not ashamed,” &c.—

Plurals reduced and contracted into singulars have sometimes much grandeur and magnificence. St. Paul makes use of this figure, jointly with a change of person, on several occasions, and with different views. In Romans 7. to avoid the direct charge of disobedience on the whole body of the Jews, he transfers the discourse into the first person, and so charges the insufficiency and frailty of all his countrymen on himself, to guard against the invidiousness, which an open accusation might have drawn upon him.—

Change of persons has also a wonderful effect, in setting the very things before our eyes, and making the hearer think himself actually present and concerned in dangers, when he is only attentive to a recital of them: “ She crieth “ at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in of “ the doors—Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to “ the sons of men.” Prov. 8. 34.

There is also an example of this in Luke 5. 14. “ And “ he commanded him to tell no man, but—Go shew thy- “ self to the priest.”

Another more remarkable in the 128 Psalm; “ Blessed “ are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in his way— “ For thou shalt eat the labours of thy hand. Oh! well is “ thee, and happy shalt thou be.”

It is observable, that the latter part of this verse transgresses against the rules of grammar; but I think the spirit would have been much impaired, had it been, "Oh! well art thou," instead of, "Oh! well is thee." It is a beautiful disorder, and does honour to the translators.—

St. Paul very artfully attacks the Jews in his Epistle to the Romans. His drift is to shew, that they were not the people of God, exclusive of the Gentiles, and had no more reason than they, to form such high pretensions, since they had been equally guilty of violating the moral law of God, which was antecedent to the Mosaic, and of eternal obligation. Yet not to exasperate the Jews at setting out, and so render them averse to all the arguments he might afterwards produce, he begins with the Gentiles, and gives a black catalogue of all their vices, which, in reality were, as well as appeared, excessively heinous in the eyes of the Jews, till in the beginning of the second chapter, he unexpectedly turns upon them with, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest."—And afterwards, "Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God," &c.

If the whole be read with attention, the apostle's art will be found surprising, his eloquence will appear grand, his strokes cutting, the attacks he makes on the Jews successive, and rising in their strength.—

Demosthenes himself bursts not out upon the traitorous creatures of Philip, with such bitterness and severity, strikes them not dumb, with such a continuation of vehement and cutting metaphors, as St. Jude some profligate wretches in his epistle: "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of wind: trees, whose fruit withereth, without fruit, plucked up by the roots: raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame: wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

By how much the bold defence of Christianity, against the lewd practices, insatiable lusts, and impious blasphemies of wicked abandoned men, is more glorious than the defence of a petty state, against the intrigues of a foreign tyrant; or, by how much more honourable and praise-worthy it is, to contend for the glory of God and religion, than the reputation of one republic; by so much does this passage of the apostle exceed that of Demosthenes, commended

by

by Longinus, in force of expression, liveness of allusion, and height of sublimity.—

Bold metaphors, and those too in great plenty, says Longinus, are very seasonable in a noble composition, where they are always mitigated and softened, by the vehement pathetic and generous sublime dispersed through the whole.— This remark shews the penetration of his judgment, and proves the propriety of the strong metaphors in Scripture; as when “arrows are said to be drunk with blood, and a sword to devour flesh.” It illustrates the eloquence of St. Paul, who uses stronger, more expressive, and more accumulated metaphors, than any other writer; as when, for instance, he styles his converts, “His joy, his crown, his hope, his glory, his crown of rejoicing:” when he exhorts them to “put on Christ:” when he speaks against the Heathens, “who had changed the truth of God into a lie:” when against wicked men, “whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame.” The following is a chain of strong ones; “Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known; there is no fear of God before their eyes.”—

In illustrations and descriptions, there is nothing so expressive and significant, as a chain of continued tropes. By these has Xenophon described, in so pompous and magnificent terms, the anatomy of the human body. By these has Plato described the same thing, in so unparalleled, so divine a manner. The head of man he calls a citadel. The neck is an isthmus placed between the head and the breast. The vertebrae, or joints on which it turns, are so many hinges. Pleasure is the bait which allures men to evil, and the tongue is the informer of tastes. The heart, being the knot of the veins, and the fountain from whence the blood arises, and briskly circulates through all the members, is a watch tower completely fortified. The pores he calls narrow streets. And because the heart is subject to violent palpitations, either when disturbed with fear of some impending evil, or when inflamed with wrath, the gods, says he, have provided against any ill effect that might hence arise, by giving a place in the body to the lungs, a soft and bloodless substance, furnished with inward vacuities, like a sponge, that whenever choler inflames the heart, the lungs should easily yield, should gradually
break

break its violent strokes, and preserve it from harm. The seat of the concupiscible passions, he has named the apartment of the women; the seat of the irascible, the apartment of the men. The spleen is the sponge of the entrails, from whence, when filled with excrements, it is swelled and bloated. Afterwards, proceeds he, the gods covered all those parts with flesh, their rampart and defence against the extremities of heat and cold, soft throughout like a cushion, and gently giving way to outward impressions. The blood he calls the pasture of the flesh; and adds, that for the sake of nourishing the remotest parts, they opened the body into a number of rivulets, like a garden well stocked with plenty of canals, that the veins might by this means receive their supply of the vital moisture from the heart, as the common source, and convey it through all the sluices of the body. And at the approach of death, the soul, he says, is loosed like a ship from her cables, and left at the liberty of driving at pleasure.

The allegory, or chain of metaphors that occurs in the 80 psalm is no way inferior to this of Plato. The royal author speaks thus of the people of Israel, under the metaphor of a vine: "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt; thou hast cast out the Heathen, and planted it; thou madest room for it, and when it had taken root, it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar trees. She stretched out her branches unto the sea, and her boughs unto the river."

St. Paul has nobly described, in a continuation of metaphors, the Christian armour, in his epistle to the Ephesians, chapter the sixth.

The sublime description of the horse in Job the thirty ninth has been highly applauded by several writers. But the twenty ninth chapter of the same book will afford as fine instances of the beauty and energy of this figure, as can any where be met with: "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!—When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me; when I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil!—When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. The blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment

was

“ was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor.”——

There is another beautiful use of this figure in the latter part of the sixty fifth psalm. The description is lively, and what the French call *Riante*, or laughing. It has indeed been frequently observed, that the eastern writings abound very much in strong metaphors; but in Scripture they are always supported by a ground-work of masculine and nervous strength, without which they are apt to swell into ridiculous bombast.——

The manner in which similes or comparisons differ from metaphors, we cannot know from Longinus, because of the gap which follows in the original; but they differ only in the expression. To say that, “ fine eyes are the eyes of a dove,” or that, “ cheeks are a bed of spices,” are strong metaphors, which become comparisons, if expressed thus, “ are as the eyes of a dove,” or, “ as a bed of spices.” These two comparisons are taken from the description of the beloved in the fifth chapter of Solomon’s song; in which there are more of great strength and propriety, and an uncommon sweetness: “ My beloved is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold; his locks are bushy, and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of a dove by the rivers of water, washed with milk and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with beryl. His belly is as bright as ivory overlaid with sapphire. His legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely.”

Smith’s Longinus, passim.

27. MILTON.

IF occasion shall lead to imitate those magnificent odes and hymns wherein Pindarus and Callimachus are in most things worthy, some others in their frame judicious, in their matter most an end faulty. But those frequent songs throughout the law and prophets beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear over all the kinds of lyric poetry, to be incomparable.

This was Milton’s opinion in the early part of life. It is evident he was of the same judgment when more advanced; seeing

seeing he introduces our Saviour answering the tempter in the following manner :

If I would delight my private hours
 With music or with poem, where so soon
 As in our native language can I find
 That solace ? All our law and story's strow'd
 With hymns, our Psalms with artful terms inscrib'd,
 Our Hebrew songs and harps in Babylon,
 That pleas'd so well our victor's ears, declare
 That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd ;
 Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
 The vices of their deities, and their own
 In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
 Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
 Remove their swelling epithets thick laid
 As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
 Thin sown with ought of profit or delight,
 Will far be found unworthy to compare
 With Zion's songs, to all true tastes excell'g,
 Where God is prais'd aright, and godlike men,
 The holiest of holies, and his faints ;
 Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee,
 Unless where moral virtue is express'd
 By light of nature not in all quite lost.

Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
 The top of eloquence, statists indeed,
 And lovers of their country, as may seem ;
 But herein to our prophets far beneath,
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching
 The solid rules of civil government
 In their majestic unaffected style
 Than all th' oratory of Greece and Rome.
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
 What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,
 What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat ;
 These only with our law best form a king. *Works, passim.*

28. REV. VICESSIMUS KNOX, M. A.

THE simple majesty of the Sacred Writings affords a proper model for sacred oratory.

The Bible, the *Iliad*, and Shakespeare's works, are allowed to be the sublimest books that the world can exhibit.—

The poetical passages of Scripture are particularly pleasing in the present translation. The language, though it is simple and natural, is rich and expressive. Solomon's Song, difficult as it is to be interpreted, may be read with delight, even if

we attend to little else but the brilliancy of the diction ; and it is a circumstance which increases its grace, that it appears to be quite unstudied. The Psalms, as well as the whole Bible, are literally translated, and yet that translation abounds with passages exquisitely beautiful and irresistibly transporting. Even where the sense is not very clear, nor the connection of ideas obvious at first sight, the mind is soothed, and the ear ravished, with the powerful yet unaffected charms of the style. It is not indeed necessary to enlarge on the excellencies of the translation in general ; for its beauties are such as are to be recognized by feeling more than by description, and it must be owned that they have been powerfully felt by the majority of the nation ever since the first edition. In many a cottage and farm-house, where the Bible and Prayer-book constitute the library, the sweet songs of Israel, and the entertaining histories of Joseph and his brethren, Saul and Jonathan, constitute a never-failing source of heart-felt pleasure.

It is false refinement, vain philosophy, and an immoderate love of dissipation, which causes so little attention to be paid to this venerable book in the busy and gay world. If we do not disclaim all belief in its contents, it is surely a great omission in many gentlemen and ladies who wish to be completely accomplished, or think themselves so already, to be utterly unacquainted with the Sacred Volume. It is our duty to inspect it, and it is graciously so ordered, that our duty, in this instance, may be a pleasure ; for the Bible is truly pleasing, considered only as a collection of very ancient and curious history and poetry.

A writer of taste and genius may avail himself greatly in pathetic compositions, by adopting the many words and phrases, remarkable for their beautiful simplicity, which are interspersed in that pleasing, as well as venerable book, the Holy Bible.— Besides its astonishing sublimity, it hath many a passage exquisitely tender and pathetic. Our admirable translation has preserved them in all their beauty, and an English writer may select from it a diction better suited to raise the sympathy of grief, than from the most celebrated models of human composition.

Sterne, who, though he is justly condemned for his libertinism, possessed an uncommon talent for the pathetic, has availed himself greatly of the Scriptural language. In all his most affecting passages, he has imitated the turn, style, manner, and simplicity, of the sacred writers, and in many of them has transcribed whole sentences. He found no language

guage of his own could equal the finely expressive diction of our common translation. There are a thousand instances of his imitating Scripture interspersed in all the better parts of his works, and no reader of common observation can pass by them unnoticed. I will quote only one or two instances taken from the most admired pieces in the tender style.—Maria, though not tall, was nevertheless of the first order of fine forms. Affliction had touched her looks with something that was scarce earthly, and so much was there about her of all that the heart wishes, or the eye looks for in woman, that could the traces be ever worn out of her brain, or those of Eliza out of mine, she should not only eat of my bread, and drink of my cup, but Maria should lye in my bosom, and be unto me as a daughter.

Adieu, poor luckless maiden! Imbibe the oil and wine which the compassion of a stranger as he sojourneth on his way, now pours into thy wounds. The Being who has twice bruised thee can only bind them up for ever.—Again, in his description of the captive, As I darkened the little light he had, he lifted up a hopeless eye towards the door, then cast it down, shook his head, and went on with his work of affliction. I heard his chains upon his legs, as he turned his body to lay his little stick upon the bundle. He gave a deep sigh. I saw the iron enter into his soul. It is easy, but it is not necessary, to adduce many more instances in which a writer, who eminently excelled in the power of moving the affections, felt himself unequal to the task of advancing the style of pathos to its highest perfection, and sought assistance of the Bible.

It is easy to see that the writer of so many tender and simple passages had imitated the book of Ruth. With what pleasure did a man of his feeling read, “ Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou dicst will I die, and there will I be buried.” Sterne stole the very spirit of this passage, and indeed of all the fine strokes of tenderness, and many an one there is, in a book which is often laid aside as absurd and obsolete. The choice which Sterne has made of texts and of citations from the Scriptures in his sermons, are proofs that he, who was one of the best judges, was particularly struck with the affecting tenderness and lovely simplicity of scriptural language.

The

The poet, therefore, who means to produce a tragedy, which shall be able to stand its ground even after the first nine nights, without the aid of puffing, and without filling the pit and box with orders, should sometimes go to the same fountain, and drink the waters of poetical inspiration of which Sterne drank so copiously. He will improve greatly by studying the language and histories of Joseph, Saul, and Jonathan, of Ruth, of Job, of the Psalms, of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, of many single passages every where interspersed, and of the parables in the New Testament.

The prophecy of Isaiah abounds in the beauties of oriental poetry. The translation is a literal one, and, though it may be found inaccurate by a Lowth or a Kennicot, will, I believe, hardly admit of improvement in force, simplicity, and animation. It does honour to the feelings of the translators, who, though they have performed their task with so much spirit, had nothing else in view but fidelity. To refinement and taste they made no pretensions; and that their work is so well executed, must have been owing to the excellence of their natural sentiment. We have several literal translations of the ancient poets into English prose, which are in request among school-boys. In these we find no remains of that beauty which has been celebrated in every age from its first production. Few of these are rendered so faithfully, word for word, from their originals, as the Scriptures, which, notwithstanding this disadvantage, are the sublimest and most interesting books in the English language. Every man of sentiment feels them of a superior kind, and if he judges by the criterion of his undissembled feelings, must acknowledge, that though they are sometimes resembled in Homer, they are seldom equalled, and never excelled. Take a view of the poetical beauties merely as the productions of Isaiah, a very ancient poet of Judæa, and his writings will surely claim the attention of a man of letters, as much as those of the native of Smyrna or of Asra.

They who pretend to an exemption from prejudice, evince the futility of their pretensions, when they attribute the general admiration of the Scriptures, as compositions, to opinions formed in their favour in the early period of infancy. The truth is, the prejudices which they have unreasonably adopted against the doctrines derived from those ancient books, extend themselves to the style and sentiment: but, surely, exclusive of the religious tendency, and of the arguments for the authenticity of the books, they claim a great degree of veneration from their antiquity, and justly
excite

excite the attention of criticism, as curious specimens of oriental composition.

It might, indeed, have been expected, from the general taste which at present prevails for the remains of ancient English poetry, that those works, which justly boast an higher antiquity than any of the productions of North or South Britain, would have been particularly regarded. But, while the ballad of a minstrel, beautiful, perhaps, and well worth preserving, has been recovered from its dust, and committed to memory, the family Bible has been suffered to lie unopened, or has been perused by many only with a view to painful improvement, without an idea of the possibility of deriving from it, the elegant pleasures of literary entertainment.

Yet even the vulgar often feel the full effect of beauties which they know not how to point out; and are affected with a very strong sense of pleasure, while they are reading the Scriptures solely from motives of duty, and a desire of edification. In truth, amongst those whose natural taste is not corrupted by false refinement, which perhaps is the most numerous, though not the most distinguished part of the community, the Bible is read as affording all the delight of pleasing poetry and history; and it may, therefore, justly be said to be the most popular book in the English language.

But all readers, whether vulgar or refined, who fully feel and acknowledge the admirable touches of nature and simplicity, which are observable in many parts of those writings, will, perhaps, receive additional satisfaction, when they discover that their taste is often conformable to classical ideas of literary excellence.

There is, in the present age, a very numerous tribe of readers, who have formed their taste and sentiments from the writings of the philosophers of Geneva, and from the sceptical sophistry of our own countrymen. They are known to make pretensions to a very uncommon degree of refinement, in their judgment of composition, and to condemn every work, whatever marks it may bear of a strong, though uncultivated genius, which wants the last polish of delicacy and correctness, and has nothing similar to those modern productions, with which alone they have been contentant. With all their boasted comprehension of mind, they seem to want ideas, which may operate as principles in forming a just opinion of those works, which were composed before the invention of systematic rules, and before native sentiment was superseded by the feeble, though elegant, feelings,

ings, of which we boast in a very advanced state of civilization. Under these unfavourable prepossessions, the Bible appears to them as an assemblage of grossness and vulgarisms, which, therefore, without determining upon the authenticity of it, they avoid reading, apprehending that they can derive no pleasure from it, and that they may possibly corrupt their style, and catch inelegance.

With these it would be a valuable point gained, for their own sakes, as well as for society, if they could be prevailed on so far to lay aside their prejudices as to open the book, and judge of it from what they feel and remark on a fair examination. If they could once be induced to read it with avidity, from an expectation of literary amusement, they could scarcely fail of receiving, at the same time, a more important benefit.

In an age like the present, when all orders are, in some degree, attached to letters, he certainly renders great service to religion, and consequently to society, who unites taste with theology, and excites the attention of the careless and sceptical to those books, of which a sense of duty enjoins the perusal, by setting their beauties in a new or a stronger light.

And that this opinion of the peculiar beauties of Isaiah is not singular, if it is necessary to appeal to any other proof than the common feelings of mankind, is evident from the judgment of a popular writer of our own, who, as he was indisputably a poet himself, will be allowed, by the most rigid critics, to be a competent judge of poetry. Mr. Pope's Messiah is one of the best known, and most esteemed, of his shorter works; but that it derived its chief merit from Isaiah there can be no doubt, and the amiable poet felt a pleasure to acknowledge. Though suspected to have been less a friend to religion than to virtue, he neglected not the opportunity which this pastoral afforded, to form a comparison between Isaiah and Virgil, in a few parallel passages, fairly exhibited in a translation equally literal, and to exhibit the oriental poet to great advantage. There are many parodies, imitations, and paraphrases of this animated prophet's poetry, all which, at the same time that they evince how difficult his excellencies are to be equalled, are proofs that he has been generally admired as a poet.

But, after all, the reader must judge of the Sacred Writings for himself. If he attends to what he feels, and lays aside prepossession, his judgment will be favourable and just. To remove a single prejudice, which can prevent the
universal

universal acceptance of books of universal concern, is to contribute greatly to the general happiness. An attempt to render the prophetic writers objects of particular attention, in an age when our most ingenious theologians are employed in illustrating their meaning at a lecture wisely established for that purpose, must, at least, have the merit of being well timed.

And surely every one who wishes to promote the desirable coalition of taste with piety, must accept, with gratitude, the labours of the venerable Lowth, whose lectures on the sacred poetry of the Hebrews, and observations on Isaiah, have displayed, in biblical literature, the unexpected charms of classic elegance.

Essays, passim.

29. REV. ISAAC WATTS, D. D.

IN the Old Testament the figures are stronger, and the metaphors bolder, and the images more surprizing and strange than ever I read in any profane writer. When Deborah sings her praises to the God of Israel, while he marched from the field of Edom, she sets the earth “ a trembling, the heavens drop, and the mountains dissolve from before the Lord. They fought from heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sifera; when the river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.”— When Eliphaz in the book of Job describes the safety of the righteous, he “ hides him from the scourge of the tongue,” he makes him “ laugh at destruction and famine,” he brings “ the stones of the field into league with him,” and makes the brute animals “ enter into a covenant of peace.” When Job speaks of the grave, how melancholy is the gloom that he spreads over it! “ It is a region to which I must shortly go, and whence I shall not return; it is a land of darkness, it is darkness itself, the land of the shadow of death;” all confusion and disorder; “ and where the light is as darkness. This is my house, there have I made my bed. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father, and to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister: as for my hope, who shall see it? I and my hope go down together to the bars of the pit.”

When he humbles himself in complaining before the almightiness of God, what contemptible and feeble images doth he use! “ Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? Wilt thou pursue the dry stubble? I consume away like a rotten

“ rotten thing, a garment eaten by the moth.—Thou liftest
 “ me up to the wind, thou caufest me to ride upon it, and
 “ difsolvest my fubftance.”

Can any man invent more defpicable ideas to represent the fcountrel herd and refuse of mankind than thofe which Job ufes in the 30 chapter? “ They that are younger than I
 “ have me in derifion, whose fathers I would have difdained
 “ to have fet with the dogs of my flock: for want and
 “ famine they were folitary; fleeing into the wildernefs
 “ defolate and wafte: they cut up mallows by the bufhes,
 “ and juniper-roots for their meat: they were driven forth
 “ from among men (they cried after them as after a thief)
 “ to dwell in the clifts of the valleys, in the caves of the
 “ earth, and in rocks: among the bufhes they brayed,
 “ under the nettles they were gathered together; they were
 “ children of fools, yea, children of bafe men; they were
 “ viler than the earth: and now am I their fong, yea, I am
 “ their by-word, &c.” Thus it is he aggravates his own for-
 rows and reproaches to amazement.

How mournful and dejected is the language of his own forrows! “ Terrors are turned upon him, they purfue his
 “ foul as the wind, and his welfare paffes away as a cloud;
 “ his bones are pierced within him, and his foul is poured
 “ out; he goes mourning without the fun, a brother to
 “ dragons, and a companion to owls; while his harp and
 “ organ are turned into the voice of them that weep.”

I muft tranfcribe one half of this holy book, if I would fhew the grandeur, the variety, and the juftnefs of his ideas, or the pomp and beauty of his expreffion. I muft copy out a good part of the writings of David and Ifaiah, if I would represent the poetical excellencies of their thoughts and ftyle: nor is the language of the leffer prophets, efpecially in fome paragraphs, much inferior to thefe.

Now while they paint human nature in its various forms and circumftances, if their defigning be fo juft and noble, their difpofition fo artful, and their colouring fo bright, beyond the moft famed human writers, how much more muft their descriptions of God and heaven exceed all that is poffible to be faid by a meaner tongue? When they fpeak of the dwelling-place of God, “ He inhabits eternity, and
 “ fits upon the throne of his holinefs, in the midft of light
 “ inacceffible.”—When his holinefs is mentioned, “ The
 “ heavens are not clean in his fight; he charges his angels
 “ with folly; he looks to the moon, and it fhineth not,
 “ and the ftars are not pure before his eyes; he is a jealous

“ God, and a consuming fire.”—If we speak of strength, “ Behold, he is strong; he removes the mountains, and they know it not; he overturns them in his anger; he shakes the earth from her place, and her pillars tremble; he makes a path through the mighty waters; he discovers the foundations of the world; the pillars of heaven are astonished at his reproof.” And after all, “ These are but a portion of his ways; the thunder of his power who can understand?”—His sovereignty, his knowledge, and his wisdom, are revealed to us in language vastly superior to all the poetical accounts of Heathen divinity: “ Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth; but shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? He bids the heavens drop down from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness. He commands the sun, and it riseth not, and he sealeth up the stars. It is he that saith to the deep, Be dry, and he drieth up the rivers. Wo to them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord; his eyes are upon all their ways, he understands their thoughts afar off. Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. He calls out all the stars by their names, he frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh the diviners mad; he turns wise men backward, and their knowledge becomes foolish.”—His transcendent eminence above all things is most nobly represented when he sits upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers: all nations before him are as the drop of a bucket, and as the final dust of the balance: he takes up the isles as a very little thing; Lebanon, with all her beasts, is not sufficient for a sacrifice to this God, nor are all her trees sufficient for the burning. This God, before whom the whole creation is as nothing, yea, less than nothing, and vanity.” To which of all the Heathen gods then “ will ye compare me, saith the Lord, and what shall I be likened to?” And to which of all the Heathen poets shall we liken or compare this glorious orator, this sacred describer of the Godhead? The orators of all nations are as nothing before him, and their words are vanity and emptiness.

Preface to Lyric Poems.

30. REV. SAMUEL CHANDLER, D. D.

LET any man but read over that admirable ode, which David penned on the death of Saul and Jonathan, than which there is nothing more elegant and passionate in all antiquity,

tiquity, and he will find all the marks of a generous grief, and the utmost decency and propriety in the expressions of it. In the encomiums respectively passed on them, there is nothing but what became the character of both, and suited the situation of him that gave them. Saul he celebrates for his former victories, and sheds a tear over him for his defeat, and the indignities offered to him after his death; but without the least expression of sorrow for him upon his own account, and, what deserves to be mentioned to his honour, without a single reflection on his past injustice and cruelty towards himself. But as to Jonathan his friend, how tender and passionate is the sorrow he expresses!

“ O thou glory of Israel! Slain upon thy mountains!”

“ O how are the heroes fallen!”

“ Tell it not in Gath,”

“ Publish it not in the streets of Askelon;”

“ Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice;”

“ Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.”

“ O ye mountains of Gilboa,”

“ Let there be no dew, nor rain fall on you;”

“ Nor on you, O ye fertile fields around them.”

“ For the shield of the mighty men were contemptuously
“ thrown away;”

“ The shield of Saul.”

“ The anointed of the Lord is no more.”

“ When Jonathan drew his bow, it never flew back again;”

“ Without being tinged with the blood of the slain;”

“ Without piercing the fat of the mighty men.”

“ Nor did the sword of Saul return from the blow without
“ execution.”

“ Saul and Jonathan were dear and delightful to each
“ other whilst they lived,”

“ And in their death they were not divided:”

“ They were swifter than eagles;”

“ They were stronger than lions.”

“ O ye daughters of Israel, weep ye over Saul.”

“ From the spoil of his enemies he clothed you with
“ scarlet, and delicate ornaments,”

“ And decorated your garments with gold.”

“ O how are the heroes fallen in the midst of the battle!”

“ O how was Jonathan pierced through, O Gilboa, in thy
“ high places!”

“ I am distressed for thee, O Jonathan, my brother:”

“ Thou wast exceedingly delightful and dear to me:”

“ Thy affection to me was more wonderful and constant,”

“ Than the love of wives to their husbands.”

“ O how are the heroes fallen !”

“ How are the warlike weapons destroyed !”

He, who can read this excellent compofure without admiration and pleasure, muft be totally deftitute of all true tafte. The lamentation over the flain heroes of Ifrael, in the beginning, and feveral times repeated ; the manner in which he expreffes his anguish, at the thought of the defeats being published in the cities of the Philiftines, and the triumphs of the daughters of the uncircumcised upon account of it ; his paffionately wifhing, that neither dews nor rains might ever fall on the mountains of Gilboa, and the fields furlrounding them, in which the flaughter of the Ifraelites happened ; his recounting the paff victories of Saul and Jonathan, who never drew a bow, or brandifhed a fword, but it proved fatal to their enemies, to heighten the glory of their character, and fet forth in a more lively manner the sad reverse of their condition ; his comparing them, the one to an eagle for fwiftnefs, the other to a lion for ftrength and valour ; the honourable mention of their mutual affection whilft they lived, and dying bravely together in the field of battle ; the exclamations to the daughters of Ifrael to mourn over Saul, and the reasons he gives for it ; his celebrating the mutual tender friendfhip between himfelf and Jonathan ; in a word, this elegy, in every part of it, both in fentiment and expreffion, hath all the charms with which the fpirit of poetry can adorn it ; fhews the richnefs of David’s genius, and will be a monument to his praife throughout all generations.

WHEN David removed the ark of God from the houfe of Obed-edom to Mount Zion, the proceffion was accompanied with vocal as well as inftrumental mufic. Full of zeal for the Deity the royal poet had prepared a proper pfalm or ode to be fung by the chanters, the feveral parts of which were fuited to the feveral divifions of the march, and the whole of it adapted to fo facred and joyful a folemnity.

When the Levites firft took up the ark on their fhoulders, the fingers began :

“ Let God arife. Let his enemies be fcattered. Let them alfo that hate him flee before him.”

“ As fmoke is driven away, fo drive them away :”

“ As wax melteth before the fire,”

“ So let the wicked perifh from the prefence of God.”

“ But

- " But let the righteous rejoice :"
 " Let them exult before God, and exceedingly rejoice."
 " Sing unto God. Celebrate his name in songs."
 " Prepare the way for him, who rideth through the de-
 " ferts."
 " His name is Jah, and exult ye before him."
 " A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow,"
 " Is God in the habitation of his holiness."
 " He maketh the solitary to dwell in families,"
 " He brings forth those who are bound with great abun-
 " dance."
 " But the rebellious dwell in a dry land."

This part of the psalm I suppose to have been sung, just as the Levites took up the ark on their shoulders, and it was a proper exordium to this great solemnity. It begins with a solemn acknowledgment of God, a devout prayer for the dispersion of his enemies, an exhortation to his people to glory in and rejoice before him, and celebrate his praises, who guided their forefathers into the desert, when he redeemed them from the Egyptian bondage, avenged them of their enemies, freed them from their fetters, enlarged them into families, enriched them with the spoils of Egypt, and condemned their oppressors to poverty, disgrace and misery.

When the ark was lift up, and placed by its staves on the shoulders of the Levites, just as the procession began, the following part of the hymn was sung.

- " O God, when thou didst go forth before thy people,"
 " When thou didst march through the wilderness,"
 " The earth trembled,"
 " Even the heavens melted from before God,"
 " Sinai itself from before God, the God of Israel."
 " Thou, O God, didst pour down a plentiful rain,"
 " Thou didst confirm thy inheritance, even when weary."
 " Thy poor, they dwelt in the midst of it,"
 " Thou didst prepare, O God, by thy goodness for the
 " poor."
 " The Lord gave the word :"
 " Large was the number of the women, that published
 " the glad tidings :” viz.
 " Kings of armies fled away. They fled away :
 " And she that staid at home divided the prey."
 " Though ye have lien among the pots,"
 " Ye shall now lie down within the wings of a dove cover-
 " ed with silver,"
 " And her feathers with yellow gold."

“ When the Almighty scattered kings therein,”

“ Thou didst make them joyful in Salmon.”

How proper were these reflections upon the past interpositions of God's providence in favour of his people, upon this great event, the translation of the ark to Jerusalem? This was the place where God was now to be peculiarly present; his dwelling place, where the great earnest of his especial protection and blessing was to dwell; the same ark, that went before them in their marches through the wilderness, and out of which God, as it were, went forth, subdued their enemies before them, and settled them peaceably in that good land, which he had promised to their fathers. As it was now to be fixed at Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom, that city was henceforwards to become the city of the living God, its prosperity to be secured by his presence, and in that the welfare and safety of the whole nation.

When the ark came in view of Mount Sion, the place of its fixed residence for the future, and probably when they began to ascend it, I apprehend, they sung the following part of this sacred composition.

“ Is the hill of Basban,”

“ Is the craggy hill, the hill of Basban, the hill of God?”

“ Why look ye with envy, ye craggy hills?”

“ This is the mountain God hath desired to dwell in:”

“ Yea, the Lord will dwell there for ever.”

“ The chariots of God are twenty thousand,”

“ Even thousands of thousands,”

“ The Lord is among them, O Sinai, in the sanctuary.”

There is somewhat peculiarly pleasing and poetical in this part of this sacred hymn. Basban was an high hill, and situated in the territories of the Hebrews; and if the loftiness of its summits could give it any claim to the preference, Sion must have lost the honour of being the residence of the ark of God's presence. But the interrogation, if my rendering be allowed, expresses a contempt for Basban, and comes with peculiar propriety, if, as I suppose, this part of the hymn was sung, just when the procession came in view of Sion. The representation of the hills as leaping with a kind of eagerness to be chosen for God's residence, or rather as envying Mount Sion for the choice God had made of it, is in the true spirit of poetry, which can make mountains speak and move, rejoice and grieve, when necessary to enliven the scene, and adorn the subject. The introducing the angels of God, as descending on the hill, and his chariots

riots as attending and guarding the ark into its habitation, in much larger numbers than they were on Mount Sinai, is finely and sublimely imagined, to create in the people a firm belief, that Jerufalem fhould be under the fpecial care of God, and that the army of heaven fhould be ftationed there for the protection and fafety of the ark and city. Nothing could have been more elegantly thought of, or better adapted to the occafion.

When the ark had afcended Mount Sion, and was de- pofited in the place affigned for it, the fingers proceeded :

- “ Thou haft afcended on high,”
 “ Thou haft led captivity captive.”
 “ Thou haft received gifts for men, even for the re- bellious,”
 “ That the Lord might have an habitation.”
 “ Blessed be the Lord. He bears our burdens every day.”
 “ He is the God of our falvation.”
 “ God is to us the God of falvations,”
 “ Even to the God Jehovah belong the out-goings of death.”
 “ But God will wound the head of his enemies,”
 “ Even the hairy crown of him that walketh in his tref- paffes.”
 “ For the Lord hath faid: I will bring them again from Baſhan,”
 “ I will bring them again from the depth of the fea”
 “ That thou may’ft ſhake thy foot in the blood of their enemies,”
 “ And the tongue of thy dogs in the fame.”

Here alfo every part of this period fuits the circumſtance and the occafion. David had now accompliſhed the great deſign his heart was fet upon, and addreſſes himſelf to his God, as having taken poſſeſſion of, and fixed his reſidence on Mount Sion; in conſequence of which, David affures himſelf of the perpetual ſafety and proſperity of his people; thus triumphing over his enemies, who attempted to diſturb his reign, and diſpoſſeſs him of Jeruſalem; but whoſe armies God enabled him to vanquiſh, great numbers of whom he had reduced into captivity, from whom he had obtained great riches, as the fruit of his victories, received gifts as tributary to his crown, confecrated great part of the ſpoils he had taken from them to God, and particularly to enable him to provide for the expences of this magnificent proceſſion, and to prepare a proper habitation for the God of Iſrael. His breaking out immediately, upon the review of theſe favours,

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into the solemn adoration of God, for thus continually upholding and protecting his people, as the God of salvation, as the sovereign director of the outgoings of death, and declaring his full assurance, that his vengeance should be exerted, on all his incorrigible enemies, and that from his holy habitation on Mount Sion he would render his people equally victorious over them, as he did formerly over Pharaoh, and the King of Bashan; must strike every attentive mind with a religious pleasing surprise, is an argument of the warmth of David's piety, and indeed naturally arose from the consideration, that he was now under God's peculiar protection, and of the liberty he had of frequenting his courts, and asking his direction in every future time of need.

When the ark was thus safely deposited, the sacrifices were offered, the solemnity well nigh concluded, and the whole assembly about to return back, the singers struck up, and joined in the following part of this noble anthem.

- “ They have seen thy marches, O God,”
 “ The marches of my God, my king, into the sanctuary.”
 “ The singers went before:”
 “ The players on stringed instruments behind:”
 “ In the midst of them virgins playing with timbrels and
 “ singing:”
 “ Bless ye the Lord in the congregations,”
 “ The Lord, from the fountain of Israel.”
 “ There was little Benjamin, their ruler:”
 “ The princes of Judah, with their council;”
 “ The princes of Zebulon, the Princes of Naphthali.”
 “ Thy God hath commanded thy strength.”
 “ Strengthen, O God, what thou hast done for us.”
 “ Because of thy temple at Jerusalem,”
 “ Kings shall offer gifts to thee.”
 “ Rebuke the beast of the reed,”
 “ The assembly of bulls, with the calves of the people,”
 “ Trampling on their idols, plated with silver.”
 “ Scatter thou the people that delight in war.”
 “ Let princes with their attendants come out of Egypt.”
 “ Unto God let Ethiopia hasten her hands.”
 “ Sing unto God, O ye kingdoms of the earth,”
 “ O sing praises to Jehovah:”
 “ To him that rideth upon the heavens of heavens which
 “ were of old,”
 “ See, when he uttereth his voice, it is a mighty voice.”
 “ Ascribe ye strength unto God:”

“ His

“ His excellency is over Israel.”

“ His power is in the clouds.”

“ O God, the God of Israel, thou art terrible out of thy holy places.”

“ It is he that giveth strength and power unto his people.”

“ Blessed be God.”

How glorious is the conclusion of this most admirable hymn! David exults in the successful translation of the ark into its fixed habitation, and that he had now his king and his God more immediately present with him, who marched in solemn procession with his ark, to take his future residence in Mount Sion. He describes that procession with pleasure, as accompanied with instrumental and vocal music, and at which the princes of all the tribes of Israel assisted, and which was graced with a choir of virgins, exciting the whole assembly to celebrate the praises of the God of Israel. He peculiarly mentions the tribe of Israel as present, an happy circumstance he could scarce have expected, as the kingdom was departed from them, and the crown transferred upon himself and family; the tribe of Judah, as the most powerful, and those of Napthali and Zebulon, the farthest distant of all the rest; to shew the perfect unanimity of the whole nation in submitting to him, and acquiescing in Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom. He devoutly acknowledges God as the author of his own and his people's prosperity, and prays that he would establish and continue it; that the kings of the earth might reverence God's sanctuary in Jerusalem, and there present their offerings before him; that God would restrain the Egyptian king, and keep him from all hostile invasions of the city and people of God, and not permit the worshippers of crocodiles and bulls and calves, to harass his dominions, or corrupt his subjects; and that he would dissipate in general all who delight in the oppression and cruelties of war. He prays even for the conversion of Egypt to the knowledge and worship of the true God, that Ethiopia might stretch forth her hand in solemn adoration of him, and that all the kingdoms of the earth might celebrate the praises of Jehovah, who rules in the heavens, rides through them in the stormy clouds, and terrifies the nations with the voice of his thunders. He concludes with exhorting this grand assembly to acknowledge the almighty power of God, who was peculiarly the God and king of Israel, who was present in his heavenly and earthly sanctuary, dreadful in the judgments he executed on his enemies, but the author and establisher of the power and prosperity of his people. On all

all these accounts he was worthy to be blessed for evermore. How highly did this tend to promote the firm adherence of the whole assembly to the worship of their God, and to establish their faith and hope in the protection of his power!

I shall now conclude by making a few observations on the whole anthem. And I would first take notice of the great and glorious subject of this hymn. It is the God of the Hebrews, and designed to celebrate his praises, on account of the perfections of his nature, and the operations of his providence. And with what dignity is he described! How high and worthy the character given him; in every respect suitable to his infinite majesty, and the moral rectitude and purity of his nature! How grand are the descriptions of him as the omnipotent God, inhabiting his sanctuaries both in heaven and earth. As the original self-existent being, worthy of all adoration and reverence, included in the name of Jah! As the almighty God, encompassed with thousands and ten thousands of his angels, and innumerable chariots, that stand ready prepared in the armoury of heaven! That rides through the heavens in his majesty, whose voice is in the thunder, who makes the clouds and vapours of heaven subservient to his pleasure, and at whose presence the earth, the heavens dissolve, and the highest hills seem to melt away like wax! Descriptions the most sublime in their nature, and that tend to strike the mind with an holy reverence and awe. And as to his moral character, and providential government of the world, he is represented as the righteous God, the hater and punisher of incorrigible wickedness, the father of the fatherless, the judge of the widow, that blesses men with numerous families, that breaks the prisoner's chains, and restores him to his liberty; the God and guardian of his people, the great disposer of victory, and giver of national prosperity; the supreme author of every kind of salvation, and as having death under his absolute command, and directing the outgoings of it by his sovereign will. This was the God of the ancient Hebrews. This is the God whom David worshipped, and whom all wise and good men must acknowledge and adore. Nor is there one circumstance or expression in this noble composition, derogatory to the majesty and honour of the Supreme being, or that can convey a single sentiment to lessen our esteem and veneration for him.

Let any one compare, with this psalm of David, the ancient hymns of the most celebrated poets on their deities, how infinitely short will they fall of the grandeur and sublimity which appears in every part of it. Strip the hymn of

of Callimachus on Jove of the poetry and language, and the sentiments of it will appear puerile and absurd, and it could not be read without the utmost contempt. Jove, with him, that *αιεν αναξ, αιει μεγας, δικασπολ* εβρανιδησι, that "perpetual king, ever great, and law-giver to the celestial deities," as he calls him, was born, he can't tell where, whether in Mount Ida, or Arcadia, washed on his birth in a river of water, to cleanse him from the defilements he brought into the world with him, had his naval string fall from him, sucked the dugs of a goat, and eat sweet honey, and so at last he grew up to be the supreme God. No despicable ballad can contain more execrable stuff than this, and some other like circumstances that he relates of him, as never dying, giving laws to the gods, obtaining heaven by his power and strength, governing kings and princes, and the inspector of their actions, the giver of riches and prosperity, wisdom and virtue, strength and power. That a mortal born baby should grow up to become the one supreme and immortal God, or an infant nursed in Crete, should rise to be the king of heaven, or one who gloried in his adulteries, should be constituted lawgiver to the celestial deities, or he whose character was stained with the vilest impurities should be the giver of virtue; are absurdities, that one would think it was impossible for any one to digest. How free are the hymns of David from all such absurd, dishonourable, and impious descriptions of God! Every sentiment he conveys of him is excellent and grand, worthy a Being of infinite perfection, and the supreme Lord and governor of the universe.

EVERY one who reads the 105 Psalm with care, must acknowledge, that the spirit of true piety and good sense breathes through the whole of it, and that it is well calculated for the purpose it was intended for, the celebrating the praises of the true God. No well disposed mind can read it without feeling some warmth of devotion, and offering up his tribute of adoration and thanksgiving. The descriptions of God are just and noble. The representation of glory and honour, strength and gladness, as ministers attending his presence, is truly sublime. It is one of the best thoughts in Callimachus' hymn on Jove, his placing power and strength, as persons or ministers, near his throne, to execute his pleasure:

Ση τε βιη τοτε καρτ ε, ο και πελωρ εισω διφρα. Ver. 67.
The ministers attending David's God are still more worthy the divine character. Majesty and honour, strength and gladness, standing before his presence, strike us with an holy,

awe

awe, and inspire us with a pleasing reverence and esteem. And finally, nothing can be conceived more grand and elevated, than the introducing heaven and earth, the sea, with all its fulness, the fields, with all that dwell in them, and the trees of the wood, as uniting in one grand chorus, and expressing their joy in songs at the presence of God, and congratulating his coming to judge the world in righteousness.

THE description of the storm in the 18 Psalm will be allowed by all skilful and impartial judges, to be truly sublime and noble, and in the genuine spirit of poetry. The majesty of God, and the manner in which he is represented as coming to the assistance of his favourite king, surrounded with all the powers of nature as his attendants and ministers, and arming, as it were, heaven and earth to fight its battles, and execute his vengeance, is described in the loftiest and most striking manner. The shaking of the earth, the trembling of the mountains and pillars of heaven, the smoke that drove out of his nostrils, the flames of devouring fire that flashed from his mouth, the heavens bending down to convey him to the battle, his riding upon a cherub, and rapidly flying on the wings of a whirlwind, his concealing his majesty in the thick clouds of heaven, the bursting of the lightnings from the horrid darkness, the uttering his voice in peals of thunder, the storm of fiery hail, the melting of the heavens, and their dissolving into floods of tempestuous rains, the cleaving of the earth, and disclosing the bottom of the hills, and the subterraneous channels or torrents of water, by the very breath of the nostrils of the Almighty; are all of them circumstances that create admiration, excite a kind of horror, and exceed every thing of this nature, that is to be found in any of the remains of Heathen antiquity.

The description which Longinus gives of Homer's battle of the Gods, with more reason, and without any mixture of Homer's impiety, which that celebrated critic justly complains of, may be, with a very little variation, applied to this noble passage of the Psalmist. We see here the earth broken up from its foundations, the very regions beneath laid open, the world itself subverted and rent, and all things together, heaven, earth, the sea and the deepest subterraneous caverns, in danger of becoming one general wreck, trembling and dissolving at the presence of God, and all conspiring to execute the vengeance of the Almighty.

Hesiod's

Hesiod's description of his Jupiter, fighting against the Titans, is perhaps one of the grandest things in all pagan antiquity. But he sinks in his very beginning. For he says, his mind was filled with vigour, and he exerted all his strength; thereby making him merely superior to the Titans, and scarce able to overcome them.—Jupiter had the gods and goddesses all engaged on his side, who fought against their common enemies. But in this description of David, God alone avenges his own cause, and needs no partner or assistant, to secure the victory over his enemies. It may be farther added, that Hesiod mixes many absurd and monstrous circumstances, which, however terrible his Jupiter is painted, with his thunders in his hand, detract from the real dignity of his character, and render him, as a God, little and contemptible: such as taking three huge giants out of their confinement, cramming them with nectar and ambrosia, to put new strength into them, bidding them fight furiously, out of gratitude for their deliverance, against the Titans, and his being at last beholden to them, for driving these Titans down to Tartarus, and there putting them into chains. Whereas, in this description of the Psalmist, every part is grand and noble, and David's God appears surrounded with a majesty, worthy the great Lord and almighty Sovereign of the universe.

I would also farther remark, that throughout this whole description, God is represented as a mighty warrior, going forth to fight the battles of David, and highly incensed at the opposition his enemies made to his power and authority. When he descended to the engagement, the very heavens bowed down to render his descent more awful. His military tent was substantial darkness. The voice of his thunder was the warlike alarm, that sounded to the battle. The chariot in which he rode, were the thick clouds of heaven, conducted by cherubs, and carried on by the irresistible force and rapid wings of an impetuous tempest, and the darts and weapons he employed, were, thunderbolts, lightnings, fiery hail, deluging rains, and stormy winds. No wonder, that when God thus arose all his enemies should be scattered, and those who hated him, should flee before him.

Life of David, passim.

31. MADAM DACIER.

NOTHING represents more lively ideas to the mind, than the Canticles, the Psalms, and some passages in the Prophets.—
The

The books of the Prophets and the Psalms, even in the Vulgate, are full of such passages, as the greatest poet in the world could not put into verse, without losing much of their majesty and pathos.

Preface to Homer.

32. LADY MARY WORTLY MONTAGUE.

To Alexander Pope, Esq.

THE Eastern manners give a great light into many Scripture passages, that appear odd to us, their phrases being commonly what we should call Scripture language. The vulgar Turk is very different from what is spoke at court, or amongst the people of figure; who always mix so much Arabic and Persian in their discourse, that it may very well be called another language. And 'tis as ridiculous to make use of the expressions commonly used, in speaking to a great man or lady, as it would be to speak broad Yorkshire, or Somersetshire, in the drawing room. Besides this distinction, they have what they call the Sublime, that is, a style proper for poetry, and which is the exact Scripture style. I believe you would be pleased to see a genuine example of this; and I am very glad I have it in my power to satisfy your curiosity, by sending you a faithful copy of the verses that Ibrahim Bassa, the reigning favourite, has made for the young princess, his contracted wife, whom he is not yet permitted to visit without witnesses, though she is gone home to his house. He is a man of wit and learning; and whether or no he is capable of writing good verse, you may be sure that, on such an occasion, he would not want the assistance of the best poets in the Empire. Thus the verses may be looked upon as a sample of their finest poetry, and I don't doubt you'll be of my mind, that it is most wonderfully resembling the Song of Solomon, which also was addressed to a Royal Bride.

Turkish Verses addressed to the Sultana, eldest daughter of Sultan Achmet 3.

STANZA I.

1. The Nizhtingale now wanders in the vines;
Her passion is to seek roses.
2. I went down to admire the beauty of the vines;
The sweetness of your charms has ravished my soul.
3. Your eyes are black and lovely,
But wild and disdainful as those of a stag.

STANZA

S T A N Z A II.

1. The wished possession is delayed from day to day,
The cruel Sultan Achmet will not permit me
To see those cheeks, more vermilion than roses.
2. I dare not snatch one of your kisses,
The sweetness of your charms has ravished my soul.
3. Your eyes are black and lovely,
But wild and disdainful as those of a stag.

S T A N Z A III.

1. The wretched Ibrahim sighs in these verses,
One dart from your eyes has pierced thro' my heart.
2. Ah! when will the hour of possession arrive?
Must I yet wait a long time?
The sweetness of your charms has ravished my soul.
3. Ah! Sultana! stag-ey'd—an angel amongst angels!
I desire,—and, my desire remains unsatisfied.
Can you take delight to prey upon my heart?

S T A N Z A IV.

1. My cries pierce the heavens!
My eyes are without sleep!
Turn to me, Sultana—let me gaze on thy beauty.
2. Adieu—I go down to the grave.
If you call me—I return.
My heart is—hot as sulphur—sigh and it will flame.
3. Crown of my life, fair light of my eyes!
My Sultana! my Princess!
I rub my face against the earth—I am drowned in scalding tears
—I rave!
Have you no compassion? Will you not turn to look upon me?

Letters.

33. REV. HUGH BLAIR, D. D.

AMONG the various kinds of poetry, which we are, at present, employed in examining, the ancient Hebrew poetry, or that of the Scriptures, justly deserves a place. Viewing those Sacred Books in no higher light, than as they present to us the most ancient monuments of poetry extant, at this day, of the world, they afford a curious object of criticism. They display the taste of a remote age and country. They exhibit a species of composition, very different from any other with which we are acquainted, and, at the same time, beautiful. Considered as inspired writings they give rise to discussions of another kind. But it is our business, at present, to consider them not in a theological, but in a critical view: and it must needs give pleasure, if we shall

shall find the beauty and dignity of the composition, adequate to the weight and importance of the matter. Dr. Lowth's learned treatise, *De sacra poësi Hebræorum*, ought to be perused by all who desire to become thoroughly acquainted with this subject. It is a work exceedingly valuable, both for the elegance of its composition, and the justness of the criticism which it contains. In this lecture, as I cannot illustrate the subject with more benefit to the reader, than by following the track of that ingenious author, I shall make much use of his observations.

I need not spend many words in shewing, that among the books of the Old Testament there is such an apparent diversity in style, as sufficiently discovers, which of them are to be considered as poetical, and which, as prose compositions. While the historical books, and legislative writings of Moses, are evidently prosaic in the composition, the book of Job, the psalms of David, the song of Solomon, the lamentations of Jeremiah, a great part of the prophetic writings, and several passages scattered occasionally through the historical books, carry the most plain and distinguishing marks of poetical writing.

There is not the least reason for doubting, that originally these were written in verse, or some kind of measured numbers, though as the ancient pronunciation of the Hebrew language is now lost, we are not able to ascertain the nature of the Hebrew verse, or at most can ascertain it but imperfectly. Concerning this point there have been great controversies between learned men, which it is immaterial to our present purpose to discuss. Taking the Old Testament in our own translation, which is extremely literal, we find plain marks of many parts of the original being written in a measured style; and the *disjecti membra poëtæ*, often shew themselves. Let any person read the historical introduction to the book of Job, contained in the first and second chapters, and then go on to Job's speech in the beginning of the third chapter, and he cannot avoid being sensible, that he passes all at once from the region of prose to that of poetry. Not only the poetical sentiments and the figured style, warn him of the change; but the cadence of the sentence, and the arrangement of the words are sensibly altered, the change is as great as when he passes from reading Cæsar's Commentaries, to read Virgil's *Æneid*. This is sufficient to shew that the Sacred Scriptures contain, what must be called poetry in the strictest sense of that word; and I shall afterwards shew, that they contain instances of most of the different

ferent forms of poetical writing. It may be proper to remark, in passing, that hence arises a most invincible argument in honour of poetry. No person can imagine that to be a frivolous and contemptible art, which has been employed by writers under divine inspiration; and has been chosen as a proper channel, for conveying to the world the knowledge of divine truth.

From the earliest times, music and poetry were cultivated among the Hebrews. In the days of the judges, mention is made of the schools or colleges of the prophets; where one part of the employment of the persons trained in such schools was, to sing the praises of God, accompanied with various instruments. In the first book of Samuel (chap. 10. 7.) we find on a public occasion, a company of prophets coming down from the hill where their school was, “propheying,” it is said, “with the psaltery, tabret, and harp before them.” But in the days of king David, music and poetry were carried to their greatest height. For the service of the tabernacle, he appointed four thousand Levites, divided into twenty four courses, and marshalled under several leaders, whose sole business it was to sing hymns, and to perform the instrumental music in the public worship. Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, were the chief directors of the music; and, from the titles of some psalms, it would appear, that they were also eminent composers of hymns or sacred poems. In chapter 25 of the first book of Chronicles, an account is given of David’s institutions, relating to the sacred music and poetry; which were certainly more costly, more splendid and magnificent, than ever obtained in the public service of any other nation.

The general construction of the Hebrew poetry is of a singular nature, and peculiar to itself. It consists in dividing every period into correspondent, for the most part into equal members, which answer to one another, both in sense and sound. In the first member of the period a sentiment is expressed; and in the second member, the same sentiment is amplified, or is repeated in different terms, or sometimes contrasted with its opposite; but in such a manner that the same structure, and nearly the same number of words is preserved. This, is the general strain of all the Hebrew poetry. Instances of it occur every where on opening the Old Testament. Thus, in psalm 96, “Sing unto the Lord a new song—Sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord and bless his name—shew forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the Heathen—his

“ wonders among all the people. For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised—he is to be feared above all the Gods. Honour and majesty are before him—strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.” It is owing, in a great measure, to this form of composition, that our version, though in prose, retains so much of a poetical cast. For the version being strictly word for word after the original, the form and order of the original sentence is preserved; which, by this artificial structure, this regular alternation and correspondence of parts, makes the ear sensible of a departure from the common style and tone of prose.

The origin of this form of poetical composition among the Hebrews, is clearly to be deduced from the manner in which their sacred hymns were wont to be sung. They were accompanied with music, and they were performed by choirs or bands of singers and musicians, who answered alternately to each other. When, for instance, one band began the hymn thus: “ The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice;” the chorus, or semichorus, took up the corresponding verse: “ Let the multitudes of the isles be glad thereof.—“ Clouds and darkness are round about him,” sung the one; the other replied, “ Judgment and righteousness are the habitation of his throne.” And in this manner their poetry, when set to music, naturally divided itself into a succession of strophes and antistrophes correspondent to each other; whence, it is probable, the origin of the antiphon, or responsory, in the public religious service of so many Christian churches.

We are expressly told, in the book of Ezra, that the Levites sung in this manner; “ alternatim,” or by course (Ezra 3. 11.) and some of David’s psalms bear plain marks of their being composed in order to be thus performed. The 24th psalm, in particular, which is thought to have been composed on the great and solemn occasion of the ark of the covenant being brought back to mount Zion, must have had a noble effect when performed after this manner, as Dr. Lowth has illustrated it. The whole people are supposed to be attending the procession. The Levites and singers, divided into several courses, and accompanied with all their musical instruments, lead the way. After the introduction to the psalm, in the two first verses, when the procession begins to ascend the sacred mount, the question is put, as by a semichorus, “ Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place?” The response is made by the full chorus with the greatest dignity; “ He that hath
“ clean

“ clean hands and a pure heart ; who hath not lifted up his
 “ soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.” As the procession
 approaches to the door of the tabernacle, the chorus, with
 all their instruments, join in this exclamation : “ Lift up
 “ your heads, ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting
 “ doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.” Here the
 semichorus plainly break in, as with a lower voice, “ Who
 “ is this King of Glory ?” and at the moment when the ark
 is introduced into the tabernacle, the response is made by the
 burst of the whole chorus : “ The Lord, strong and mighty ;
 “ the Lord, mighty in battle.” I take notice of this instance
 the rather, as it serves to shew how much of the grace and
 magnificence of the sacred poems, as indeed of all poems,
 depend upon our knowing the particular occasions for which
 they were composed, and the particular circumstances to
 which they were adapted ; and how much of this beauty must
 now be lost to us, through our imperfect acquaintance with
 many particulars of the Hebrew history, and Hebrew rites.

The method of composition which has been explained, by
 correspondent verses, being universally introduced into the
 hymns or musical poetry of the Jews, easily spread itself
 through their other poetical writings, which were not de-
 signed to be sung in alternate portions, and which therefore
 did so much require this mode of composition. But the
 mode became familiar to their ears, and carried with it a cer-
 tain majesty of style, particularly suited to sacred subjects.
 Hence, throughout the prophetic writings, we find it
 prevails as much as in the psalms of David ; as, for instance,
 in the prophet Isaiah (chap 60. 1.) “ Arise, shine, for thy
 “ light is come—and the glory of the Lord is risen upon
 “ thee ; for lo ! darkness shall cover the earth,—and gross
 “ darkness the people. But the Lord shall rise upon thee—
 “ and his glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles
 “ shall come to thy light—and kings to the brightness of
 “ thy rising.” This form of writing is one of the greatest
 characteristics of the ancient Hebrew poetry ; very different
 from, and even opposite to, the style of the Greek and
 Roman poets.

Independent of this peculiar mode of construction, the
 sacred poetry is distinguished by the highest beauties of
 strong, concise, bold, and figurative expression.

Conciseness and strength, are two of its most remarkable
 characters. One might indeed at first imagine, that the prac-
 tice of the Hebrew poets, of always amplifying the same
 thought, by repetition or contrast, might tend to enfeeble

their style. But they conduct themselves so, as not to produce this effect. Their sentences are always short. Few superfluous words are used. The same thought is never dwelt upon long. To their conciseness and sobriety of expression, their poetry is indebted for much of its sublimity; and all writers who attempt the sublime, might profit much, by imitating in this respect, the style of the Old Testament. For nothing is so great an enemy to the sublime, as prolixity or diffuseness. The mind is never so much affected by any great idea that is presented to it, as when it is struck all at once; by attempting to prolong the impression, we at the same time weaken it. Most of the ancient original poets of all nations, are simple and concise. The superfluities and excrescencies of style, were the result of imitation in after times; when composition passed into inferior hands, and flowed from art and study, more than from native genius.

No writings whatever abound so much with the most bold and animated figures, as the Sacred Books. It is proper to dwell a little upon this article; as through our early familiarity with these books, a familiarity too often with the sound of the words, rather than with their sense and meaning, beauties of style escape us in the Scripture, which, in any other book, would draw particular attention. Metaphors, comparisons, allegories, and personifications, are there particularly frequent. In order to do justice to these, it is necessary that we transport ourselves as much as we can into the land of Judæa; and place before our eyes that scenery, and those objects, with which the Hebrew writers were conversant. Some attention of this kind is requisite, in order to relish the writings of a poet in any foreign country, and a different age. For the imagery of every good poet is copied from nature, and real life; if it were not so, it could not be lively; and therefore, in order to enter into the propriety of his images, we must endeavour to place ourselves in his situation. Now we shall find, that the metaphors and comparisons of the Hebrew poets, present to us a beautiful view of the natural objects of their own country, and of the arts and employments of their common life.

Natural objects are in some measure common to them with poets of all ages and countries. Light and darkness, trees and flowers, the forest and cultivated field, suggest to them many beautiful figures. But, in order to relish their figures of this kind, we must take notice, that several of them arise from the particular circumstances of the land of Judæa. During the summer months, little or no rain falls through-

out

out all that region. While the heats continued, the country was intolerably parched; want of water was a great distress; and a plentiful shower falling, or a rivulet breaking forth, altered the whole face of nature, and introduced much higher ideas of refreshment and pleasure, than the like causes can suggest to us. Hence to represent distress, such frequent allusions amongst them, “to a dry and thirsty land where no water is;” and hence, to describe a change from distress to prosperity, their metaphors are founded on the falling of showers, and the bursting out of springs in the desert. Thus in Isaiah, “The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert; and the parched ground shall become a pool; and the thirsty land, springs of water; in the habitation of dragons there shall be grass, with rushes and reeds.” Chap. 35. 1, 6, 7. Images of this nature are very familiar to Isaiah, and occur in many parts of his book.

Again, as Judæa is a hilly country, it was, during the rainy months, exposed to frequent inundations by the rushing of torrents, which came down suddenly from the mountains, and carried every thing before them; and Jordan, their only great river annually overflowed its banks. Hence the frequent allusions to “the noise and the rushing of many waters;” and hence great calamities so often compared to the overflowing torrent, which, in such a country, must have been images particularly striking: “Deep calleth upon deep at the noise of thy water-spouts; all thy waves, and thy billows, are gone over me.” Psalm. 42. 7.

The two most remarkable mountains of the country, were Lebanon and Carmel; the former noted for its height, and the woods of lofty cedars that covered it; the latter, for its beauty and fertility, the richness of its vines and olives. Hence, with the greatest propriety, Lebanon is employed as an image of whatever is great, strong or magnificent, Carmel, of what is smiling and beautiful. “The glory of Lebanon,” says Isaiah, “shall be given to it, and the excellency of Carmel.” (35. 2.) Lebanon is often put metaphorically for the whole estate or people of Israel, for the temple, for the king of Assyria; Carmel, for the blessings of peace and prosperity. “His countenance is as Lebanon,” says Solomon, speaking of the dignity of a man’s appearance; but when he describes female beauty, “Thine head is like mount Carmel,” Song 5. 15. and 7. 5.

It is farther to be remarked under this head, that in the images of the awful and terrible kind, with which the sacred poets abound, they plainly draw their descriptions from that violence of the elements, and those concussions of nature, with which their climate rendered them acquainted. Earthquakes were not unfrequent; and the tempests of hail, thunder, and lightning, in Judæa and Arabia, accompanied with whirlwinds and darkness, far exceed any thing of that sort which happens, in more temperate regions. Isaiah describes, with great majesty, “the earth reeling to and fro like a drunkard, and removed like a cottage.” 24. 20. And in those circumstances of terror, with which an appearance of the Almighty is described in the 18th psalm, when his “pavilion round about him was darkness; when hailstones and coals of fire were his voice; and when, at his rebuke, the channels of the waters are said to be seen, and the foundations of the hills discovered;” though there may be some reference, as Dr. Lowth thinks, to the history of God’s descent upon Mount Sinai, yet it seems more probable, that the figures were taken directly from those commotions of nature with which the author was acquainted, and which suggested stronger and nobler images than what now occur to us.

Besides the natural objects of their own country, we find the rites of their religion, and the arts and employments of their common life, frequently employed as grounds of imagery among the Hebrews. They were a people chiefly occupied with agriculture and pasturage. These were arts held in high honour among them; not disdained by their patriarchs, kings, and prophets. Little addicted to commerce; separated from the rest of the world by their laws and their religion; they were, during the better days of their state, strangers in a great measure to the refinements of luxury. Hence flowed, of course, the many allusions to pastoral life, to the “green pastures and the still waters,” and to the care and watchfulness of a shepherd over his flock, which carry to this day so much beauty and tenderness in them, in the 23d psalm, and in many other passages of the poetical writings of Scripture. Hence, all the images founded upon rural employments upon the wine press, the threshing floor, the stubble and the chaff. To disrelish all such images, is the effect of false delicacy. Homer is at least as frequent, and much more minute and particular, in his similes, founded on what we now call low life; but, in his management of them, far inferior to the Sacred Writers, who generally mix with their

their comparisons of this kind somewhat of dignity and grandeur, to ennoble them. What inexpressible grandeur does the following rural image in Isaiah, for instance, receive from the intervention of the Deity: "The nations shall rush like
" the rushings of many waters, but God shall rebuke them,
" and they shall fly afar off; and they shall be chased as the
" chaff of the mountain before the wind, and like the down
" of the thistle before the whirlwind."

Figurative allusions too, we frequently find, to the rites and ceremonies of their religion; to the legal distinctions of things clean and unclean; to the mode of their temple service; to the dress of their priests; and to the most noted incidents recorded in their sacred history; as to the destruction of Sodom, the descent of God upon mount Sinai, and the miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Red-sea. The religion of the Hebrews included the whole of their laws, and civil constitution. It was full of splendid external rites, that occupied their senses; it was connected with every part of their national history and establishment; and hence, all ideas founded on religion, possessed in this nation a dignity and importance peculiar to themselves, and were uncommonly fitted to impress the imagination.

From all this it results, that the imagery of the sacred poets is, in a high degree, expressive and natural; it is copied directly from real objects, that were before their eyes; it has this advantage, of being more compleat within itself, more entirely founded on national ideas and manners, than that of most other poets. In reading their works, we find ourselves continually in the land of Judæa. The palm trees, and the cedars of Lebanon, are ever rising in our view. The face of their territory, the circumstances of their climate, the manners of the people, and the august ceremonies of their religion, constantly pass under different forms before us.

The comparisons employed by the sacred poets are generally short, touching on one point only of resemblance, rather than branching out into Episodes. In this respect, they have perhaps an advantage over the Greek and Roman authors; whose comparisons to the length they are extended, sometimes interrupt the narration too much, and carry too visible marks of study and labour. Whereas in the Hebrew poets, they appear more like the glowings of a lively fancy, just glancing aside to some resembling object, and presently returning to its tract. Such is the following fine comparison, introduced to describe the happy influence of good government upon a people, in what are called the last words

of

of David, recorded in the second book of Samuel (23. 3):
 “ He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear
 “ of God; and he shall be as the light in the morning,
 “ when the sun riseth; even a morning without clouds; as
 “ the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear
 “ shining after rain.” This is one of the most regular and
 formal comparisons in the sacred books.

Allegory, likewise, is a figure frequently found in them. When formerly treating of this figure, I gave, for an instance of it, that remarkably fine and well supported allegory, which occurs in the 80th psalm, wherein the people of Israel are compared to a vine. Of parables, which form a species of allegory, the prophetic writings are full; and if to us they sometimes appear obscure, we must remember, that in these early times, it was universally the mode throughout all the eastern nations, to convey sacred truths under mysterious figures and representations.

But the poetical figure, which, beyond all others, elevates the style of Scripture, and gives it a peculiar boldness and sublimity, is *prosopopœia* or personification. No personifications employed by any other poets, are so magnificent and striking as those of the inspired writers. On great occasions, they animate every part of nature; especially, when any appearance or operation of the Almighty is concerned. “ Before him went the pestilence — the waters saw thee,
 “ O God, and were afraid—the mountains saw thee, and
 “ they trembled.—The overflowing of the water passed by;
 “ —the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on
 “ high.” When enquiry is made about the place of wisdom, Job introduces the deep, saying, “ It is not in me; and the
 “ sea saith, It is not in me. Destruction and death say,
 “ We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.” That noted sublime passage in the book of Isaiah, which describes the fall of the king of Assyria, is full of personified objects; the fir trees and cedars of Lebanon breaking forth into exultation on the fall of the tyrant; hell from beneath, stirring up all the dead to meet him at his coming; and the dead kings introduced as speaking and joining in the triumph. In the same strain, are these many lively and passionate apostrophes to cities and countries, to persons and things, with which the prophetic writings every where abound. “ O
 “ thou sword of the Lord! how long will it be ere thou be
 “ quiet? put thyself up in the scabbard, rest and be still.
 “ How can it be quiet,” (as the reply is instantly made)
 “ seeing

“ seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Akelon, and
 “ the sea shore? there hath he appointed it.” Jerem. 47. 6.

In general, for it would carry us too far to enlarge upon all the instances, the style of the poetical books of the Old Testament is, beyond the style of all other poetical works, fervid, bold, and animated. It is extremely different from that regular correct expression, to which our ears are accustomed in modern poetry. It is the burst of inspiration. The scenes are not coolly described, but represented as passing before our eyes. Every object, every person, is addressed and spoken to, as if present. The transition is often abrupt; the connection often obscure; the persons are often changed; figures crowded, and heaped upon one another. Bold sublimity, not correct elegance, is its character. We see the spirit of the writer raised beyond himself, and labouring to find vent for ideas too mighty for his utterance.

Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres.

34. MONSIEUR ROLLIN.

I. *Simplicity of the Sacred Writings.*

“ They crucified him there.”

THE more we reflect on the inimitable character of the evangelists, the more we discover that they were not directed by the spirit of Man. These barely say in few words, that their master was crucified, without discovering the least surprise, compassion, or acknowledgement. Who would have spoke in this manner of a friend that had laid down his life for him? What son would have related in so short, so unaffected a manner, how his father had saved him from death, by suffering in his stead? But it is in this that the finger of God appears conspicuous; and the less man appears in a conduct so little human, the more evident is the operation of God.

The prophets describe Christ's sufferings, in a lively, affecting, and pathetic manner, and abound with sentiments and reflections; but the evangelists relate them with simplicity, without emotion, or reflections; without breaking out into admiration or testimonies of gratitude; or discovering the least design to make their readers the disciples of Christ. It was not natural, that persons who lived so many years before Christ should be so touched with his sufferings: nor that men who were eye-witnesses of his cross, and so zealous for his glory, should speak with so much calmness of the unheard of crime that was perpetrated against him. The strong
 zeal

zeal and affection of the apostles might have been suspected, which that of the prophets could not be. But, had not the evangelists and the prophets been inspired, the former would have writ with greater force and fire, and the latter with more coldness and indifference; the one would have shewn a desire to persuade, and the other such a timidity and hesitation in their conjectures as would not have affected any one. All the prophets are ardent, zealous, full of respect and veneration for the mysteries they publish; but, as for the evangelists, they are calm, and have an inimitable moderation, though their zeal is as strong as that of the prophets. What man but sees the hand which guided both the one and the other? And what more sensible proof can we have of the divinity of the Scriptures, than their not resembling, in any particular, such things as are written by men? But, at the same time, how much ought such an example (and there are multitudes of the same kind) teach us to revere the august simplicity of the Sacred Books, which frequently conceal the most sublime truths, and the most profound mysteries?

It is much in the same manner the Scripture relates, that Isaac was laid, by Abraham, on the wood which was to be his funeral pile, and was bound before he was sacrificed, without telling us one word either of the sentiments of the son, or of his father's discourse to him; or preparing us for such a sacrifice by any reflections, or telling us in what manner the father and son submitted to it. Josephus, the historian, puts a pretty long, but very beautiful and moving discourse into Abraham's mouth; but Moses describes him as silent, and is himself silent on that occasion. The reason of this is, the former wrote as a man, and as his genius prompted him; whereas the other was the pen and instrument of the Spirit of God, who dictated all his words.

II. *Simplicity and Grandeur.*

“IN the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” What man, who was to have treated of such exalted matters, would have begun as Moses did? How majestic, and, at the same time, how simple is this? Don't we perceive, that it is God himself who informs us of a wonder which does not astonish him, and to which he is superior? A common man would have endeavoured to suit the magnificence of his expressions to the grandeur of his subject, and would have discovered only his weakness; but eternal wisdom, who made the world in sport, relates it without emotion.

The

The prophets, whose aim was to make us admire the wonders of the creation, speak of it in a very different manner :

“ The Lord is King, and hath put on glorious apparel ;
“ the Lord hath put on his apparel, and girded himself
“ with strength.”

The holy king, transported in spirit at the first origin of the world, describes in the most pompous expressions, in what manner God, who hitherto hath remained unknown, invisible, and hid in the impenetrable secret of his being, manifested himself on a sudden, by a crowd of incomprehensible wonders.

The Lord, says he, at last comes forth from his solitude. He will not be alone happy, just, holy, but will reign by his goodness and bounty. But with what glory is the immortal King invested ! What riches has he displayed to us ! From what source do so many lights and beauties flow ? Where were those treasures, that rich pomp hid, which issued out of the womb of darkness ? How great must the majesty of the Creator be, if that which surrounds him impresses so great an awe and veneration ! What must he himself be when his works are so magnificent !

The same prophet in another psalm, coming out of a profound meditation on the works of God, and filled with admiration and gratitude, exhorts himself to praise and bless the infinite majesty and goodness, whose wonders astonish, and whose blessings oppress him : “ Praise the Lord, O my
“ soul : O Lord my God, thou art become exceeding glo-
“ rious, thou art clothed with majesty and honour.—Thou
“ deckest thyself with light, as it were with a garment ; and
“ spreadest out the heavens like a curtain.” Would not one think that the God of ages had clothed himself on a sudden with magnificence ; and that, issuing from the secret part of his palace, he displayed himself in light ? But all this is but his outward clothing, and as a mantle which hides him. Thy majesty, O my God ! is infinitely above the light that surrounds it. I fix my eyes on thy garments, not being able to fix them on thyself : I can discern the rich embroidery of thy purple, but I shall cease to see thee, should I dare to raise my eyes to thy face

It will be of use to compare in this manner the simplicity of the historian with the sublime magnificence of the prophets. These speak of the same things, but in a quite different view. The same may be observed with regard to all the circumstances of the creation. I shall present the reader with only a few of them, by which he may form a judgment

of the rest: "God made two great lights; the greater light
 "to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he
 "made the stars also."

Can any thing be more simple and at the same time more august? I shall speak only of the sun and stars, and will begin with the last.

God only is allowed to speak with indifference of the most astonishing spectacle with which he had adorned the universe: "And the stars." He declares, in one word, what cost him but a word; but who can fathom the vast extent of this word? Do we consider that these stars are innumerable, all infinitely greater than the earth; all, the planets excepted, an inexhaustible source of light? But what order fixed their ranks? and whom does that host of heaven, all whose centinels are so watchful, obey with so much punctuality and joy? The firmament, set with such a numberless multitude of stars, is the first preacher who declared the glory of the Almighty; and, to make all men inexcusable, we need only that book written in characters of light.

As for the sun, who can behold it stedfastly, and bear for any time the splendor of its rays? "The sun, when it appeareth, declaring at his rising a marvellous instrument, the work of the Most High: at noon it parcheth the country, and who can abide the burning heat thereof? A man blowing a furnace is in works of heat, but the sun burneth the mountains three times more; breathing out fiery vapours, and sending forth bright beams, it dimmeth the eyes. Great is the Lord that made it, and at his commandment it runneth hastily." Is this then the same sun, which is mentioned in Genesis in so plain and simple a manner: "He made its light greater, that it might preside over the day?" How many beauties are comprehended, and, as it were, veiled under these few words! Can we conceive the pomp and profusion with which the sun begins his course; the colours with which he embellishes nature; and with what magnificence himself is arrayed at his appearing on the horizon, as the spouse whom heaven and earth await, and whose delight he forms? "He cometh forth out of his chamber as a bridegroom." But behold in what manner he unites the majesty and graces of a bridegroom with the rapid course of a giant, who is less studious to please, than to carry, throughout the world, the news of the Prince who sends him, and who is less attentive to his dress than to his duty: "He exulted as a giant who is to run his race. He came from the highest heaven, and his course is to its height;

“ height ; nor can any one hide himself from his heat.” His light is as strong and diffusive as at the first day, so that the perpetual deluge of fire, which spreads from all parts of it, has not diminished the incomprehensible source of so full and precipitated a profusion. The prophet had just reason to cry out, “ Great is the Lord who made it !” How great is the majesty of the Creator, and what must he himself be, since his works, are so august !

3. I shall add farther that passage which relates to the creation of the sea : “ God said, Let the waters under the “ heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the “ dry land appear.”

Had not the prophets assisted us in discovering the wonders concealed under the surface of these words, their depth would be more unfathomable with regard to us, than that of the sea.

This commandment, which is here but a single expression, is a dreadful menace, and a thunder, according to the prophet : “ The waters stood above the mountains. At thy “ rebuke they fled : at the voice of thy thunder they hasted “ away.” Instead of running off gently, they fled with fear ; they hasted to precipitate themselves, and to crowd one over the other, in order to leave that space void which they seemed to have usurped, since God drove them from thence. Something like this happened when God made his people to pass through the Red Sea and the river Jordan, “ The Red “ Sea made a noise, and was dried up ;” whence another prophet takes occasion to ask God, “ whether he is angry at “ the river and the seas ?”

In the tumultuous obedience, where the frightened waters, one would imagine, should have swept away every thing in their course, an invisible hand governed them with as much ease as a mother governs and handles a child she had first swathed, and afterwards put in his cradle. It is under these images God represents to us what he did at that time. “ Who “ shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth as if it “ had issued out of the womb ? When I made the cloud the “ garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for “ it ; and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and “ doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther ; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed ?” There is no occasion to raise the beauty of these last words, for who is not affected with them ? God marked out bounds to the sea, and it did not dare to transgress them : that which was written on its shores prevented it from going beyond them ;
and

and that element, which appears the most ungovernable, was equally obedient both in its flight and in its stay. This obedience has continued the same for many ages; and, how tumultuous soever the waters may appear, the instant they come near the shore, God's prohibition keeps them in awe and stops their progress.

III. *The beauty of the Scripture does not arise from the words, but the things.*

IT is well known, that the most excellent Greek and Latin authors lose most of their graces when translated literally, because a great part of their beauty consists in the expression; but, as that of the Scriptures consists more in the things than the words, we find that it subsists and strikes in the most verbal translation. This will plainly appear from every part of the Scripture. I shall content myself with transcribing only two or three passages from it.

I. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth. In mine ears, said the Lord of Hosts, of a truth many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair without inhabitant."

There is nothing in all the eloquence of the Heathens comparable to the vivacity of the reproach, which the prophet here makes to the wise men of his time, who, neglecting the law of God, which had assigned to every man, in particular, a proportion of the promised land with a prohibition to alienate it for ever, swallowed up, in their vast packs, the vineyard, the field, and the house of those who were so unhappy as to live near them.

But the reflection which the prophet adds seems to me no less eloquent, notwithstanding its great simplicity: "In mine ears, said the Lord of Hosts. I hear the Lord; his voice is at my ear. Whilst the whole world attends to nothing but their pleasures, and that no one hears the law of God, I already hear his thunder roaring against those ambitious rich men, who think of nothing but building and establishing their abode upon the earth. God echoes in mine ear a perpetual threat against their vain enterprises, and a kind of oath more dreadful than the threat itself, because it proves the latter ready to break forth, and irrevocable: "Of a truth many houses shall be desert, &c."

2. The same prophet describes the characteristics of the Messiah in a wonderful manner: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be
" upon

“ upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace.”

I shall consider only the following expression, “ and the government shall be upon his shoulder;” this includes a wonderful image, and has a peculiar energy, when considered with due attention.

Jefus Christ shall be born an infant, but then he shall not wait either for years or experience before he reigns. He shall not stand in need of being acknowledged by his subjects, nor of being assisted by his armies, in order to subdue rebels; for he himself will be his strength, his power, his royalty. He shall differ infinitely from other kings, who cannot be such, unless they are acknowledged by some state; and who fall into the condition of private men, if their subjects refuse to obey them. Their authority is not their own, nor for themselves, nor can they give it duration. But the child who shall be born, even when he shall appear to be in want of all things, and to be incapable of commanding, shall bear all the weight of divine majesty and royalty. He shall support every thing by his efficacy and power; and his sovereign authority shall reside fully and wholly in himself, “ and the government shall be upon his shoulder.” Nothing can prove this better than the manner itself in which he shall chuse to reign. He must have from himself, and independent of all exterior means, a sovereign power, in order to make himself be worshipped by mankind, notwithstanding the ignominy of the cross, which he shall vouchsafe to take upon himself; and to change the instrument of his punishment into the instrument of his victory, and the most splendid mark of his sovereignty; “ the government shall be upon his shoulder.”

Those who study the Scripture attentively find that the beauty of it consists in the strength and greatness of the thoughts.

IV. *Description.*

CYRUS was the greatest conqueror, and the most accomplished prince mentioned in history; the reason of which the Scripture gives us, viz. that God himself had taken a pleasure in forming him, for the accomplishment of his intended mercy to his people. He calls him by his name two hundred years before his birth, and declares, that he himself will set the crown on his head, and put a sword in his hand, in order to make him the deliverer of his people.

“ Thus

“ Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose
 “ right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him :
 “ and I will loose the loins of kings to open before him the
 “ two leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut. I will
 “ go before thee, and make the crooked places straight : I will
 “ break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the
 “ bars of iron.—I am the Lord, and there is none else, there
 “ is no God besides me : I girded thee, and thou hast not
 “ known me.”

In another place, he commands Cyrus, king of the Persians, then called Elamites, to set out with the Medes ; he orders the siege to be made, and the walls to fall down :
 “ March, Elam ; Mede, do thou besiege. In fine, Babylon will no longer make others sigh.” Let him come now at my command ; let him join with the Medes ; let him besiege a city, which is an enemy to my worship and to my people ; let him obey me without knowing me ; let him follow me with his eyes shut ; let him execute my commands without being either of my counsel, or in my confidence ; and let him teach all princes, and even all men, how I am sovereign over empires, events, and even wills ; since I make myself to be equally obeyed by kings, and by every private soldier in the armies, without having any occasion either to reveal myself, or to exhort, or employ any other means than my will, which is also my power : “ that they may know
 “ from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is
 “ none besides me, I am the Lord, and there is none else.”

How majestic are these few words ! “ Go up, Elam ;” prince of the Persians, set out. “ Besiege, Mede :” and you, prince of the Medes, form the siege. “ I have made
 “ all their groans to cease :” Babylon is taken and plundered : it has no power ; its tyranny is at an end.

2. The Scriptures have painted in the strongest colours, how greatly sensible God is to the oppression of the poor and the weak, as well as to the injustice of the judges and the mighty of the earth.

Isaiah represents truth feeble and trembling, imploring, but in vain, the assistances of the judges, and representing herself to no purpose before every tribunal. Access is denied her every where ; she is in all places rejected, forgot, and trodden under foot. Interest prevails over right, and the good man is delivered up a prey to the unjust : “ And the
 “ Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. And he saw that there was no man, and he wondered that there was no intercession.”

His

His silence would make me conclude, either that he does not see those disorders, or that he is indifferent to them. It is not so, says the prophet in another place; every thing is prepared for judgment, whilst men are not thinking any thing of the matter. The invisible judge is present. He is standing in order to take in hand the defence of those who have no other; and to pronounce a very different sentence against the unjust, and in behalf of those who are poor and weak: "The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of the people, and the princes thereof; for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in their houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord of hosts." Nothing can be stronger or more eloquent than the reproaches which God makes in this place to the judges and princes of his people. How! You who ought to defend my people, as a vine that was committed to your care; and you ought to serve as a hedge and a rampart to it; it is you yourselves have made wild havock of this vine, and ruined it, as though the fire had passed over it. "And you eat the vine." Had you been but a little tender of your brethren, and not ruined them intirely! but, after you had striped my people, you lay them in the wine presses, in order to squeeze the marrow out of their bones: You bruise them; you crush them under the mill, in order to grind them to dust; "you grind them." You perhaps intend to conceal your thefts and rapine from me, by converting them into proud furniture for the ornament of your houses. I have followed, with attentive and jealous eyes, all you have despoiled your brother of; and see it, notwithstanding your great endeavours to hide it: "the spoil of the poor is in your houses." Every thing calls aloud for vengeance, and shall obtain it; it shall fall on you and your children; and the son of an unjust father, as he inherits his crime, will also inherit my anger: "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

We observe a quite opposite character in the person of Job, who was the pattern or example of a good judge and a good prince: "For from my youth (compassion) was brought up with me, as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb.—I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem.—I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was

“ ready to perish came upon me ; and I caused the widow’s
 “ heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet
 “ was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor.—I brake
 “ the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoils out of his
 “ teeth.”

V. *Figures.*

IT would be an endless labour to run over all the different kinds of figures in the Scriptures. The passages above cited include a large number, and to these I shall add a few more, especially of those that are most common, such as the metaphor, the simile; the repetition, the apostrophe, and the prosopopœia.

1. *The Metaphor and Simile.*

“ I HAVE always dreaded the anger of God, as waves
 “ hanging over my head, and I could not bear the weight of
 “ them.” What an idea does this give us of God’s anger! waves that swallow up every thing, a weight that overwhelms and dashes to pieces: “ I shall bear the anger of the Lord.” How can we bear it to all eternity?

Nor is the magnificence of God, with regard to his elect, less difficult to be comprehended and explained: “ He will
 “ make them drunk with his blessings, and will overflow
 “ thee with a flood of delights.”

But here is another kind of drunkenness reserved for the wicked. “ Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow,” says a prophet to wicked Jerusalem, “ with the cup
 “ of astonishment and desolation, with the cup of thy sister
 “ Samaria. Thou shalt even drink it, and suck it out, and
 “ thou shalt break the shreds thereof, and pluck off thine
 “ own breasts: for I have spoken it,” saith the Lord. This is a dreadful picture of the rage of the damned, but infinitely fainter than truth.

2. *Repetition.*

“ LIKE as I have watched over them, to pluck up and
 “ to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and
 “ to afflict; so I will watch over them, to build, and to
 “ plant,” saith the Lord. The conjunction, here repeated several times, denotes, as it were, so many redoubled strokes of God’s anger.

“ Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she
 “ made all nations drink of the vine of the wrath of her fornication.” This repetition, which is also in Isaiah, denotes that the fall of this great city will appear incredible; and that every one, before he will believe it really is fallen, will cause it be repeated several times to him.

Now

“ Now will I rise, saith the Lord ; now will I be exalted, “ now will I lift up myself.” That is to say, after having taken a long time to lie asleep, he will at length come out of his sleep, to undertake the defence of his people with splendor, and that the moment is come, “ now, now.” God expresses himself still more strongly in the same prophet : “ I “ have long time holden my peace, I have been still and “ restrained myself : now will I cry like a travailing woman ; “ I will destroy and devour at once.”

3. *Apostrophe, Profopœia.*

THESE two figures are often blinded. The latter consists chiefly in giving life, sentiment, or speech to inanimate things, or in addressing discourse to them.

In the cxxxviiith psalm, it is a citizen of Jerusalem banished to Babylon, who, sitting mournfully on the banks of the river which watered that city, breathes his grief and complaints, in turning his eyes towards his dear country. His masters who kept him in captivity urged him to play some airs on his musical instrument for their diversion. But he, filled with grief and indignation, cries out, “ How shall we sing “ the Lord’s song, in a strange land ! If I forget thee, O “ Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I “ do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof “ of my mouth.” How tender ! how affecting, does this Apostrophe to the city of Jerusalem make the discourse of this banished Jew ! He imagines he sees it, discourses with it, protests with an oath, that he will lose his voice and the use of his tongue, and that of his instruments, rather than forget it, by partaking in the false joys of Babylon.

The sacred writers make a wonderful use of the Profopœia, and Jerusalem is often the object of it. I shall content myself with pointing out only a single example taken from Baruch, where that prophet describes the unhappiness of the Jews who are led captives to Babylon. He introduces Jerusalem as a mother in the deepest affliction, but at the same time obedient to the instructions of God, how rigorous soever, who exhorts her children to obey the sentence which condemns them to banishment ; who bewails her solitary condition and their miseries ; who represents to them, that it is the just punishment for their prevarications and ingratitude ; who gives them salutary advices, in order to their making an holy use of their severe captivity ; and who, at last, full of confidence in the goodness and promises of God, promises them a glorious return. The prophet afterwards addresses

himself to Jerusalem, and comforts her, from the prospect that her children will be recalled, and the several advantages to succeed their return: "Put off, O Jerusalem, the garment of thy mourning and affliction, and put on the comeliness of the glory that cometh from God for ever.— For thy name shall be called of God for ever, the peace of righteousness, and the glory of God's worship."

Nothing is more common in the Scriptures than to give life to the sword of God. God lays his command on it; it sharpens, it polishes itself, prepares to obey; sets out at the appointed moment; goes where God sends it, devours his enemies, fattens itself with their flesh, gets drunk with their blood; grows hot with slaughter, and after having executed its master's commands, returns to its place. The prophet Jeremiah unites almost all these ideas in one place, and adds others more animated to them: "O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into thy scabbard; rest and be still. How can it be quiet," replies the prophet, "seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Asskelon, and against the sea-shore? There hath he appointed it."

VI. *Sublime Passages.*

"GOD said, Let there be light, and there was light:" it is in the original, "God said, Let light be, and light was."

Where was it a moment before? How could it spring from the very womb of darkness? At the same instant with light, the several colours which spring from it, embellished all nature. The world, that had been hitherto plunged in darkness, seemed to issue a second time out of nothing; and every thing, by being enlightened, was beautified.

This was produced by a single word, whose majesty even struck the Heathens, who admired at Moses's making God speak as a sovereign, and that instead of employing expressions, which a little genius would have thought magnificent, he contented himself with only God said, "Let there be light, and there was light."

And, indeed, nothing can be greater or more elevated than this way of thinking. To create light (and it is the same with regard to the universe) God needed only to speak: it would be too much to say, he needed only to have willed it, for the voice of God is his will; he speaks as a commander, and commands by his decrees.

The Vulgate has a little lessened the vivacity of the expression: "God said, Let the light be made, and the light was made."

“made.” For the word made, which has different progressions among men, and supposes a succession of times, seems in some sort to retard the work of God, which was performed the very moment he willed it, and received its perfection in an instant.

The prophet Isaiah makes God deliver himself, with the same sublimity, when he foretels the taking of Babylon. “I am the Lord that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth alone the earth by myself:—That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”

The kings of Syria and Israel had sworn the destruction of Judah, and the measures they had taken for that purpose seemed to make its ruin unavoidable. A single word baffles their design: “Thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.”

The same thought is amplified in another place; and the prophet who knows that God has promised to prolong the race of David until the time of the Messiah who was to spring from him, defies with a holy pride the vain efforts of the princes and nations who conspired to destroy the family and throne of David: “Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken to pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us.” Isaiah here prophesies in words suitable to the infinite power of God, that, though all men should unite together, they yet shall not retard, one instant, immutable promises; that confederacies, conspiracies, secret designs, powerful armies, shall have no effect; that all those who attack the weak kingdom of Judah shall be overcome; that the whole universe united shall not be able to effect any thing against it: and that the circumstance which will render it invincible, is, God’s being with it, or, which is the same thing, because Emmanuel is his protector and his king, and that his interest is the present concern, rather than that of the princes he is to spring from.

Numberless obstacles opposed Zerubbabel’s design of causing the temple of Jerusalem to be rebuilt; and these obstacles, like so many mountains, seemed to defy all human efforts. God only speaks, but with the voice of a sovereign, and the

mountain vanishes: "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."

Every one knows with what energy the Scriptures make the impious man vanish, who a moment before seemed, like the cedar, to raise his proud head to the skies: "I have seen the wicked in great power: and spreading himself like a green bay-tree: yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea I fought him, but he could not be found." He is so completely annihilated, that the very place where he stood was destroyed.

Such is the grandeur of the most formidable Princes, when they do not fear God; a smoke, a vapour, a shadow, a dream, a vain image: "Man walketh in a vain shadow."

But, on the other side, what a noble idea do the Scriptures give us of the greatness of God! He is He who is. His name is The Eternal; the whole world is his work. The heaven his throne, and the earth his footstool. All nations are before him but as a drop of water, and the earth they inhabit but as a particle of dust. The whole universe is before the Almighty as though it were not. His power and wisdom conduct it, and regulate all the motions of it with as much ease as a hand holds a light weight, with which it sports rather than bears it. He disposes of kingdoms as the absolute sovereign of them, and gives them to whom he pleases; but both his empire and power are infinite.

All this appears to us great and sublime, and is indeed so when compared to us. But, when we speak to men in words they are capable of understanding, what can we say that is worthy of God? The Scriptures themselves sink under the weight of his majesty, and the expressions they use, how magnificent soever they may be, bear no proportion to the greatness, which alone deserves that name.

This Job observes in a wonderful manner. After having related the wonders of the creation, he concludes with a very simple, but, at the same time, very sublime reflection: "Lo, these are part of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?" The little he discovered to us of his infinite grandeur bears no proportion to what he is, and nevertheless surpasses our understanding. He stoops, and we cannot rise to him at the time that he descends to us. He is constrained to employ our thoughts and expressions in order to make himself intelligible; and, even then, we are rather dazzled with his brightness, than truly enlightened. But how would it be, should he reveal himself in all his majesty? Should he
lift

lift up the veil which softens its rays? Should he tell us who he is, what ear could resist the thunder of his voice? What eye would not be blinded by a light so disproportioned to their weakness? “But the thunder of his power who can understand?”

VII. *Tender and affecting passages.*

ONE would not believe, that such great majesty would descend so low as to speak to man, if the Scripture did not give us some proofs of it in every page. The most lively, the most tender things in nature, are all too faint to express his love.

“I have nourished and brought up children,” says he, by the mouth of Isaiah, “and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.”

“And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?”

“They say, if a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man’s, shall he return unto her again? Shall not that land be greatly polluted? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers: yet return again to me, saith the Lord.”

“Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me, from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am he, and even to hoary hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you.”

“As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.”

“But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.”

Though these comparisons are vastly tender, they yet are not enough so, to denote his tenderness and sollicitude for men who so little deserve it. This Sovereign of the universe does not disdain to compare himself to a hen, who has her wings perpetually extended, in order to receive her young ones under them; and he declares that the least of his ser-

vants is as dear to him as the apple of his eye: "O Jerusalem, " Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them " which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gather- " ed thy children together, even as the hen gathereth her " chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" He him- self, speaking of his people, says thus: "He that toucheth " you toucheth the apple of my eye."

Hence come these expressions so usual in Scripture; and it is surprising that creatures should dare to use them when they speak of God; "Keep me as the apple of thine " eye; hide me under the shadow of thy wings." To what man, O my God, could I speak in this manner, and to whom could I say that I am as precious as the apple of his eye? But you yourself inspire and injoin this confidence. Nothing can be more delicate or weaker than the apple of the eye; and in that respect it is the image of myself. Be it so, O my God, in every thing else; and multiply the succours with regard to me, as you have multiplied the precautions with regard to that, by securing it with eyelids: "Keep me as the apple of thine eye." My enemies surround me like birds of prey, and I cannot escape them, if I do not fly for shelter to thy bosom. You taught callow birds to withdraw beneath the shelter of their mother's wings; and have inspired mothers with a wonderful care and tenderness for their young ones. You have represented yourself in your own works, and have exhorted mankind to have recourse to you, by all the testimonies of your goodness, which you have diffused in the animals and over nature. Let me presume, O my God, to put a confidence in thee, proportionate to thy goodness for me: "Hide me under the shadow of thy " wings."

Nothing can be more affecting than the admirable story of Joseph; and one can scarce refrain from tears, when we see him obliged to turn aside in order to dry his own, because his bowels yearned at the presence of Benjamin; or when, after having discovered himself, he throws himself about the neck of his dear brother; and, folding him in the strictest embrace, mingles his tears with those of Benjamin, and discovers the same affectionate tenderness for the rest of his brethren, over each of whom it is said he wept. At that instant not one of them spoke, and this silence is infinitely more eloquent than any expressions he could have employed. Surprise, grief, the remembrance of what was past, joy, gratitude, stifle their words: their heart can express itself no
other

other ways than by tears, which would, but cannot sufficiently express their thoughts.

When we read the sad lamentation of Jeremiah over the ruins of Jerufalem; when we behold that city, once so populous, reduced to a dreadful folitude; the queen of nations become as a difconfolate widow; the ftreets of Zion weeping, becaufe no one affifts at its folemnities; her priefts and virgins plunged in bitternefs, groaning day and night; her old men, covered with fackcloth and afhes, fighting over the laid ruin of their country; her famifhed children crying for bread, but without getting any; we are ready to cry out with the prophet, “ O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the flain of the daughter of my people!”

It was this deplorable ftate of Jerufalem; that made the prophet vent perpetually fuch warm complaints, fuch tender prayers as thefe: “ Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holinefs and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy ftrength, the founding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards me? Are they reftained?—But now, O Lord, thou art our father: we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are all the work of thy hand.—Behold, fee, we befeech thee, we are all thy people. Thy holy cities are a wildernefs, Zion is a wildernefs, Jerufalem a defolation. Our holy and our beautiful houfe, where our fathers praifed thee, is burnt with fire: and all our pleafant things are laid wafte. Wilt thou refrain thyfelf for thefe things, O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace, and affliet us very fore?”

VIII. *Characters.*

IS it not furprifing, that the Spirit of God fhould have defcribed, in the Scriptures, the different characters of men in fuch lively colours? He implanted in our hearts all the rational fentiments they have; and he knows much better than we do, fuch as our own degeneracy has added to them.

Who does not at once fee the ingenuous candour and innocent fimplicity of childhood, in the relation which Jofeph makes to his brethren of thofe dreams, which were to excite their jealousy and hatred againft him, and which really had that effect?

When Jofeph difcovers himfelf to his family, he fpeaks a very few words, but then they are the expreffions of nature itfelf: “ I am Jofeph: doth my father yet live?” This is one of thofe ftrokes of eloquence which are inimitable. Jofephus, the

the historian, was not touched with this beauty, or, at least, did not preserve it in his relation; for the long discourse he substitutes for it, though very beautiful, does not supply its place.

There is a passage in the Acts, which paints in a wonderful and, at the same time, natural manner, a sudden and impetuous joy. St. Peter had been thrown into prison, and miraculously released from it; when he came to the house of Mary, mother to John, where the faithful were assembled in prayer, having knocked at the door, a maiden named Rhoda, knowing his voice, instead of opening it (so great were the transports of her joy) ran to the faithful, to tell them St. Peter was at the door.

Grief, particularly that of a mother, has also a peculiar language and character. I do not know whether it would be possible to represent them better, than we find them in the admirable story of Tobias. As soon as this dear son was set out upon his journey, his mother, who loved him tenderly, was inconsolable for his absence; and, being plunged in the deepest sorrow, she bewailed herself incessantly: but her affliction was infinitely greater, when she found he did not return at the time appointed: "My son is dead, seeing he stayeth long; and she began to bewail him, and said; "Now I care for nothing, my son, since I have let thee go, the light of mine eyes: my son is dead. And she went out every day into the way which they went, and did eat no meat in the day-time, and ceased not whole nights to bewail her son Tobias." We may judge of the effect which Tobias's return with Raphael produced: "The dog who had followed them all the way ran before them, and, as though he had carried the news of their arrival, he seemed to testify his joy by the motion of his tail, and his caresses. Tobias's father, though blind, rose up, and began to run, though at the hazard of falling every moment; and, taking one of his servants by the hand, he ran to meet his son. Being come up to him, he embraced him, and his mother afterwards, when they both began to weep for joy. Then after worshipping God, and returning him thanks, they sat down." This is a most exquisite finished description; and the penman, in order to make it still more natural, did not omit even the circumstance of the dog, which is intirely natural.

A word, which the ambitious Haman happens to let fall, discovers the whole state of their souls who abandoned themselves to the insatiable desire of honours. He had reached the highest

highest point of fortune to which a mortal could attain, and every one bowed the knee to him, except Mordecai. "Yet," says he to his friends in confidence, "all this avail-
"eth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai, the Jew,
"sitting at the king's gate."

I shall conclude with a passage in Scripture, where the suppression of a single word describes in a wonderful manner the character of a person whose soul is strongly fixed on an object. The Spirit of God had revealed to David, that the ark would at last have a fixed habitation on mount Sion, where should be built the only temple he would have in the world. This king and prophet, in the highest raptures, and in a manner drunk with holy extasies; without relating what passed within himself, nor whom he speaks of; and, supposing that the minds of the rest of mankind as well as his own are intirely fixed on God, and on the mystery which had just been revealed to him, cries out: "His foundation
"is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of
"Zion, more than all the dwellings of Jacob." He will therefore change his promises no more; and the Lord will no more depart from Israel: his habitation will henceforward be fixed among us; his ark will wander no more; his sanctuary will no longer be uncertain, and Zion shall in all ages be the seat of his rest; "his foundation is in the holy
"mountains."

It is from the same sentiments of joy that Mary Magdalene, when she was seeking Christ in the grave, wholly intent upon the object of her love and desires, imagining it was a gardener she saw, says to him, without telling him whom she spoke of, "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me
"where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." Transported, as it were, out of herself, by the ardour of her love, she thinks every one ought to think of that person whose idea possesses her whole soul; and that all must know him she is seeking.

The Psalms only would furnish an infinity of admirable examples in every kind of eloquence; the simple, the sublime, the tender, the vehement the pathetic style. The reader may peruse what bishop Bossuet has said on this head, in the second chapter of his preface to the Psalms, intitled, *De grandiloquentia & suavitate Psalmorum*, i. e. Of the majesty and sweetness of the Psalms. The lively and sublime genius of that great man is visible in every part of it. I shall quote but one passage from it in this place, which might suffice to shew, in what manner a taste of the beauties of the
Holy

Holy Scripture may be attained: it is that where David describes a storm.

Sit exempli loco illa tempestas: "Dixit & adstitit spiritus procellæ: intumuerunt fluctus: ascendunt usque ad cœlas, & descendunt usque ad abyssos." Sic undæ susque deque volvuntur. Quid homines? "Turbati sunt, & moti sunt sicut ebrîus: & omnis eorum sapientia absorta est;" quam profecto fluctuum animorumque agitationem non Virgilius, non Homerus, tanta verborum copia æquare potuerunt. Jam tranquillitas quanta! "statuit procellam ejus in auram & siluerunt fluctus ejus." Quid enim suavius, quam mitem in auram desinens gravis procellarum tumultus, ac mox silentes fluctus post fragorem tantum? Jam, quod nostris est proprium, majestas Dei quanta in hac voce, "Dixit, & procella adstitit?" Non hic Juno Æolo supplex, non hic Neptunus in ventos tumidis exaggeratisque vocibus sæviens, atque æstus iræ suæ vix ipse interim premens. Uno ac simplici jussu statim omnia peraguntur.

God commands, and the sea swells, and is impetuous: the waves ascend to the heavens, and descend to the depth of the abyss. God speaks, and with a single word he changes the storm into a gentle breeze, and the tumultuous agitation of the waves into a deep silence. How strong! how various are these images!

Method of teaching and studying the Belles Letters.

35. MONSIEUR HERSAN.

The Song of Moses.

THIS excellent song may justly be considered as one of the most eloquent pieces of antiquity. The turn of it is great, the thoughts noble, the style sublime and magnificent, the expressions strong, and the figures bold; every part of it abounds with images that strike the mind, and possess the imagination. This piece, which some believe was composed by Moses in Hebrew verse, surpasses the most beautiful descriptions, which the Heathens have given us in this way. Virgil and Horace, though the most perfect models of poetical eloquence, have not writ any thing comparable to it. No man can set a higher value than I do on those two great poets, and I studied them close with the utmost pleasure, for several years. Nevertheless, when I read what Virgil wrote in praise of Augustus, in the beginning of the third book of the Georgics, and at the end of the eighth Æneid; and what he makes the priest Evander sing, in the same book, in
honour

honour of Hercules; though those passages are vastly fine, they seem groveling to me in comparison with the Song in question. Virgil methinks is all ice, Moses all fire. The same may be affirmed of the fourteenth and fifteenth Odes of the fourth book, and in the last of the Epodes.

A circumstance which seems to favour these two poets, and other profane writers, is, that we find in them a cadence, a harmony and elegance of style, which is not to be met with in the Scriptures. But then we commonly read them in a translation; and it is well known, that the best French translators of Cicero, Virgil, and Horace, disfigure their authors very much. Now, the original language of the Scripture must be vastly eloquent, since there remains more in the copies of it, than in the Latin works of ancient Rome, and the Greek ones of Athens. The Scriptures are close, concise, and void of foreign ornaments, which would only weaken their impetuosity and fire; hate long perambulations, and reach the mark the shortest way. They love to include a great many thoughts in a few words; to introduce them as so many shafts; and to make those objects sensible which are the most remote from the senses, by lively and natural images of them. In a word, the Scriptures have a greatness, strength, energy, and majestic simplicity, which raise them above every thing in the Heathen eloquence. If the reader will but give himself the trouble to compare the places above cited from Virgil and Horace with the reflections I shall now make, he will soon be convinced of the truth of what I say.

Occasion and subject of the Song.

THE great miracle which God wrought, when the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea. The Prophet's view in it is to indulge himself in his transports of joy, admiration, and gratitude, for this great miracle, to sing the praises of God, the deliverer, to offer up to him public and solemn thanks, and to inspire the people with the same sentiments.

Explication of the Song.

MOSES full of admiration, gratitude, and joy, could he possibly have better declared the emotions of his heart, than by this impetuous exordium, in which the lively gratitude of the people delivered, and the dreadful greatness of God, the deliverer, are described?

This exordium is the bare or simple proposition of the whole piece. It is, as it were, the extract and point of sight,
to

to which the several parts of the picture refer. This we must carry in our minds, as we read the Song, to comprehend the artifice with which the prophet draws so many beauties, so much magnificence, from a proposition, which at first sight seems so simple and barren.

“ I will sing,” is much more energetic, more affecting, more tender, than it would be in the plural, “ we will sing.” This victory of the Hebrews over the Egyptians is not like those common victories which one nation gains over another, and whose fruits are general, vague, common, and almost imperceptible to every individual. Here every thing is peculiar to every Israelite, every thing is personal. At this first instant, every one reflects on his own chains which are broken; every one imagines he sees his cruel master drowned: every one is sensible of the value of his liberty, which is secured to him for ever. For it is natural to the heart of man, in extreme dangers, to refer every thing to himself, and to consider himself as every thing.

“ The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” This singular, “ the horse, his rider,” which includes the totality of horses and riders, is much more energetic than the plural would have been. Besides, the singular denotes much better the ease and suddenness of the drowning. The Egyptian cavalry was numerous, formidable, and covered whole plains. It would have required several days to have defeated and cut them to pieces: but God defeated them in an instant, with a single effort, at a blow. He overthrew, drowned, overwhelmed them all, as though they had been but one horse, and one rider: “ The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.”

“ The Lord is my strength and my song, &c.” This is the amplification of the first words of the song, “ I will sing.” Let us observe in what manner this is extended.

Of the several attributes of God, he praises only his strength, because it was by that he had been delivered.

“ My strength.” This figure is energetic, for “ the cause of my strength” which is flat and languid; besides that “ my strength” shews, that God alone was to the Israelites as courage, and dispensed with their making any use of it.

“ My song:” This is the same figure, and equally emphatic. He is the only subject of my praise: no instrument divides it with him; neither power, wisdom, nor human industry, can be associated with him: he alone merits all my gratitude, since he alone performed, ordained, and executed every thing: “ The Lord is my song.”

“ He

“ He is become my salvation.” The writers of the Augustan ages would have writ “ hath saved me,” but the Scripture says much more. The Lord hath undertaken to perform, himself, every thing that was requisite for my salvation; he made my salvation his own, his personal, affair; and, what is much more emphatical, “ is become my salvation.”

“ He is my God. He” is emphatical, and signifies much more than it is supposed to do at first sight. He, not the Gods of the Egyptians and nations; Gods void of strength; speechless and lifeless; but he who performed so many prodigies in Egypt and in our passage; he is my God, and him will I glorify.

“ My God.” This “ my” may have a double relation, the one to God, the other to the Israelite. In the former, God appears to be great, powerful, and a God for me only. Unattentive to the rest of the universe, he is employed wholly on my dangers and on my safety; and is ready to sacrifice all the nations of the earth to my interest. In the second relation, “ he is my God;” I will never have any other. To him only I consecrate all my wishes, all my desires, all my confidence. He only is worthy my worship and love, and to him only will I for ever pay homage.

“ My father’s God, and I will exalt him.” This repetition is inexpressibly tender. He whose grandeur I exalt is not a strange God, unknown to this day, a protector for a moment, and ready to assist any other. No: he is the ancient protector of his family: his goodness is hereditary. I have a thousand domestic proofs of his constant love, perpetuated from father to son, down to me. His ancient kindnesses were so many titles and pledges, which assured me of the like. He is the God of my father: he is the God who displayed himself so often to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In fine, he is the God who but now fulfilled the mighty promises which he had made to my forefathers.

What has he done to effect this? “ The Lord is a man of war.” He might have said, as he is the God of armies, he has delivered us from the army of Pharaoh; but this was saying too little. He considers his God as a soldier, as a captain; he puts, as it were, the sword in his hand, and makes him fight for the children of Jacob.

“ The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name.” In the Hebrew it is, “ Jehovah is a man of war, Jehovah is his name.” Moses insists on the word “ Jehovah,” the better to shew, by this repetition, who this extraordinary warrior is, who designed to fight for Israel. As though he had said,

“ Jehovah,

“Jehovah, the Lord, has appeared like a warrior.” Is what I now say well understood? Is this miracle comprehended in its full latitude? Yes, I again repeat: It is the supreme God in person, it is the only God; it is, to say all in one word, he who is called “Jehovah,” whose name is incommunicable, who alone possesses all the fulness of being; he is become the champion of Israel. Himself has been to them instead of soldiers. He took upon himself the whole weight of the war. “The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace,” said Moses to the Israelites before the battle; as though he had said, You shall be still and not fight.

Ver. 4. and 5. “Pharaoh’s chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea; his chosen captains are also drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them, they sank into the bottom as a stone.”

Observe the pompous display of all that is contained in these two words, “the horse and his rider.”

1. “Pharaoh’s chariot.” 2. His hosts. 3. His chosen captains.” A beautiful gradation!

How wonderful is this amplification! “He cast into the sea. They are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; they sank into the bottom as a stone;” all this is to explain, “He has thrown them into the sea.” We observe, in these words, a series of images, which succeed one another, and swell by degrees. 1. “He cast into the sea.” 2. They are drowned in the Red Sea. They are drowned” improves on “He cast—In the Red Sea” is a circumstance which more determinates than simply “the sea.” (The Hebrew has it, “in the sea Suph.”) One would conclude, that Moses was desirous of heightening the greatness of the power which God exhibited in a sea which formed part of the Egyptian empire, and which was under the protection of the Gods of Egypt. 3. “His chosen captains,” the greatest of Pharaoh’s princes; that is to say, the proudest, and perhaps those who opposed with the greatest violence the laws of the God of Israel; in a word, those who were most able to save themselves from the shipwreck, are swallowed up like the meanest soldiers. 4. The “depths have covered them.” What an image is here! They are covered, overwhelmed, vanished for ever. 5. To complete this picture, he concludes with a simile, which is, as it were, the stroke that animates and points out the whole; “they sank into the bottom as a stone.” Notwithstanding their pride and haughtiness, they make no greater resistance

to rise up against the arm of God who plunges them, than a stone that sinks to the bottom of the waters.

After this, what should Moses think, what should he say? One of the most important rules of rhetoric, and which Cicero never fails to observe, is, that, after an account of a surprising action, or even of an extraordinary circumstance, the writer must quit the calm and easy air proper to narration, and deliver himself with more or less impetuosity, according to the nature of the subject; this is commonly done by apostrophes, interrogations, exclamations, which figures enliven both the discourse and the hearer. All this Moses has done inimitably in the Song before us.

“Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in thy power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.”

There are several things to be observed here.

1. Moses might have said, God has displayed his strength by striking Pharaoh. But how faintly, in how languid a manner, would that express so great an action! He springs towards God, and says to him in a kind of enthusiasm, “Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious, &c.”

2. He might have said, O Lord, thou hast displayed thy strength, &c. But this is not strong enough, and does not convey a sensible idea to the mind; whereas, in the expression of Moses, we see, we distinguish, as it were, the Almighty's hand, which extends itself, and crushes the Egyptians. Whence I conclude at once, that the true eloquence is that which persuades; that it commonly persuades no other way than by moving; that it moves by things and palpable ideas only, and that for these several reasons no eloquence is so perfect as that of the Holy Scriptures, since the most spiritual and metaphysical things are there represented by sensible and lively images.

3. “Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.” A most beautiful repetition! and that very necessary to give a stronger idea of the power of God's arm. The first member of the period, “Thy right hand is become glorious in power,” having hinted only at the event in loose and general terms, the Prophet thinks he has not said enough; and, to denote the manner of this action, he immediately repeats, “thy right hand hath dashed in pieces the enemy.” It is the nature of great passions to repeat those circumstances which foment them, as appears from all the passionate places in the best authors; and as is seen in the Sacred Writings, particularly in the Psalms.

4. "In the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee." So many great beauties are concealed in the original text, that they merit some illustration.

1. By these words, "in the greatness of thine excellency," the sacred writer would describe the action of a nobleman of figure, who assumes a haughty air; who rises in proportion as an impotent inferior presumes to rise against him, and is pleased to sink him the lower for that reason. The Egyptians looked upon themselves as very great; they even attacked God himself, and asked with a haughty tone, "Who is then the Lord?" But as these feeble, though insolent creatures rose, God rose also, and assumed all the elevation of his infinite grandeur, all the height of his supreme majesty against them: "The proud he knoweth afar off." And it is from thence he overthrew his enemies who were so full of themselves, and hurled them, not only against the earth, but down into the most profound abysses of the sea.

2. "That rise up against THEE." It was not against Israel that the Egyptians declared war, but it is "You" they presumed to attack; it is "You" they defied. Our quarrel was your's; it was against "You" they warred; "against thee." This is a delicate, affecting turn, in order to engage God himself in Israel's cause.

Ver. 7. "Thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble."

Ver. 8. "And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters are gathered together; the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths are congealed in the heart of the sea."

Ver. 9. "The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, mine hand shall destroy them."

Ver. 10. "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sunk as lead in the mighty waters."

Moses returns to the narration, not as in the fourth and fifth verses by a mere description, but in continuing his apostrophe to God, which gives more passion to the relation, and from which the conduct of this song seems superior to human eloquence. The farther it removes from the simple proposition which serves as an exordium to it, the stronger are its amplifications.

"Thou sentest forth thy wrath." How great is this figure! How noble the expression! The prophet gives action and life to God's anger: he transforms it into an ardent and

and zealous minister, whom the Judge sends calmly from his throne, to execute the decrees of his vengeance. When kings would fight their enemies, they stand in need of infantry, cavalry, arms, and a long train of warlike instruments; but, as to God, his wrath alone can punish the guilty. "Thou sentest forth thy wrath." How many things are comprised in two or three words, which leave to the reader the pleasure of enumerating in his imagination the fires, the flashes of lightning, the thunderbolts, the storms, and all the other instruments of this wrath! The beauty of this expression is better felt than expressed; we find a certain depth in it, a something which employs and fills the mind. Horace had this figure in view in the expression *Iracunda fulmina*, and Virgil hit upon it in the ingenious composition of the thunder described in the eighth book of the *Æneid*.

— *Sonitumque metumque*

Miscebant operi, flammisque sequacibus iras.

What was then the effect of this dreadful wrath? "It consumed them as stubble!" The Scripture only can furnish us with such images. Let us consider this thought attentively. We shall see the wrath of God consuming a prodigious army. Men, horses, chariots, all are dashed, consumed, overwhelmed; how weak are these synonymous terms! All these are consumed, that would be laying all; but the simile which follows finishes the picture; for the word "consume" gives us the idea of an action that lasts some time; but "as stubble" shews an instantaneous action. How! so mighty an army as this consumed like stubble! The reader should consider the force of these ideas.

But how was this effected? God, by a furious wind, assembled the waters, which swelled like two mountains in the midst of the sea. The children of Israel pass over it as on dry land; the Egyptians pursuing them into it were swallowed up by the waves. This is a plain and unimbellished relation; but how beautiful, how majestic, is the turn which is given to it in Scripture! I should never have done, should I examine them particularly. I am charmed with the whole song, but this passage transports me.

"With the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together." The Prophet ennobles the wind by making God himself the principle of it; and animates the waters, by representing them susceptible of fear. The better to paint the divine indignation, and its effects, he borrows the image of human wrath, whose lively transports are accompanied with a precipitated breathing, which causes a violent

and impetuous blast. And, when this wrath, in a powerful person, directs itself towards a fearful populace, it forces them, for their own security, to give way, and to fall in a tumultuous manner one upon the other. It is thus "with the blast of the Lord's nostrils," the frightened waters withdrew with impetuosity from their usual bed, and crowded suddenly one upon the other, in order to give way to his wrath; whereas the Egyptians, who came in the way of this wrath, were consumed like stubble. We often meet with such a description of the divine wrath in the Scriptures: "The sea saw it and fled. — Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered, at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils. — There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured; coals were kindled at it." Are we to wonder, that a wrath like this should overthrow and swallow up every thing?

"The depths were congealed in the heart of the sea." That is, the waters were bound up, and frozen like ice. "The depths" give us a much more dreadful idea than waters. "In the heart of the sea;" this circumstance is very emphatic; it fixes the imagination, and makes us conceive to ourselves mountains of solid water in the centre of the liquid element.

The two verses that follow are inexpressibly beautiful. Instead of barely saying, as was before observed, that the Egyptians, by their pursuing the Israelites, went into the sea; the Prophet himself enters into the heart of those barbarians, puts himself in their place, assumes their passions, and makes them speak; not that they had really spoke, but because a thirst of vengeance, and a strong desire of pursuing the Israelites, was the language of their hearts, which Moses made them utter, in order to vary his narration, and to make it the more ardent.

"The enemy said," instead of "the Egyptians said." This singular, "the enemy," how beautiful is every word.

"I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, &c." We read, and perceive a palpable vengeance in these words, as we read them. The sacred penman has not put a conjunction to any of the six words which compose the Egyptian soldier's discourse, in order to give it the greater spirit, and to express more naturally the disposition of a man whose soul is fired, who discourses with himself, and does not mind connecting his words with conjunctions, his thoughts requiring freedom and liberty.

Another

Another writer would have stopt here, but Moses goes farther: "My lust shall be satisfied upon them." He might have said, I will divide the spoil, and I will fill myself with them. But "my lust shall be satisfied upon them" represents them as rioting on spoils, and swimming in joy.

"I will draw my sword, mine hand shall destroy them." The Vulgate runs thus, "I will unsheathe my sword, and mine hand shall kill them." The reflection that follows, which is very beautiful, supposes this sense. They are no less affected with the pleasure of killing their enemies than that of plundering them. Let us see how he describes this. He might have said in one word, "I will kill them;" but this would have been too quick; he gives them the pleasure of a long vengeance. "I will unsheathe my sword." How great is this image! It even strikes the reader's eye. "Mine hand shall destroy them."

This "mine hand" is inexpressibly beautiful. This represents a soldier who is sure of victory: we see him looking about, moving up and down, and stretching forth his arm. My fear for the children of Israel makes me tremble. Great God! what wilt thou do to save them? A numberless multitude of barbarians are furiously hastening to victory and vengeance. Can all the shafts of thy wrath check the impetuosity of thine enemies? The Almighty blows, and the sea has already surrounded them. "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them."

It must be confessed, that this reflection is very strong, eloquent, and well adapted to form the taste, for which reason I thought the reader ought not to be deprived of it. But I must be obliged to confess, that the Hebrew text, instead of "mine hand shall destroy them," has it thus: "Mine hand shall again subject them to me; mine hand shall triumph over them, my hand shall again put me in possession" of those fugitives. And, indeed, this was the real motive which prompted the Egyptians to pursue the Israelites, as the Scriptures manifestly declare: "And it was told the King of Egypt, that the people fled; and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants were turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" Pharaoh therefore and his officers did not intend to kill and extirpate the Israelites, which would have been against their own interest; but they designed to force them sword in hand to return into captivity, and work again in the public edifices.

Methinks there is also a great beauty in this expression, "Mine hand shall again subjeēt them to me." The God of the Israelites had declared, that he would free the Israelites from their captivity, and deliver them from their hard servitude by the strength of his arm: "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage; and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm." He had often caused Pharaoh to be told, that he would stretch out his hand upon them, in his servants, in his fields, and his cattle; that he would shew him, that he was the master and the Lord, by stretching out his hand over all Egypt, and by rescuing his people out of their captivity: "The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." Here the Egyptian, who already fancies himself victorious, insults the God of the Hebrews. He seems to reproach him for the weakness of his arm, and the emptiness of his threats; and says to himself in the drunkenness of an insolent joy, and in the transports of a foolish confidence, notwithstanding what the God of Israel hath said, "Mine hand shall again subjeēt them to me."

19. "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them, they sank as lead in the mighty waters."

"Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them." Could Moses have possibly given us a nobler idea of the power of God? He only blows, and he at once overwhelms a numberless multitude of forces. This is the true sublime: "Let there be light, and there was light." Can any thing be greater?

"The sea covered them." How many ideas are included in four words! How easy are the words? But what a croud of ideas! 'Tis to this passage we may apply what Pliny says of Timanthus, the painter: *In omnibus ejus operibus plus intelligitur, quam pingitur—ut ostendat etiam quæ occultat.*

Any other writer but Moses would have let his fancy take wing. He would have given us a long detail, and a train of useless insipid descriptions; he would have exhausted his subject, or impoverished it, and tired the reader, by an empty pomp of words, and a barren abundance. But here God blows, the sea obeys, it pours upon the Egyptians, they are all swallowed up. Was ever description so full, so lively, so strong, as this! There is no interval between God's blowing and the dreadful miracle he performs in order to save his people: "Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them."

"They

“ They sank as lead in the mighty waters.” Reflect attentively on this last stroke, which assists the imagination, and finishes the picture.

Ver. 11. “ Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the
“ Gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in
“ praises, doing wonders? 12. Thou stretchest out thy right
“ hand, the earth swallowed them.”

To the wonderful relation above-mentioned succeeds a wonderful expression of praise. The greatness of this miracle required this vivacity of sentiment and gratitude. And how, indeed, could it be possible for the writer not to be transported, and, as it were, out of himself, at the sight of such a wonder? He employs the interrogation, the comparison, the repetition, all which figures are naturally expressive of admiration and rapture.

“ Glorious in holiness, &c.” It is impossible to imitate the lively, concise style of the text, which is composed of three little members, detached from each other, without a copulative, and of which each consists of two or three words, inot enough, “ Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing
“ wonders.” It is as difficult to render the sense of it, how diffusive soever the version may be made, which besides makes it flat and languid, whereas the Hebrew is full of fire and vivacity.

Ver. 13. “ Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people
“ —thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy
“ habitation, &c.”

This, and the four following verses, are a prophetic declaration of the glorious protection which God was to grant his people after having brought them out of Egypt. They abound every where with the strongest and most affecting images. The reader does not know which to admire most; God’s tenderness for his people, whose guide and conductor he will himself be, by preserving them during the whole journey, like the apple of his eyes, as he declares in another place: and carrying them on his shoulders, as an eagle bears her young ones: or his formidable power, which, causing terror and dread to walk before it, freezes, with fear, all such nations as should presume to oppose the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, and strikes those nations so that they become motionless as a stone: or, lastly, God’s wonderful care to settle them in a fixed and permanent manner in the promised land, or rather to plant them in it: “ Thou shalt plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance;” an emphatic expression, and which alone recalls
all

all that the Scriptures observe, in so many places, of the care which God has taken to plant this beloved vine; to water it, inclose it with fences, and to multiply and extend its fruitful branches to a great distance.

Ver. 18, 19. "The Lord shall reign for ever and ever. "For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots, and "with his horsemen, into the sea; and the Lord brought "again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children "of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea."

This concludes the whole song, by which Moses promises God, in the name of all the people, to bear eternally in their minds the signal victory which God had wrought in their favour.

Possibly this conclusion may appear too simple, when compared to the verses which go before it. But methinks there is as much art in this simplicity as in the rest of the song. And, indeed, after Moses had moved and raised the minds of the people by so many great expressions and violent figures, it was proper, and agreeable to the rules of rhetoric, to end his song with a plain, simple exposition, not only to unbend the mind of his hearers, but also to give them an idea, without employing figures, turns, or a pomp of words, of the greatness of this miracle, which God had just before wrought in their favour.

The delivery of the Jewish people out of Egypt is the most wonderful prodigy we read of in the Old Testament. God mentions it a thousand times in the Scriptures; he speaks of it, if I may be allowed the expression, with a kind of complacency; he relates it as the most shining proof of the strength of his all-powerful arm. And, indeed, it is not a single prodigy, but a long series of prodigies, each more wonderful than the other. It was fit that the beauty of a song, which was written to perpetuate the remembrance of this miracle, should equal the greatness of the subject: and it was impossible but this should do so, as the same God, who wrought those wonders, dictated also the song.

Method of teaching and studying the Belles Letters.

36. REV. JOHN NEWTON.

THE internal character of the Bible arising from its comprehensiveness, simplicity, majesty, and authority, sufficiently prove to every enlightened mind, that it is given by inspiration of God. They who are competent judges of this evidence, are no more disturbed by the suggestions of some men reputed wise, that it is of human composition; than if they

were told that men had invented the sun, and placed it in the firmament. Its fulness speaks its author. No case has yet occurred, or ever will, for which there is not a sufficient provision made in this invaluable treasury. Here we may seek (and we shall not seek in vain) wherewith to combat and vanquish every error, to illustrate and confirm every spiritual truth. Here are promises suited to every want, directions adapted to every doubt that can possibly arise. Here is milk for babes, meat for strong men, medicines for the wounded, refreshment for the weary. The general history of all nations and ages, and the particular experience of each private believer from the beginning to the end of time, are wonderfully comprised in this single volume; so that whoever reads and improves it aright, may discover his state, his progress, his temptations, his danger, and his duty, as distinctly and minutely marked out, as if the whole had been written for him alone. In this respect, as well as in many others, "great is the mystery of godliness."

The simplicity, as well as the subject matter of the Bible, evinces its divine original. Though it has depths sufficient to embarrass and confound the proudest efforts of un sanctified reason, it does not, as to its general import, require an elevated genius to understand it, but is equally addressed to the level of every capacity. As its contents are of universal concernment, they are proposed in such a manner as to engage and satisfy the enquiries of all; and the learned (with respect to their own personal interest) have no advantage above the ignorant. That it is in fact read by many who receive no instruction or benefit from it, is wholly owing to their inattention or vanity. This event may rather excite grief than wonder. The Bible teaches us to expect it. It forewarns us, that the natural man cannot receive the things of God, can neither understand nor approve them. It points out to us the necessity of a heavenly teacher, the Holy Spirit, who has promised to guide those who seek him by prayer into all necessary truth. They who implore his assistance, find the seals opened, the vail taken away, and the way of salvation made plain before them.

The language of the Bible is likewise clothed with inimitable majesty and authority. God speaks in it, and reveals the glory of his perfections, his sovereignty, holiness, justice, goodness, and grace, in a manner worthy of himself, though at the same time admirably adapted to our weakness. The most laboured efforts of human genius are flat and languid, in comparison of those parts of the Bible which are designed

signed to give us due apprehensions of the God with whom we have to do. Where shall we find such instances of the true sublime, the great, the marvellous, the beautiful, the pathetic, as in the Holy Scriptures? Again, the effects which it performs, demonstrate it to be the Word of God. With a powerful and penetrating energy, it alarms and pierces the conscience, discovers the thoughts and intents of the heart, convinces the most obstinate, and makes the most careless tremble. With equal authority and efficacy, it speaks peace to the troubled mind, heals the wounded spirit, and can impart a joy unspeakable and full of glory in the midst of the deepest distress. It teaches, persuades, comforts, and reproves, with an authority that can neither be disputed nor evaded; and often communicates more light, motives, and influence, by a single sentence, to a plain unlettered believer, than he could derive from the voluminous commentaries of the learned. In a word, it answers the character the apostle gives it; "it is able to make us wise unto salvation;" it is completely and alone sufficient "to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished for every good work." The doctrines, histories, prophecies, promises, precepts, exhortations, examples, and warnings, contained in the Bible, form a perfect Whole, a complete summary of the will of God concerning us, in which nothing is wanting, nothing is superfluous.

Religious Letters.

37. MR. THOMAS LLOYD.

IT is the design of this essay to solicit for the Scriptures a place at least, if not the highest rank in the literary studies of mankind. The Sacred Writings have been hitherto considered too much in a single point of view, as distinct from all other things, and having no reference and analogy to, or communion with them: they have therefore been set apart, and confined within their own peculiar province by a separation no less religiously preserved, than that of the Levites of old, from the rest of the people. But is it instruction only, that is to be looked for in them? May they not be considered a little comparatively with other arts and sciences, without any diminution of their worth and dignity: May they not enlarge their empire from the heart to the understanding, and assist at least, if not preside, in cultivating and embellishing the mind with those graces, which crown the man of letters?

It is for bigotted superstition to seek a refuge in monasteries, and to cloister itself from the public eye; it is for false religion

gion to seek the aid of arms, and to constrain rather than to persuade obedience; it is for Pagan idolatry, conscious of imposture, to humble herself at the feet of learning, and beg its connivance (whose blind assent it would not have) but Revelation shrinks not from the test, she comes forward, and offers herself to every examination, being well assured, that she need be known only in order to be owned and admired, and she demands no less the reverence of profound erudition, than of profound ignorance. If then such be the religion, which we profess and enjoy (as truly it is) should it not be carried into all our pursuits and speculations, become the guide and director of our studies, and so mix with our lives, that they may take their whole tincture and complexion from it!

But instead of speaking thus generally, it will be proper to mark out, with what precision and accuracy the nature and scope of this design will admit, the grounds on which these its pretensions are founded: and if there be just cause to expect the Scriptures should improve our understanding, as well as our principles, that they should exalt the mind, as well as mend the heart, and raise and elevate our sentiments, where reason and philosophy fail us, there will then be abundant reason for our delighting in the Word of God, as well as believing it, and for contemplating the beauties of it, as well as revering its truths.

Allow me then to class our enquiries under the three heads of Sentiment, Diction, and regularity of Plan; in which principally, all literary excellence seems to consist; and if, in the prosecution of this attempt, the natural flow and current of thought be rather pursued, than the strict rules of art and method, it is humbly hoped that an allowance will be made, or rather indulgence given, to the design, and to the age and experience of the writer, rather than exactness and accuracy be required in the execution.

To begin then with Sentiment. Under this article is comprehended every conception of an intelligent being, whether it respect his opinions merely, or his principles, himself or others. Now all such as are contained in the works of the learned, however recommended by their excellence and beauty, cannot, or at least should not, have that weight and influence with us, which those of Scripture lay claim to and receive; for the former are grounded on weaker authority than the latter: these are of man, who is fallible, those of an infallible God: and indeed should the truth of both be equally apparent, still our estimation of the author is generally

nerally carried on to the work, and gains it a greater degree of veneration and observance, than we should otherwise pay it. Scriptural Sentiment therefore has this advantage over human, that it comes recommended to our closest attention by the dignity of its source and origin.

But when it is thus introduced in the best manner to our notice, what means has it of engaging our affections and securing to itself a permanent attention? Does not it want that grace and delicacy, that strength and sublimity, that purity and pathos, which so much recommended the classical writers to all men of true taste and learning? It is readily granted, that the doctrines of the Holy records are true; but are they such as fill an improved mind with those pleasing sensations, which polite literature always communicates? Let the blessed Revealer of our religion plead its merits in this respect, and be consulted for the purpose in his heavenly teachings! And these if we examine in this view, we shall find them to abound with genuine marks of his own divine nature: for from so pure a fount, what, that is not of a correspondent excellence, could flow?

Nor is the spirit of their Master less perceivable in the Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists. Let us attend Paul in his very celebrated apology, and agree with Agrippa, that he need make no other appeal! The learning, the strength of reasoning, the constraining, and yet graceful eloquence of this great man and christian, may well be thought even superior to that most renowned Athenian orator Demosthenes. Those that admire Xenophon's perspicuity and elegance, may find them in Luke: for where does truth appear in a more becoming dress, than when set forth by him with a naked simplicity, and most artless manner of narration?

Do we require to have our passions excited? There are various passages in Scripture, that must affect the coldest, and soften the most obdurate heart. If we have not read Medea's farewell to her children without feeling, have we read David's lamentation over his son without it, or our blessed Saviour's over Jerusalem? But particulars cannot be comprehended in a work of this kind. Suffice it to observe in general, that Euripides, though the greatest master of the pathetic among the ancients, falls short of the weeping prophet Jeremiah; who has these great advantages over the Grecian, that he both felt the sorrows which he hath so tenderly described, and was assisted by God himself in the description of them.

Besides, the writings of the one make a deeper impression on us, than those of the other; because we are only voluntarily

tarily interested in the latter, but naturally and necessarily in the former. The fictitious tale of the tragedian is adopted into our concern, but the true narration of the man of God demands our affections of fear and pity with an authority, which will not be resisted. We shudder at the judgments, that are represented as impending over Judea, and the more so, when we behold sin and irreligion, the sad causes of them, abound so much in Britain; the horror and grief excited become peculiarly our own, and in feeling for the Jews, we feel for ourselves.

Again, where shall we look for the sublimity of sense, the heavenly majesty, and the awful beauties of Isaiah in the classical world? Pindar, who stands first of the ancients in this species of writing, is left far behind, and cannot reach in his most noble flights him, who rose on seraph wing, and whose hallowed lips were touched with sacred fire. Do we want wisdom and instruction? We shall do wrong to go for it to the academic groves, when we can obtain it at the mouth of such a moralist as Solomon. What useful lessons for life are here delivered, what a lantern is held up to guide our feet! In this faithful mirror, we may find a truer and more accurate representation of the human heart and its principles of action, than history, observation, and experience could supply.

But it may not be amiss, before we quit the subject of Scriptural Sentiment, to examine it somewhat more closely in the two branches of Declarations and Precepts; which I the rather select for particular discussion, because they seem to contain the two chief sources of intellectual pleasure, the Great and the Excellent. In order to illustrate them, it will be necessary to encroach on the province of Diction, which perhaps may be more allowable, as the examples thence taken, will be considered with a view, not merely to the expression, but the ideas conveyed under it.

And first, the declarations of Scripture inspire the most exalted sensations, that we are capable of, and fill the soul with pleasing wonder and astonishment. We need only examine them as they present to us the Supreme Being, in order to be convinced of this. Are we terrified at the giant strides of Homer's Neptune, under which the mountains trembled, or at the nod of his Jupiter, by which the whole heavens were shaken? With what superior awe and dignity does Jehovah rise upon us, either when first introduced to us in the wonderful works of creation, saying, "Let there

"be light and there was light," or when he bowed the hea-

vens and came down to mount Sinai, “and it quaked greatly, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace.” Pindar’s Jove, sits enthroned on clouds, but does he make “his pavilion round about him with dark waters, and thick clouds of the sky? Is he clothed with light as with a garment? Hath he stretched out the heavens as a curtain, and laid the beams of his chambers in the waters?” It is not easy to collect and enumerate all the grand representations of God in Scripture; “He is the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity; in whose sight a thousand years are but as yesterday;” so pure and holy, “that the very heavens are unclean before him;” so powerful, “that he killeth and maketh alive;” of such omniscience, “that he knoweth the thoughts of man afar off;” and of such mercy and goodness, “that he waiteth to be gracious and to forgive.” In this presence, as it were, of the true and living God, how does the whole system of Pagan superstition melt away, as mist before the morning sun! These descriptions of him as far transcend the descriptions of Jupiter and Olympus, which the poets give us, as the thunder and lightning of the heavens do the rattling and flashes of Salmo-neus. The idol, set up by poetical invention, is no longer revered, and only serves to shew, how unable man was to form any just and proper conceptions of his Creator.

And here it may be observed, that philosophy in all her researches and reasonings from the effect to the cause, could never have raised God in our ideas, as the Sacred Writings have done; because it would require a penetration and comprehension of mind far beyond any human attainment so to trace the secret and mysterious clew, which leads from the works to the great Author of nature; and in no other way is it possible for mere man to proceed towards a knowledge of heavenly things. But our religion has at once revealed, what the labour of ages would have in vain attempted to discover; it has opened a new world to us, and pointed out the Supreme Ruler of the universe in all his perfections, both as he is in himself, and as he is in relation to us his creatures. It tells us that “the inhabitants of the earth are in his sight as grass-hoppers,” whole nations only “as the small dust of the balance,” and that “he maketh the judges thereof as vanity.” What noble and striking imagery is here, which has the more effect with us, as the subject of it so naturally concerns us! May we not then fairly conclude from these few specimens, that there is in the Sacred Writings

ings an inexhaustible source of all that refined pleasure, which great and exalted minds receive from the sublime !

After having taken this view of our God, let us, (as indeed we always should) bring our minds, whilst impressed with awe and veneration, to the precepts appointed by him for our observance. For who, that fears the lawgiver, can despise the law? This system of obedience, if we trace it from Paradise down to the Christian æra, we shall find to have passed through several variations, and to have been altered and enlarged gradually, till by the Son of God it was at length brought to its greatest comprehension and perfection: it began with Adam, by forbidding him the tree of knowledge, it revived with Noah, by forbidding blood, it afterwards enjoined circumcision to Abraham in addition to the former prohibition; but at mount Sinai, it first took a regular form and became both enlarged and general, and then, after the intervention of some centuries, received on the mount of Olives its full and final completion.

If we look upon it in its yet imperfect state as a body of laws prescribed for the Jewish hierarchy, we cannot but perceive and acknowledge the Divine Author, inasmuch as it strikes at the very root of all vice, and is marked throughout with a spirit of sanctity, which was lamentably deficient, in the best and wisest Heathen legislatures. But how improved, exalted and purified have we received it from Jesus! The Scriptural Precepts, as he presents them to us, are the genuine emanations of the Godhead, and of themselves sufficient to silence and confound all the cavils of infidelity; for observe their superiority over those of human teaching! Philosophy could enjoin us to worship God, but Christianity adds, “in spirit and in truth.” If that could tell us to love our neighbour, this goes farther, and describes the measure of such love, in the words, “as ourselves.” The one could require us, to do good to our friends, the other to our enemies likewise. And so throughout the whole tenor of them there is an evident perfection, which human reason, in its most improved state, neither attained, nor was able to attain. How far it could carry man, we see in the examples given, and we therefore know, to whom we are to ascribe our farther guidance and progress in the grand duties of religion and morality: to him truly, who first lighted up the lamp of understanding within us, and knows the very inmost secrets of the soul. Plato and Isocrates are most deservedly esteemed, and they justly demand our admiration; though they have ceased from being the chief sources, whence instruction is to be drawn,

drawn, ever since a greater master of the heart than they, has condescended to teach mankind: and from this time, the mount of Olives became what the groves of the academy were before, and practical knowledge has been sought in Judea instead of Athens.

Let us for a moment suppose ourselves the auditors of the heavenly sermon on the mount. How searching, and of what intrinsic excellence are the doctrines? They prescribe not a mere outward shew of goodness, but an inward sanctity; "they try the very heart and the reins," and require that the principal be good, in order that the action may be so. With what authority and easy eloquence, with what an evident concern for man, are they addressed! With what pathetic exhortations, or awful menaces enforced! And lastly, how fine is the imagery and solemn the sense of the conclusion! "Every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth 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." Surely the Heathen moralists need not blush to confess themselves far outdone, both in regard to the quality of the precepts, and the mode of delivering them. Nor can they fail of affording the highest delight to men of letters and liberal minds, in whom the love of truth (implanted by God, in order to lead us into the depth of duty and of happiness) has been cherished and cultivated; for what ever is truly excellent, has naturally a charm for the soul, and must appear amiable to it.

But it is time to close this part of our subject. And indeed the transition is easy from Sentiment to Diction, from the very soul of all literary beauties, to their external form and dress, without which they can have no visible being or existence; so necessary a connexion is there between words and ideas, and with so happy an union must they conspire, in order to please and instruct. That such is their friendly intercourse, and such the effects of it in the Sacred Writings, the few specimens, that have been exhibited of Scriptural Diction, would lead us to conclude: but it will be proper to take a more general survey of it.

The great excellence and secret of language consists, in adapting the expression to the sense; or, as no common critic informs us, in describing low things with nicety, great things with becoming gravity, and such as are equally removed from both extremes, in an equable and easy manner.

Now

Now the Scriptures are a wide field, in which all this variety of subjects may be found; and where else are they treated with equal propriety, and so agreeably to the above rule? If the minutiae of the Jewish Law, or any other simple and more humble occurrence in Jewish history solicit our attention, they are related in a familiar way, and yet without the least coarseness or vulgarity; if the matter be grand and of a sublime nature, (as in the manifestations of the true God particularly) with what true majesty and force of Diction is it clothed? And if, lastly, plain narrative of facts, or any other topic less elevated than the former be presented to us, a chaste perspicuity, and correct, though artless and unaffected, elegance are its very obvious embellishments.

But besides this general character of Scriptural language, it is still further diversified by certain peculiarities of style, which are common to the Sacred with other writers. The most striking of these deserve notice; and first, the great apostle of the Gentiles furnishes us with a conciseness and energy of expression, with a quick and short, yet comprehensive turn of sentence, and with a nervous manner, which Thucydides himself might envy: this more especially appears in his epistles, through which to pursue him requires the full bent and exertion of the mind: and yet it is not soon weary, nor has either cause or inclination to complain of dryness of precept; as his works are adorned and interspersed, to great advantage, with all the graces of metaphor, allusion and allegory; so that the characteristic of St. Paul's style seems to be, strength and beauty united. Contrary to this close and masculine oratory, which appears as it were ready girt up for exercise and action, is that loose, flowing, and negligent species of it, that runs into longer measures, and spreads itself with a sort of wild and pleasing luxuriancy, and such, as it is naturally the language of sorrow; so belongs to the prophet Jeremy. The variegated repetition of the same sentiment, and gradually heightened colouring, the pathetic exclamation, and vehemence and redundancy of language sweetly distinguish him from the other inspired penmen, and most happily accord with his mournful subjects. Again, in the historical parts of the New Testament we meet with a clear and unadorned plainness of words, which seems to promise the truth, it delivers to us; and on this account it may be deemed the most proper style for narration.

But with what a superior dignity and simple grandeur is the Diction of the evangelical prophet fraught? In what a rich garment, how thickly crowded with bright images,

tropes and figures, are his truly sublime and vigorous ideas habited? Æschylus is no longer bold and daring in his expressions, when compared with Isaiah, who rolls them on in a rapid and continued succession, whilst the other at intervals only breaks forth in them: and what are they in the Grecian, but faint and sickly glimmerings of light, that cast a transient gleam over the sky, before the sun arise upon the morn? But the Jewish writer, like the noon-day sun, shines forth in full brightness and splendor; nor need we look further than to the difference of their subjects, in order to see the reason, why that fire of imagination, which has subjected the tragedian to some censure, blazes out in the prophet with so general applause and approbation: it is because the sense of the one seems often overstrained, and will not bear the image applied, whereas so great and glorious is the matter of the other, that to treat it in a less exalted manner, would be to disgrace it, and the only danger was, lest throughout the whole range of Diction, no words could be found strong enough to convey an adequate sense of his conceptions.

This remark gives rise to a very natural observation, which is, that the language of the East, both as it is foreign from common discourse, and on account of its affinity to the poetic style, and its peculiar majesty, was therefore admirably suited and qualified to reveal God unto man; for it helps that imperfection of ideas, under which a finite being must necessarily labour, when he would conceive of an infinite One, and serves to fill the mind with a general sense of what cannot be known particularly or fully. And Isaiah need only be read, that it may appear, how well he hath availed himself of so favourable a circumstance.

Indeed most of the Sacred Writers among the Jews, made great use of it. Thus, where plain and proper words would not answer their conceptions, they have recourse to select tropes and lively metaphors, and often represent them by means of these, in a stronger and a better light, than the mere literal expressions could have admitted. Is the trust which a good man reposes in Jehovah to be shewn? The words are, "God is my rock." Is exceeding plenty to be promised? Then, "the valleys stand so thick with corn, that they shall laugh and sing:" and so in numberless other instances, the most sensible and pleasing images are set before our view, which tend equally to illustrate and adorn the sense.

In fine, there is scarce any striking beauty, either in style or expression, with which Scriptural diction does not seem to be

be enriched, it addresses itself sometimes to the judgment, sometimes to the imagination; it here descends with dignity, and there rises to the most sublime heights with propriety; it has likewise this leading feature and characteristic, that while it stoops to the meanest understanding, it satisfies at the same time the nicest and most cultivated taste; for surely he that undervalues the language of the Bible, can make no better pretensions to true taste, than he can to Christianity, who denies its doctrines.

The Sentiment and Diction of Scripture having been thus found worthy of each other; we proceed next to the Regularity of Plan, that more secret and retired fund of literary beauty, which is known to them only who take a comprehensive view of things. For a man may study the various parts of a good author, examine them one by one with the utmost accuracy, and yet continue a perfect stranger to this inlet of pleasure, unless he likewise consider each part, so examined, with a reference to the whole, and observe with what secret art they all conspire towards the end at first proposed. Whence the mind is delighted with such a general survey, whether from its love of order and perfection, or not, is by no means the business of this Essay to enquire: certain it is, that men of letters derive great inward satisfaction from the contemplation of a well conducted work: and hence we find the admiration of the critics, which had been raised by the language and sentiment of Homer, encreased even to a degree of enthusiasm, when they turn their attention towards his invention and method, and prepare to weigh his merits in a larger scale. For the subject of his poem is so well laid, the conduct of it so wise and regular, the episodes interwoven into it with such art and ingenuity, the characters kept so distinct, the first grand object so constantly respected, and all the different circumstances lead towards it with such an easy and imperceptible tendency; and, in short, such nice symmetry and admirable connection runs through the whole, that the eye of the most rigid criticism, which turned to it at first perhaps to discover faults, cannot help gazing on it with delight and astonishment.

If human plans be attended with this powerful effect, what may we not expect from a divine one? It is therefore proposed to see whether there be not likewise this source of literary beauty in the Scriptures. And who can for a moment doubt it, if he has ever bestowed a proper consideration on the Bible, and not blindly received and owned it, without

knowing the value of the gift? Perhaps, in a spiritual light, the only advantage which the learned man has over the illiterate, is, that he can gain larger and more complete views of that religion, which they both in common enjoy, and thus become more sensible of its grandeur and goodness. Shall he then forfeit or neglect this superior privilege? especially as the declarations of the Inspired Writers concerning the true and living God obtain additional strength and confirmation, from the observation of his operations and providences. For who can derive from the descriptions of Holy Writ so lively a sense of the wisdom of Jehovah, as is impressed on the soul of him, that hath accustomed himself to search out the depths of it; to reflect on the wondrous dealings of God with man; and to seek the mysterious clew, by which he may trace the counsels of the Most High?

Nor need we be at a loss for assistance in this respect, if we will but use, what is put into our hands. The Word of Life not only proclaims the terms of Salvation, but likewise discloses every thing relating to it. It shews us equally the nature of the Christian dispensation, and the preparation for it, and points out no less the grand scheme of Redemption, than its certainty. But too many rest satisfied with the assurance of the Gift, and care not to exalt the Giver; whereas it should constitute no small part of the studies of every learned Christian to contemplate the whole body of divinity, which is contained in the Scriptures, and to bring in one view, as it were, all the various parts of the Almighty Plan.

Let us suppose such an one so employed! He would find the Bible to be the work of one Divine Author, though carried on at different periods and through the medium of human instruments: he would see it in Genesis commencing with the beginning, and in the Apocalypse closing with the end of time. Having impressed his mind with this sense of its Origin and Extent, he would naturally be led to look for that Unity of Design, and General Purpose of Subject, which, as it is the most distinguishing mark of understanding amongst men, cannot but be expected of their Maker. Upon the first opening of the writings of Moses, after a short, yet important detail of Adam's primitive happiness, and his fall from it, the grand object of all the succeeding counsels of God is at once proposed, and consists in the restoration of man to his favour, and to that purity, and those privileges, which, in the person of his first parents, he forfeited. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," are the words of this precious promise, and not obscurely intimate the

the nature of that wonderful Redemption, which was to be worked out for us: and indeed such is it, as no less glorifies the Author, than blesses the receiver of it: it is a great deep of wisdom and mercy, in which we are lost with pleasing wonder and astonishment.

After some pause here for just meditation on the Riches of the Divine Goodness, and on the Salvation itself, he would proceed to a consideration of the manner in which it was published abroad among the nations. He would presently observe that the first step, taken towards this aim, was the election of the Jews from out of the midst of an idolatrous world, miserably sunk in vice and ignorance; for they were elected that they might know and serve the true God, and prepare mankind for the reception of the heavenly Messenger, who was soon to visit them on the most gracious errand. He would perceive all their religious rites and ceremonies directed uniformly and bearing reference to the grand event, for which they were meant as an introduction.

If he look to their prophecies, which gradually unfolded more and more of the purposes of Jehovah, he would with pleasure trace in them the encreasing light of Revelation; if to their types, used by themselves indeed to commemorate things of old; but pre-signifying likewise greater things to come; he must reverently bow down before that wisdom, which could so connect this comprehensive plan of mercy with the duty of a people, as to make the performance of the one, the promotion of the other: and lastly, if we look to the Lord's proceedings with them, which are emblematical of what every true Christian experiences, (for such an one like the Israelites, passes from bondage into liberty, from the Egypt of sin, into the Canaan of righteousness) he will be astonished at the diversity of intentions, which the Jewish Economy is ordained to answer. Then carrying on his eye into the dawn of Christianity, with what a strong admiration would he behold the means lost in the end, each type meet with its antitype, and every prophecy with its completion! The time, place, and character of the Messiah, so exactly answered; the admission and influx of the Gentiles into the church, the forcible attestation of miracles, the pouring out of the spirit, promised so many ages before, and in short, that universal concord, beauty, and harmony, which exists in every point of view between the Jewish and Christian dispensations, would all contribute in the highest degree to raise his ideas of the Scriptures, and of the most wise methods which God has taken, to point out unto sinners their Saviour.

Having thus come down to his own present state and condition, he will find the primitive design of redemption brought into effect, and realized. Yet he must not stop here; for the kingdom of Christ, though begun, is not yet perfected, and wants much of that universality even in these days, which it is finally to attain. The joyful sound of salvation is indeed gone forth, but not into the ends of the world; mankind is only partially restored, and expects its promised fulness of bliss in futurity. He will therefore see Jehovah still engaged in aiding and advancing his own great project, and making the cause of his only begotten son to flourish in the midst of enemies and persecutors; he will learn to prize more particularly that Religion, which as a citizen of this happy country he has received equally pure from delusion, and unstained by blood; and encouraged by the continued protection that it has hitherto derived from heaven, and is assured of through all ages, he will go beyond the present state of things, and setting aside all intermediate events, anticipate the predicted conclusion of this vast and extensive work of mercy; a work, which is to end, not like Virgil's, with the settling a small people in Italy, but with the gathering of all the seed of the faithful, throughout all lands and generations into the new Jerusalem, the holy city, "wherein dwelleth "righteousness," and with the full restoration of man to a second Eden, better than the first, and to a far higher state of happiness and glory, than that, which sin destroyed. What a subject for contemplation is this! how august and interesting! It is such as cannot fail of inspiring the most animated and devout reverence.

And when he has thus pursued the great Gospel scheme; when he has seen the hand of God "bringing mighty "things to pass," and conducting his benevolent and gracious purposes with the most unerring and astonishing wisdom, at such a time into what insignificance do the little plans of the most exalted writers shrink in his sight; human learning for a moment loses its usual consequence with him, and all its highest efforts only serve to prove the more fully that infinite distance, which there is between the creature and the Creator!

And if the mind is wont to receive great pleasure from a grand and extensive view of nature, with what sensations must it be transported, when the man, like Moses in the mount of Sinai, is thus brought into nearer converse with his God, becomes, as it were, a partaker of his counsels, and has his prospects bounded only by eternity! The soul, which

which was formed for immortality, triumphs here and exults, as if in sight of its native home, and declares its origin by its joy; particularly if it be under the influence of religion, it is filled with a pure delight, a rapturous foretaste of heavenly bliss.

Thus, I trust, has the literary claim of the Scriptures been made out; and may it be allowed universally! Considered collectively together through the whole of both Testaments, they form, if I may so say, one grand Epic, they concur uniformly in one and the same scheme and view, and are all the work of one author, God. The Sentiment accordingly is of such excellence and purity, the Diction of such force and energy, and the Plan so glorious and interesting, that they cannot fail of supplying the richest feasts of intellectual pleasure to cultivated and polished minds.

But this is by no means the only, or best fruit of Sacred study: for taste here does not, as in other things, play uselessly about the head, and delight the imagination only, but descends likewise unto the heart, warms and interests the whole man, and influences all his actions; and thus the elegances of Literature and graces of Religion go hand in hand, and the Scholar is completed in the Christian.

Essay on the literary beauties of the Scriptures.

38. BISHOP LAW.

I PROCEED to some of the remarkable circumstances in our Saviour's more public life, and manner of teaching.

As to the former, we cannot but observe a surprising mixture of humility and greatness, dignity and self-abasement, in his general demeanour; both which were equally instructive in their turns. Sometimes we find him solemnly asserting his divinity; at other times the meekest and the lowest of the sons of men: sometimes reminding his followers, that he could command legions of angels, were it necessary; at others, apprising them, that he should be more destitute of common conveniences, than even the beasts of the field, or birds of the air; now telling them, that a greater than Solomon is amongst them; now, washing his disciples feet. Conscious of his own power and just prerogative, yet all submission to the powers in being; complying with their laws and institutions, however hazardous, or inconvenient to him; and paying their demands to the uttermost, though at the expense of a miracle. On some occasions, publishing the character and office which he bore; on others, carefully concealing them; in order to prevent the hasty misconstruction
of

of his friends; to guard against the inveterate malice of his foes; and gain sufficient time to fix a good foundation for the faith of all. None more industrious and zealous in the cause of God; none more indifferent and resigned in his own. He patiently endures the affronts and outrage to his person, and the frequent insults on his reputation; and intercedes for the forgiveness of his murderers: yet when his father's honour is concerned, he vindicates it instantly, and with uncommon warmth, he publicly chastises the profaners of his temple; and threatens the severest punishment to such as would continue to blaspheme the power and spirit by which he was acting. He is ready to receive publicans and harlots; disdains not to converse with heretics and schismatics; persons most odious and of worst repute; but whom he sees to be truly penitent, and really desirous of instruction: while he rejects the formal, sanctimonious hypocrite; and reprimands the self-sufficient Pharisee. He detects, and with authority rebukes, the flattery of the proud, designing querrist; but satisfies each scruple, and resolves each doubt, of the sincere and humble searcher after truth, even before they can be intimated to him. He cherishes the broken-hearted; comforts the desponding; strengthens and supports the weak and wavering; condescends to the infirmities of the meanest and most despicable, that has the least spark of goodness in him; but never gratifies the vanity, or gives way to the petulance of the greatest. Vice from him meets with due discouragement and just reproof in all men, even those of the highest station; virtue with kind compassion, and a generous aid, in any of the lowest.

For, Secondly; This mixture of so various, and seemingly opposite qualities, which constituted the foregoing contrast, did not proceed from any variation in his temper; but wholly in that of those among whom he conversed. He steadily adheres to the same principle, and constantly pursues one plain and uniform design, of doing all the service possible, on all occasions, to all sorts of people: of doing it in the most agreeable manner too, whenever that becomes consistent with their real interest: sympathizing with men in their several states and dispositions; suiting himself to every one's circumstances, and capacity; applying to each part of the human constitution for access; and watching every motion of the heart to gain admittance: being himself ever affable, and easy of access to all that seriously applied to him; accepting any invitation, and admitting every well-meant instance of respect; nay, making a voluntary offer of his company,

pany, whenever he knew it would be useful and acceptable : indulging the most secret wish of such as would receive an obligation from him ; and enhancing that by his obliging readiness to confer it. He submitted to the lowest offices for the sake of others, and was at every body's service that desired his assistance. He condescended to the meanest company, when he had a prospect of doing any good upon them ; and was content to lose the reputation of being a good man, that he might more effectually serve the ends of piety and goodness.

His conversation was free, and familiar ; open, and undisguised : sober and rational : his carriage clear from all affected singularity ; all rigid and unnatural severity ; and any of those austere, forbidding airs, which used to be put on by others ; and were apt to procure them so much reverence, and awe, upon the like occasion. His very miraculous works, were no less evident signs of mercy, goodness, generosity ; than of power : and equally adapted to convince men's understandings, and engage their affections ; as to remove their maladies, or to relieve their wants : his first public miracle being no more than a proper act of kindness, or humanity ; in preventing the confusion of a poor relation, by a very reasonable supply of what was wanting in his entertainment ; which want perhaps could not have otherwise been conveniently supplied ; and was most probably occasioned by the extraordinary concourse he himself drew thither : his last being no less than an instance of the highest and most undeserved compassion, in calmly healing the wound of one of those who came with eagerness to take away his life ; and thereby shewing, that with the same ease he could have delivered himself, or destroyed them.

The like might be observed in almost every other case, where he exerted an extraordinary power ; which he did, in a manner that more particularly suited his own character.

But what we are now considering in the life of Christ, is its more ordinary course, and common tenor ; which we find chiefly conversant in social duties, as they come into use most frequently, and are of the greatest and most general benefit to mankind ; and setting us a pattern of performing these, which was the most inviting to us, and most imitable by us ; and the least capable of ever being mistaken, or perverted : a pattern, not only of perfect innocence, but usefulness, in every circumstance, and situation ; of joining sometimes in such relaxations both of mind and body, as would tend to the comfort and support of each ; such prudent,

dent, moderate enjoyment of the good things of this world, as might convert them both to the present, and the future benefit of all who partook of them: of undergoing all the toils and difficulties, labours and distresses, to which we are subject; of bearing all the evils and afflictions, the crosses and calamities of life; with so much patience, constancy, and perseverance, as would prevent our sinking under them; and at length make us more than conquerors over them. A pattern, of particular affection and esteem for friends; of general kindness, and good-will towards enemies; of gratitude and love for all good offices; of meekness and a most forgiving temper under any ill usage; of strict obedience to superiors, either in church or state, so far as is consistent with our duty to the Supreme Being; mildness and condescension to inferiors, in whatsoever respect, or whatsoever degree; of justice, fidelity, benevolence, and charity to all. In short, his whole life was a lecture of true practical philosophy, and each part of it pointed out some virtue proper for our imitation.

Which brings me in the next place, to his manner of teaching: and this was likewise the most easy and natural that could be imagined. He generally draws his doctrine from the present occasion; the conversation that is passing; or the objects that surround him; from the most common occurrences, and occupations: from the time of the day; the season of the year; the service of the Jewish synagogue, or their solemnities; from some extraordinary accidents, remarkable places, or transactions; and the like.

Thus, upon curing a blind man, he styles himself the light of the world; and admonishes the Pharisees of their spiritual blindness, and inexcusable obstinacy, in refusing to be cured and enlightened by him. On little children being brought to him, he recommends the innocence and humility of that state, as very proper qualities for all those who would be true members of his church; and under the same figure, intimates the privileges that belong to all such. On being told, that his mother and brethren came to seek him; he declares to all those among his disciples, who were desirous of learning, and disposed to follow his instructions; that they were equally dear to him, and should be equally regarded by him, as his very nearest friends and relations. Beholding the flowers of the field, and the fowls of the air, he teaches his disciples to frame right and worthy notions of that providence which supports them, and therefore will support beings of a rank so much superior to them. Observing the fruits of the earth, he

he instructs them to judge of men, by their fruits; and not to be themselves unfruitful under all the means of grace. Taking notice of their behaviour at a feast, he first gives general advice therein to both the master and his guests; and from thence brings them to the consideration of a better entertainment, to which they were all invited; but of which few among them would be persuaded to render themselves worthy. From meat and drink, he leads them to the eating of his body, and drinking his blood, in a spiritual sense; the being nourished with his doctrine, and partaking of his kingdom. From outward washing, to the purifying of the heart, and cleansing the affections. From tasting of the fruit of the vine after the paschal supper; to the celebration of an eternal festival of freedom, rest, and happiness in another world. From the salt, he takes occasion to acquaint them with the nature of their office, which was to season the minds of men, and keep them from the contagion of this world; as well as to give them a true taste and relish for the enjoyments of that kingdom; and at the same time reminds them of the absolute necessity for their duly executing this their office; otherwise, instead of being the best, the purest, and most useful; they would become the most worthless, and incurable, and contemptible among mankind. Those that were fishers, he teaches how to catch men: and shews them how far this would resemble their former employment, in taking of all kinds, both bad and good; which were at first inseparable, but would at length be carefully distinguished from each other. Seeing the money-changers, he exhorts his disciples to lay out their several talents to the best advantage. Being among the sheep-folds, he proves himself to be the true shepherd of souls, describing the particulars in which his character exactly answered that of a good shepherd, even so far as to the giving, or laying down his life for the sheep, i. e. exposing himself to certain death in protection and the defence of his flock from beasts of prey. Among vines, he discourses on the spiritual husbandman and vine-dresser; and draws a parallel between his vineyard, and the natural one. At the sun rising, he says, I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. q. d. The sun arises to set again in a few hours, and may fail many of you, e'er you have finished your journey: but every one that receives and governs himself by doctrine, shall have a constant and continual guide, sufficient to direct him to eternal life. Upon the appearance of summer in the trees before him, he points out as evident signs of his
approaching

approaching kingdom. At the season of fruits, he puts the Jews in mind, that the time was come when some would be expected from them in return of all the labour that had been bestowed upon them; and intimates the judgment, that would shortly overtake all such among them as were found unprofitable. When the harvest comes on, he reminds them of the spiritual harvest, or the gathering of his church among men; admonishes them to labour diligently in that work, and add their prayers to heaven for success. From servants being made free on the sabbatical year, he takes occasion to proclaim a greater and more noble freedom from the slavery of sin, and bondage of corruption. And from the Jewish ceremony of fetching water on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, in commemoration of the miracle wrought for their fathers in the thirsty wilderness; he introduces an offer of that true living water, which should be unto them a well springing up unto everlasting life; that gospel of immortal happiness and salvation; and the plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive. Upon a report that certain Jews were massacred by the Roman governor in the midst of their devotions; and that others had lately met with a no less untimely death by the fall of a tower in Jerusalem; he guards his audience against the common vices of pride and censoriousness, in judging such as these to be the greatest sinners, because they were the most eminent sufferers; and exhorts them all to repent of their own crimes, before the divine judgments overtook them; which would shortly fall upon that people, and be the more distinguishable, as coming attended with the very same circumstances. From the conspicuous eminence of a city standing on a mountain, he turns his discourse to the no less remarkable situation of his own disciples. From the Temple before him, he points to that of his body; which was most properly so called from the divinity residing in him. From Herod's unadvisedly leading his army out to meet the king of Arabia, who came against him with superior forces, and defeated him; a lesson is laid down to all who entered on the Christian warfare, that they should first well weigh, and carefully compute the difficulties that attended it, before they were engaged in a matter of such consequence. From the robberies which were more particularly frequent in that age and place, he forms a beautiful story of a certain traveller, who fell among thieves, was stripped and wounded, and could find relief from none of his own country or persuasion; but met with it in one of those, from whom he had the least reason

son to expect any, as being so much used to despise and hate that people, and their way of worship. From whence he forces his opponent to prove this amiable instance of humanity, even in the odious character of a Samaritan; and thereby shews him incontestibly, that the like good office would no less become a Jew in the like circumstances. And from what happened about that time, namely, that those, who obtained the kingdom of Judea, went to Rome to be confirmed in it; and on their return, called such to account as had been wanting in their duty, and took ample vengeance on those who rebelled against them, (which was the case particularly under Archelaus, a few years before our Lord delivered that parable;) he gives his followers to understand, that after he had ascended into heaven, and taken full possession of his spiritual kingdom; he would come again in power and great glory, and not only punish that rebellious nation of the Jews, with exemplary judgments; but at length condemn all those who wilfully opposed his Gospel; as well as those who continued to neglect and disregard it.

Many more instances might be given, where Christ has formed his arguments and exhortations on such things as offered themselves to him; applying each most aptly to his present purpose: and where this does not so immediately appear, we have reason to believe it chiefly owing to the omission of some circumstances in the history; as is observed by a very eminent writer. By this means he improved every thing into an useful moral; made every object and event serve for a constant monitor, and remembrancer of his instructions; which by these means must be more easily retained, than they could be by a long train of abstract reasoning, or under any artificial arrangement of a number of particulars laid down together.

Again, it is observable, that he delivered many things by way of story, or parable; a most engaging, and a most effectual method of instruction; gradually informing those who in reality were disposed for information, and not too violently disgusting those who were not. This way of teaching is of all others most apt to raise, and to keep up the attention, and set each faculty of the mind on work: it gains the easiest admission into both head and heart; it strikes the deepest; sticks the longest; gives most delight, by leaving something for the hearers themselves to discover; and disoblige least, by putting them upon making their own application. On these accounts it has been admired in all ages, and nations, from the beginning of the world; and was particularly celebrated

celebrated in the east. This, among many other excellent uses to which Christ applied it, in a manner the most delicate and masterly, was peculiarly fitted to insinuate such points, as more immediately opposed the prejudices, or the inclinations, of all those to whom Christ preached; and which, though necessary for them to be apprized of, so far as might help afterwards to reconcile their thoughts to these things, when they were able to recollect that they had been intended, and foretold from the beginning; yet were not at that time to be laid down in a more open, direct manner: such as related chiefly to the external circumstances of his person and doctrine; and the effects thereof, upon both Jew and Gentile.

As to the fundamental parts of his religion, and his manner of declaring them; both these were easy and obvious, such as the weakest and most ignorant (unless affectedly so) could not mistake; and proposed in that plain, popular way to which they were most accustomed, and in which they would be most likely to apprehend him: and it is worth remarking, that wherever his words seem capable of different senses, we may with certainty conclude, that to be the true one, which lay most level to the comprehension of his auditors; allowing for those figurative expressions, which were so frequent and familiar with them; and which therefore are no exceptions to this general rule, this necessary canon of interpretation, which of all others, I think, wants most to be recommended.

The bulk of his doctrine was of a practical nature, always pertinent to the case in hand, and of an immediate and apparent tendency to the most beneficial purposes: and he is so far from seeking reputation by an artful and elaborate manner of explaining it; that he seems barely to propose each point, together with its proper sanction, and leaves it to shine forth by its own light. 'Tis neither versed in any nice, subtle speculations, nor involved in pompous paradoxes, nor adorned with flowers of rhetoric. We find it free from all ostentations and unnatural flights, as well as from that load of superstitious rites, and slavish ceremonies, which encumbered every other system: consisting of solid and substantial duties; containing general, comprehensive rules to try them by; and grounded on such never-failing principles of action, as must quickly enable his disciples to determine for themselves, and judge aright in each particular case: as in that of the sabbath; which, like all other solemnities, was instituted for the sake of man; and therefore should be made subservient

subserving to his good; and in that, to the glory of his Maker, which are inseparable from each other. In meats and drinks, and every thing, by consequence, of the same kind; which, as being merely external things, must likewise be of an indifferent nature; and therefore could not of themselves defile a man. In that of oaths, the several kinds whereof were really of the same import, as including the same virtual appeal to God; and therefore must needs be of equal force, and should alike exclude all fraudulent, evasive artifices. In that of vows, which bind only to things otherwise innocent at least, and by which none ever could exempt themselves from duties of a prior, and perpetual obligation. In that of contracts, more especially the great, general one of matrimony, which ought not to be rashly violated by either party, or dissolved for any cause less than such an one as proves inconsistent with the very foundation and original end thereof, v. g. fornication or adultery: and by that universal rule, of mercy being preferable to sacrifice, whenever a moral and a positive precept interfere with one another.

Such doctrine must appear, not only excellent in itself, and taken independently; but more especially so, in the circumstances under which it was delivered: as fully obviating the several false maxims, and fallacious glosses, advanced by the Jewish teachers of our Saviour's time: in which respect it must be doubly useful, as an instruction in truths of the last importance; and a guard against so many popular errors; and may be considered as another instance of his exquisite manner of accommodating things, both to the general benefit of mankind, and the particular exigencies of his hearers.

Lastly, our Saviour's whole discourse and way of arguing, must carry something of a peculiar force and poignancy along with it, and be attended with extraordinary degrees both of conviction and astonishment; as he knew thoroughly what was in man, and therefore could speak to his heart directly; and needed not that any man should either ask him, or inform him of any thing: as he saw into the most secret thoughts, and purposes, of all those whom he had to deal with; and often shewed them plainly that he did so, by removing the latent prejudices of his weaker friends, and obviating their several doubts and difficulties, as they arose in their own minds; before they durst give utterance to them: by answering such objections as had been made only in private, or at least out of his hearing: by refuting every plausible pretence, and laying open the most artful stratagems of his inveterate enemies; detecting their hypocrisy, exposing their
true

true aim ; and thereby cutting off all possibility of reply ; on which account his word must needs “ be quick and powerful, “ and sharper than any two-edged sword.”—In this respect too it might well be said, “ Never man spake like this man.” Many instances whereof will occur upon a diligent perusal of the gospels.

Thus did Christ live, and teach : shewing himself as much superior to the rest of the world in each of these respects, as he did in his miracles.

There was a wondrous man among the Greeks, who has often been compared to Christ, and considered as a kind of type of him to the Heathen ; there being a great resemblance between them, in some remarkable particulars. Socrates lays out all his time in going about to admonish and reform his countrymen ; which, he assures them, was a ministry enjoined him by the Deity, for their benefit ; to whom he supposes himself given, or sent by God ; with the utmost firmness bearing all the injuries, and despising the affronts, to which he was continually exposed on that account. He constantly resorts to places of public concourse, and generally grounds his discourses on what occurs there ; making use of every place, and season, and occasion, to exercise and inculcate his philosophy. He chooses a state of poverty, to clear himself from all suspicion of private interest, and make his character more unexceptionable, by shewing that he himself practised what he taught : he avoids meddling with the affairs of the public ; declines posts of authority amongst them ; as these in such bad times, must have precipitated his fate, before he had done them any considerable service. He perseveres in sitting and examining them, in order to detect their ignorance and presumption, and to mortify their pride, on all occasions ; and declares that he must persevere in the same course, even when he clearly foresees that the loss of his life would certainly attend it : nay, that he would continue this course, though he were to die ever so often for it. When merely out of envy he is delivered up to his enemies, and on a most malicious prosecution brought to his trial ; instead of having recourse to the usual way of supplication, and applying to the passions of his judges ; he proves to them, that they ought not to admit of any such application ; he informs their reason, and appeals to their consciences ; and proceeds only so far in his own defence, as would be just sufficient to assert his innocence, and shew them the great sin of persecuting and oppressing it. Instead of using or permitting any other means to avoid his death, he

signifies

signifies that it was free and voluntary in him, because it was become necessary for the world; and meets the instruments thereof with the utmost calmness and serenity.

He left none of his philosophy in writing, but took good care, as he said, to imprint it deeply in the hearts of his disciples; which some of them delivered down to us; [though in a manner very different from that simplicity, and strict propriety, with which the gospels are recorded:] and, indeed, the effects which his instructions, and example, had upon them, were prodigious.

Some other circumstances might be pointed out, were we to draw a parallel between these two, considered merely as philosophers. But notwithstanding any such, and without derogating from the character of Socrates; we still may affirm, that he was far surpassed by Christ; as well in the importance of the doctrines taught, as in the candid, clear, convincing manner of delivering them; and in that purity, and general perfection, which distinguish Christianity from every other system.

Socrates descends to trivial subjects; and often trifles in pursuing others; neither attempting to give his hearers information in them; nor so much as pretending to have received any himself: he wraps up his discourse in subtle intricacies, as best adapted to his principal design of shewing men that they knew nothing: disputes pro and con, puzzling and perplexing those with whom he argues; and seems more studious to confute what they maintain, than to establish any doctrine of his own: instead of clearing up their doubts, and opening his whole mind to them; he constantly makes use of captious interrogatories; to ensnare and draw them into difficulties; and is ever mixing ridicule and satire with his reasonings; which, though it suited but too well with the general turn and temper of that lively people; though it afforded great delight to several of his followers; and served to attach them the more strongly to him: yet it was surely gratifying a wrong taste in them, and giving much unnecessary offence to others. But that was Socrates' talent: and his employing it so much, has given great occasion for that charge of vanity, which some have brought against him.

His method of disputing, however admired by his contemporaries, and celebrated by most others since, yet must be owned to admit of many sophisms; to be calculated rather for confounding, than convincing an opponent.

His genius, or dæmon, whatsoever be understood by it, though upon some occasions it should be allowed to guard him and his followers, from evils of some consequence; yet on others, it seems to interest itself in very low affairs, and which were hardly Deo digna; such, as its giving them warning not to go through a certain street, in which they were to meet some swine, and spoil their cloaths: in matters of the greatest importance it leaves him under the highest uncertainty; sometimes it seems to degenerate into downright fanaticism: and, after all, perhaps, was merely fancy, or fiction.

Socrates was very far from opposing either the superstitious principles, or practices of the Athenians with that freedom and simplicity, that openness and zeal, with which Christ taxed those of the Jews: on the contrary, he always conforms, and gives countenance to them. Nor does he declare against their most predominant, and not irreputable vices; but rather, it must be owned, often goes very grossly into the language of them; unless we admit the favourable apology made for him on this article, by throwing the whole blame on one of his disciples. He appears publicly to plead his own acknowledgment of their divinities, and approbation of their established worship; both which were abominable; and often treated accordingly upon the stage; and which therefore no such excuse, as that of avoiding to disturb the public peace, or not offending the weak minds of the people, or obviating persecution; ever can justify. He performs his devotion to the same deities in private; and in his last moments, either betrays an apprehension of some criminal neglect towards one of them; or contents himself with continuing the same strain of ironical humour in respect to them, which he indulged in other subjects; or, lest the world uncertain what he meant.

; From these slight strictures on a character justly reputed one of the most complete among mere men; when it is placed in opposition to that of Christ our Lord, 'tis easy to distinguish which has the advantage; as is freely owned by some modern unbelievers. The same would appear more clearly, were the latter to be drawn out at large, and shewn together with any other of the most celebrated lawgivers, and teachers. But such a comparative view seems to be little necessary to its illustration.

And I content myself with only touching on some few of those remarkable circumstances in the life of Jesus, which were recorded by his first disciples, as the signs and evidences of his being the Son of God; which brought so many to believe

believe on him at that time, and which one would think sufficient to produce the same belief in every age; as they have actually done, both with the generality, wherever they have fairly been proposed to them; and with the best, and wisest men, who have given themselves leave duly to reflect upon them.

Theory of Religion;

39. REV. ROBERT SOUTH, D. D.

IN God's Word we have not only a body of religion, but also a system of the best rhetoric. And as the highest things require the highest expressions, so we shall find nothing in Scripture so sublime in itself, but it is reached, and sometimes over-topped by the sublimity of the expression. And first, where did majesty ever ride in more splendor, than in those descriptions of the divine power in Job, in the 38, 39, and 40 chapters? And what triumph was ever celebrated with higher, livelier, and more exalted poetry, than in the song of Moses, in the 32 chapter of Deuteronomy? And then for the passions of the soul; which being things of the highest transport, and most wonderful and various operation in human nature, are therefore the proper object and business of rhetoric; let us take a view how the Scripture expresses the most noted and powerful of them. And here, what poetry ever paralleled Solomon in his description of love, as to all the ways, effects, and extasies, and little tyrannies of that commanding passion? See Ovid with his *omnia vincit amor*, &c. and Virgil with his *vulnus alit venis, & cæco carpitur igne*, &c. How jejune and thin are they to the poetry of Solomon in the 8 chapter of the Canticles, and the 6 verse; "Love is strong as death, and jealousy cruel as the grave?" And as for his description of beauty, he describes that so, that he even transcribes it into his expressions. And where do we read such strange risings and fallings, now the faintings and languishings, now the terrors and astonishments of despair, venting themselves in such high amazing strains, as in the 77 psalm? Or where did we ever find sorrow flowing forth in such a natural prevailing pathos, as in the lamentations of Jeremy? One would think, that every letter was wrote with a tear, every word was the noise of a breaking heart; that the author was a man compacted of sorrows; disciplined to grief from his infancy; one who never breathed but in sighs, nor spoke but in a groan. So that he, who said he would not read the Scripture for fear of spoiling his style, shewed himself as much a blockhead as an atheist, and to have

as small a gift of the elegancies of expression, as of the sacredness of the matter. *Sermons.*

40. REV. JOSEPH WHARTON, M. A.

AT tibi prima, puer, nullo, &c.

'Tis impossible to forbear observing the great similitude of this passage, and these famous ones of Isaiah:

“ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose,” chap. 34. 1.—“ The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together,” chap. 11. 13.—“ The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them: and the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adders den,” chap. 11. 6, 7, 8.

How much inferior is Virgil's poetry to Isaiah's! The former has nothing comparable to these beautiful strokes; “ that a little child shall lead the lion;”—that the very trees of the forest shall come to pay adoration.—Virgil says only, *occidet et serpens*; Isaiah adds a circumstance inimitably picturesque, “ that the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp; and that the weaned child,” a little older and beginning to make use of its hands, “ shall put his finger on the adder's den.” There are certain critics who would never cease to admire these circumstances and strokes of nature, if they had not the ill fortune to be placed in the Bible. *Works of Virgil, translated.*

41. REV. BENJAMIN KEACH.

THE divinity of the Scriptures appears by that majesty and authoritativeness of the Spirit of God speaking in them, and that extraordinary and inimitable style wherein they are written. It is singular, and has peculiar properties, not elsewhere to be found. Its simplicity is joined with majesty, commanding the veneration of all serious men. Augustine says, that the Holy Scriptures seemed rude and unpolished to him, in comparison of Cicero's adorned style, because he did not then understand its inward beauty. But when he was converted to Christianity, he declared, that when he understood them, no writing appeared more wise and eloquent. Gregory Nazianzen, a man of prodigious wit, learning, and eloquence,

eloquence, when he came to study the Sacred Scriptures, vilifies all ornaments of literature amongst the Greek philosophers, as infinitely below those Divine Oracles. Illyricus says, that although we find not in the Holy Scriptures that idle or delicate itch of words, that external sweetness or allurements, that numerosity of sounds, or those pleasing trifles, which vain-glorious orators of Greece and Rome beautified their so much famed harangues with; yet we find there a grave and masculine eloquence, exceeding all others. —The more plain the Word and Law of the great God is, the more becoming the author thereof, and it is an evidence of his divine stamp and authority. Yet in that humility of style in Scripture, there is far more height and loftiness, and more profoundness in its simplicity, more beauty in its nakedness, and more vigor and acuteness in its seeming rudeness, than in those other things men so much praise and admire. easiness and plainness doth best become the truth. A pearl needs no painting; it becomes not the majesty of a prince to play the orator. In the Holy Scripture is a peculiar and admirable eloquence. What are all the elaborate blandishments of human writers, to that grave, lively, and venerable majesty of the prophet Isaiah's style? That which critics admire in Homer, Pindar, &c. singly, are universally found here, though not that elegance that tickles the ear and fancy, and relishes with the flesh, but the noble and immortal part, an illuminated soul. *Tropologia.*

42. REV. WILLIAM GREEN, M. A.

WE can never sufficiently admire the strength and spirit, as well as justness and propriety of the description of the Divine Being in the third chapter of Habakkuk. The design of the prophet was to give us right conceptions of Jehovah, as king and commander of the ten thousands of Israel. And what more proper circumstances could he have chosen, to inspire us with a just idea of his magnificence and greatness on this occasion? The glory with which he is arrayed is such as filleth the heaven and the earth: a glory which arises, not from the pomp of external grandeur and the parade of honourable followers, but from himself. His power is the terror of all the world around him; the insignia of it being, not the sword or the fasces, but the pestilence and devouring fire. And so great is the dread of him, that the Canaanites fly at his approach, the land trembles at his presence, and the nations around are not able to hide their dismay. Such is Habakkuk's description of Jehovah, simple and plain, but

yet grand and sublime; as much excelling the Pagan descriptions of Jupiter, as light surpasses darkness.

Translation of poetical Parts of the Old Testament.

43. THEODORUS BEZA.

THE reason why the Evangelists and Apostles mingled Hebraisms with their Greek, was not because they were Hebrews, but because they discoursed of many things delivered in the Hebrew learning and law; therefore it was necessary to retain many things of that nature, lest they might be thought to introduce some new doctrine. And I cannot wonder that they retained so many Hebraisms, when many of them are such, that they cannot be so happily expressed in any other language; or rather cannot be expressed at all: so that unless they had retained those forms of expression, they must sometimes have invented new words and phrases, which would not have been understood. In a word, since they were the only persons whom God was pleased to employ to write all things necessary for our salvation, we must also conclude, that God so guided their tongues and pens, that nothing fell rashly from them; but that they expressed all things so plainly, properly, and pertinently, that it was impossible for any one to speak of these things with greater plainness and force.—

I allow there is the greatest simplicity in the apostolical writings, neither do I deny that there are transpositions, inconsequences, and also some solecisms. But this I call an excellence, not a fault; and from these—transpositions—solecisms—who can vindicate either Demosthenes, or Homer himself?—

I find no grandeur of speech in Plato himself like to St. Paul, as often as he pleases to thunder out the mysteries of God; no vehemence in Demosthenes equal to him, when he proposes to terrify men's minds with the fear of divine judgment; or to warn them, and draw them to the contemplation of God's goodness, or to exhort them to the duties of piety and charity. In a word; I can find no method of teaching more exact even in Aristotle and Galen, though very excellent masters. *Annotations on the New Testament.*

44. REV. JOHN RYLAND, M. A.

NO speakers or writers in the world ever had so great a claim to sound eloquence as the writers of the Old and New Testament. The Sacred Scriptures are adorned with all the brightest images of divine and invisible objects, drawn from every part of the visible world: and we dare to affirm, that there

there is not a striking figure in eloquence but may be found in its highest perfection in the Holy Scriptures.

Every form and manner of speaking which contain a beauty, or express a passion or movement of the soul, may be seen in a rich variety all through the Book of God.—

The grandest figure of all for addressing the passions is the *protopopæia*; and you have in the Sacred Bible the boldest personifications in the world. Here you see death as a person and a king of terrors having a first born son, which is the plague or pestilence; this likewise is represented as walking in terror before God.—Here you see departed spirits in the invisible world speaking to each other; Abraham, a happy soul in glory, conversing with a damned sinner in hell.—You see inanimate beings assuming the powers and expressing the passions of living and reasonable creatures:—and in that grand prophecy of the ruin of the king of Babylon, you see such a variety of personifications as are not to be equalled in any piece of fine writing and eloquence. You see the fir trees and cedars endued with life and speech;—hell all in motion—the souls of the damned monarchs—the ghost of the king of Babylon—the soldiers who have found out his dead body—the cutting jeers of those soldiers, “Is this the man who made the earth to tremble?”—the triumphant people of God rejoicing over the dead tyrant—the dreadful doom of his name and family—and the close of the whole scene by the solemn oath of God himself.—These are such strokes of divine and daring eloquence as would please every man of real taste were he to review them ten thousand times.—There is no book in the world in which all the passions are so strongly expressed, and so frequently addressed as in the Inspired Writings of God. I verily believe there is not a trope, or a figure, either in words or sentences, that is worth a moment's notice, but may be found in its height of beauty in the Holy Scriptures.

Recommendation of Keach's Metaphors.

45. EDMUND BURKE, ESQ.

THE description of the wild ass, in Job, is worked up into no small sublimity, merely by insisting on his freedom, and his setting mankind at defiance.—The magnificent description also of the unicorn and of leviathan in the same book, is full of the same heightening circumstances.—

The Scripture alone can supply ideas answerable to the majesty of the Divine Being. In the Scripture, wherever God is represented as appearing or speaking, every thing
terrible

terrible in nature is called up to heighten the awe and solemnity of the divine presence. The Psalms, and the prophetic books, are crowded with instances of this kind. "The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord." And what is remarkable, the painting preserves the same character, not only when he is descending to take vengeance upon the wicked, but even when he exerts the like plenitude of power in acts of beneficence to mankind.— "Tremble, thou earth! at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the God of Jacob; which turned the rock into standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

On the Sublime and Beautiful.

46. MR. PRATT.

THE first chapter of Genesis may be considered as the exordium of the Bible. The Sacred penman, in a single page, hath related a variety of events, circumstances, and actions, which demand the most consummate attention. To one scanty chapter is confined the work of the creation. Curiosity is captivated, and the soul impressed by every sentence. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Here is the first awful and admirable transaction, and yet compressed within the limits of ten words. The second verse mentions the chaotic state of things, of themselves, incongruous and incompetent, prior to the creation.

The third verse fills the human soul with as magnificent an image as it is capable of entertaining; and recites, indeed, so bright a blessing, that we must seek relief from its effulgence in the feebleness of mortal understanding, that cannot bear the fuller displays of celestial radiance.—

Modern writers, sensible of the beauty of this admirable opening of the Sacred Books, have viewed it as worthy of their imitation, and, without any scruple, adopted it as a pattern; and yet, neither moderns, or ancients have equalled the brevity, the simplicity, or the perspicuity of Moses. It is needless to run into the catalogue of instances; the general defect is sufficiently obvious. The greatest epic poets amongst the ancients, Homer and Virgil, have been complimented on the conciseness of their exordiums; but, neither the Iliad, or the Æneid, reach the various excellencies which are compressed without being crowded, in the first chapter of Genesis. I submit the comparison to the critics, with all possible confidence of superiority on the side of Scripture. —Whatever has been conceived or expressed in poetry,

comes

comes extremely short of many passages and parts of the Sacred Writings, merely considering them as literary compositions, but when we add to their excellencies as pieces of writing, the reflection of their being the sacred credentials of religion, and the immortal volumes of salvation, how is our zeal and our admiration heightened.

The story of Abraham and his son Isaac, is one of the many narratives in Sacred Writ, which has employed the pens of our ablest divines, being universally allowed, one of the master strokes of the Bible.—There is not a sentence in the whole chapter without its peculiar beauty.—The sweetest simplicity that can be conceived in composition, distinguishes, in general, the tender narratives of the Bible, from the love tales of modern writers; nor does any author approach, in any degree, near them in this respect, except some parts in the works of the immortal Shakespear.—The history of Rebekah and Rachel are both related, in a language, and in a manner beyond description, fine and natural; every syllable has its charm, and the whole is a feast for the fancy and the heart.—The passion of love, which is almost the foundation of all poetry, is more pleasingly and highly touched in several parts of the Scriptures, than in all the pastoral, dramatic, or amorous attempts since the Scriptures were written.—

The Bible, for the most part, clears up each point as it goes along; and without seeming to possess the least art, almost every narrative is actually so constructed, as to exhibit what the critics require, and what, indeed, is said to be essential to every composition—a beginning, a middle, and an end. What is still more, the minuter laws of literature are seldom violated, especially, in what may, not improperly, be termed the episodes of Scripture; and while on the one hand, we reverence it, as a complete and perfect system of morals, we are on the other, delighted, with a beautiful variety of ancient record, and of admirable writing.—

The history of Joseph and his brethren appears to be one of the most beautiful and interesting narratives in the whole lettered world; nor will it, perhaps, be easy to match it, even as it now stands translated, by any composition, in any language. As a chain of sacred facts, recorded in the Divine Volume of the Christian religion, it affects us with awe and veneration: as a relic of antiquity, it is dear and valuable to all posterity; and, as a piece of writing, it possesses at one and the same time, and in the highest degree, every elegance

gance of literature. In point of style, it is various and masterly; the images are pathetic beyond the force of encomium to do them justice; and the morality and virtues inculcated, are obvious, important, and domestic.—

He who can read the blessings of Jacob upon his children, without catching some part of the enthusiasm, must have as little relish for composition, as for religion. And, I cannot help wondering, that the Bible is not oftener quoted and read, as an authority, by the lovers, even of polite learning, and literary taste. The names of Pindar and Demosthenes, and our own Mr. Gray, are considered by many, in point of sublimity, as the very children of the sun, while the Bible lies gathering the dust of disuse upon some solitary shelf, like an inestimable jewel in possession of a peasant, who is unconscious of its value. And yet, it were no difficult labour to prove, by parallel passages, that the boldest and noblest flights of these writers, however elegant they may be when not brought to so severe a test, are very feeble efforts, when compared to that glowing fire of imagination, that irresistible force of language, and that sublimity of arrangement, so remarkable in many parts of the Scriptures.—

There never was any thing more happily conceived, or more sweetly told than the book of Ruth.—

The Psalms, both as pieces of Scripture and of writing, are totally unrivalled in point of energy and sublimity, by any composition that hath yet been, or that probably ever will be, produced in human language.—

There is a skill observable in the conduct of the sacred narratives rarely, if ever, seen in other writings. The chain of real circumstances relating to the duel betwixt David and Goliath, is, from the beginning to the end, from the first syllable to the last, a match for any composition whatever—setting aside the matter of Scripture—even in point of what the dramatists call fable. And I am thus particularly earnest to display the literary excellence of the Holy Bible, because I have reason to apprehend it is too frequently laid by, under a notion of its being a dull, dry, and unentertaining system; whereas the fact is quite otherwise: It contains all that can be wished, by the truest intellectual taste; it enters more sagaciously, and more deeply, into human nature; it develops character, delineates manner, charms the imagination, and warms the heart more effectually than any other book extant: and if once a man would take it into his hand, without that strange prejudicing idea of its flatness, and be willing to be pleased, I am morally certain he would find all
his

his favourite authors dwindle in the comparison, and conclude, that he was not only reading the most religious, but the most entertaining book in the world.—

The story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath is inferior to few, if any, in sacred composition: for it not only abounds with most agreeable incidents, but furnishes a striking and conspicuous moral. The virtue of gratitude is very emphatically illustrated on the one hand, and the duty of hospitality, on the other. Nor has it escaped, indeed, the remark of several writers; but the Scriptures are treasuries affording inexhausted novelty to their admirers.—Solomon equalled his father David in his poetical capacity, and even surpassed him as a moralist. His songs are marked by an enthusiasm, a tenderness, and a pathos, in which all the treasures of the warmest, gayest, and sublimest imagination, appear to have been exhausted. Image and metaphor were equally at his command; and a genius, so ethereal, is sometimes discovered in these sallies of his pen, that his conception takes a flight too lofty for the eye to reach him. But, however amazing the powers of his fancy, they were, at least, equalled by the graver abilities of his judgment. He, by no means, figured less as a moral writer; for, his Proverbs are a collection of concise maxims, which stand, altogether unrivalled; and are the foundation of all those short, multitudinous remarks, which have been issued from the press, since his time: but those of Solomon will, indeed, be ever separated from all others. Such knowledge of life, such various beauty in the expression, such astonishing terseness in the style, such poignancy in the satire, such purity in the phrase, and such solidity in the sense, entitled their author to the immortality which he claims, and which he possesses.

There seems to have been an epocha in his genius. His compositions present us with a climax. From the poet, he rises to the moralist, and from the moralist he soars to the divine. The book of Ecclesiastes, is one of the finest systems, or bodies of divinity. Every sentence is sound and orthodox. His observations are accurate and devotional; and the whole book well becomes the preacher and the pulpit. In a word, Solomon was the greatest and most general literary character that ever wrote. As a prince, he was amiable, beloved, and popular; and it is impossible to give a more pleasing assurance of it, than the pacific and tranquil idea suggested in these words: “Every man dwelt in safety
“under his own vine and fig-tree, even all the days of Solomon.”

“ mon.”—It is painful, however, to view him in a religious light.—

The sacred penmen surpass all writers, generally speaking, in point of figure, sentiment, allusion, narration, and every other property of perfect composition. Distributed up and down the Old and New Testament, there are a thousand passages, which utterly annihilate any thing that can be brought from the stores of ancient or modern learning. I conclude these observations with the selection of two passages from those most admirable volumes.

“ O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed
 “ with honour and majesty : who coverest thyself with light
 “ as with a garment : who stretchest out the heavens like a
 “ curtain : who layeth the beams of his chambers in the
 “ waters : who maketh the clouds his chariot : who walketh
 “ upon the wings of the wind. Thou coverest it with the
 “ deep as with a garment : the waters stood above the moun-
 “ tains : at thy rebuke they fled ; at the voice of thy
 “ thunder they hasted away.”

What inexpressible sublimity in every one of these thoughts ; and with how much accuracy the diction is adapted to display them ! What ideas can exceed those of the Deity’s covering himself with a mantle of light, mounting his cloudy chariot, and walking on the wings of the wind ?

The ascending series, is in this passage, very judiciously preserved ; the whole sentiment is a glorious gradation from great to greater, and from that to the last positive degree of the climax. I beg the reader to mark the rise of the expressions as he repeats them. There is also a particular beauty here, in the sudden transition from one person to another—
 “ Who walketh upon the wings of the wind ;” and then instantly altering the address to—“ Thou coverest it with the
 “ deep as with a garment.”

But a second example courts our admiration, and that of so high and exalted a nature, that a reader of true taste, and a real sense of religion, will hardly bear to engage his time in looking at minor or modern authors ; while some, probably, who have been prejudiced against the Bible, will be surprized to find such admirable, and unequalled writing in a book, which they have been taught to consider as a dull, uninteresting code of maxims, proverbs, and ordinary sentiments.

“ Whither shall I go from thy Spirit ? Or whither shall I
 “ flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven, thou
 “ art there : if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art
 “ there.

“ there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in
 “ the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand
 “ lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely
 “ the darkness shall cover me, even the night shall be light
 “ about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but
 “ the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light
 “ are both alike to thee.” In short, this, and various other
 portions of the Sacred Books, as infinitely exceed Homer,
 as Homer surpasses Blackmore.

Sublime and Beautiful of Scripture.

47. DR. BARROW.

THE last advantage I shall mention, peculiar to the
 Christian doctrine, is the style and manner of its speech,
 which is properly accommodated to the capacity of all persons,
 and worthy the majesty and sincerity of divine truth. It ex-
 presseth itself plainly and simply, without any affectation
 or artifice, ostentation of wit or eloquence. It speaks with
 an imperious awful confidence, in the strain of a king; its
 words carrying with them authority and power divine, com-
 manding attention, assent and obedience: as, this you are
 to believe, this you are to do, on pain of our high dis-
 pleasure, and at your utmost peril; for even your life and
 salvation depend thereon. Such is the style and tenor of the
 Scripture, such as plainly becomes the sovereign Lord of all
 to use, when he is pleased to proclaim his mind and will to
 us his creatures.

Sermons.

48. REV. JAMES DUPORT, D. D.

NE quis ita de me existimet, quasi in hoc parallelismo idagam,
 nempe et Scriptores Sacros et profanos simul in æquilibrio
 ponam, aut quasi velim inde Davidem puta, vel Solomonem,

Atque aliâ parte in trutinâ suspendere Homerum. Juvenal.
 Sat. 6. πολλοῦ γε καὶ δεῖ procul, procul absit a me hæc im-
 pietas, imo infania; quippe qui nôrim tantum distare eloquia
 divina a gentium scriptis, etiam optimis et pulcherrimis,
 ὅσον ἔστιν ἐξ ἀπο γαίης. Iterum dico, procul a me absit, ut
 Homerum Scriptoribus Sacris, vatibus θεοπνευστοῖς, aliisque
 Spiritûs Sancti amanuensibus æquiparem: absit, ut nugas et
 nænias poetarum cum Sacrosanctis Dei Oraculis, ut turbidos
 et cænosos Ethnicorum rivulos cum limpidissimis scripturarum
 fontibus compararem: Οὐκ ἂν ἔπω μανθάνῃ ἐγώ γε. Imo palam
 profiteor, atque proclamo, ita ut omnes audiant (arrige
 aures, O Mome, et tu, Zoile, quisquis es, si modo es) Si
 Verbum

Verbum Dei quasi in alterâ libræ lance ponatur, terram, mihi crede, ea lanx, et maria, poetas, rhetores, historicos, philosophos, omnes denique omnium gentium scriptores, nedùm unum Homerum deprimet. Adeo incomparabiliter pulchrior est veritas Christianorum, quam Helena Græcorum (Augustin. epist. 9. ad Hieron.) quantumvis Homericò penecillo depicta; et *μυρισμυριας* suavior psalmus Davidicus, quam ode Pindarica; utcùnque contrâ senserit dixeritque (si Melanchthon et Morneo fides) doctus ille Florentinus, autor admodum politus, sed in hoc sanè parùm Angelicus. Ex animo itaque subscribo sententiæ illi cl. Molinæi (Tractat. de cognitione Dei) Davidis poemata enthea tantùm distant ab Homero, quantum cælum à terrâ, & fabulæ humanæ à veritate divinâ. Longe, longe, imo infinitis parasangis alios, quotquot uspiam sunt, transcendat Sacer Codex: at quid si dicam,

Proximus huic, longo sed proximus intervallo,

Liber ille, quem Iliadem bonorum non minùs verè quàm eleganter appellat Eustathius? Nam imprimis inimitabilis illa sermonis sublimitas, majestas, atque simplicitas, (quibus, non minùs quàm suavitate et elegantia, cæteros omnes gentium scriptores, non poetas modo, sed et *πεζογορηδες*, longè antecellere mihi semper visus est Homerus) quàm propè ad Auctores Sacros et *θεοπνευστας* accedit!

Scrutamini igitur, si placet, (et certè placet) etiam ethnicorum aurifodinas, et metalla Gentium, si quam fortè veritatis venam reperiatis (veritas enim ubicunq; est, veritas est, adeoque pretiosa, et auro contrâ non cara:;) Sed multò magis scrutamini Scripturas, ipsa divinæ veritatis oracula. Gentilium, si vultis, monumenta revolvite; arculas omnes, et myrothecia excutite; veterumque etiam *των εξοθεν* autorum, imprimis vero Sacri Codicis—Exemplaria Græca nocturnâ versate manu, versatè diurnâ; ea præcipuè in manus sumite, ea penitus imbibite, ea in succum et sanguinem convertite. Est quidem Homerus vastum pelagus eruditionis et ingenii, quem magnus ille mundi Monarcha adèò in deliciis habuit, ut noctu dormitur sub pulvinari suo reponere solet; eum nè dedignentur nobilissimi juvenes in sinu fovere, nec quenquam pudeat eum in fermio pectoris sui recondere, quem idem Alexander pretiosissimo illo Darii scrinio, auro gemmitque distincto, includi dignum existimavit est, inquam. Homerus immensus scientiarum oceanus, *Εξ ε υπερ παντες ποταμοι*—Sed Christus multò magis abyssus veritatis, et fons vitæ ac salutis æternæ. In Homeri scriptis (teste Plutarcho) omnium bonarum artium elementa atque femina, omnium virtutum

virtutum et vitiorum exempla, omnium scientiarum documenta continentur: at in Christo multò magis (teste Paulo) sunt omnes thesauri sapientiæ ac scientiæ absconditi. Quid ergo Helicon præ Sione? Quid Apollo præ Christo? Quid Pindarus præ Davide? Quid Seneca præ Paulo? Quid Homerus præ Solomone? Vellem equidem Homeristæ sitis, vellem ut Aristotelici, vel etiam, si vultis, ut Ciceroniani, sed multò magis (id quod estis) Christiani. Quid enim scientia sine conscientia? Vel (ut symbolo meo solenni apud vos utar) Quid prodest esse peritum, et periturum?

Gnomologia Homeri.

49. REV. LAURENCE STERNE, M. A.

THAT things of the most inestimable use and value, for want of due application and study laid out upon them, may be passed by unregarded, nay, even looked upon with coldness and aversion, is a truth too evident to need enlarging on. Nor is it less certain, that prejudices, contracted by an unhappy education, will sometimes so stop up all the passages to our hearts, that the most amiable objects can never find access, or bribe us by all their charms into justice and impartiality. It would be passing the tenderest reflection upon the age we live in, to say, it is owing to one of these, that those inestimable books, the Sacred Writings, meet so often with a disbelief (what makes the accusation almost incredible) amongst persons who set up for men of taste and delicacy; who pretend to be charmed with what they call beauties and nature in classical authors, and in other things would blush not to be reckoned amongst sound and impartial critics. But so far has negligence and prepossession stopped their ears against the voice of the charmer, that they turn over those awful Sacred Pages with inattention and an unbecoming indifference, unaffected amidst ten thousand sublime and noble passages, which, by the rules of sound criticism and reason may be demonstrated to be truly eloquent and beautiful. Indeed the opinion of false Greek and barbarous language, in the Old and New Testament, had, for some ages, been a stumbling block to another set of men, who were professedly great readers and admirers of the ancients. The Sacred Writings were, by these persons rudely attacked on all sides: expressions which came not within the compass of their learning were branded with barbarism and solecism; words which scarce signified any thing but the ignorance of those who laid such groundless charges on them. Presumptuous man!

man! Shall he who is but dust and ashes, dare to find fault with the words of that Being, who first inspired man with language, and taught his mouth to utter; who opened the lips of the dumb, and made the infant eloquent! These persons, as they attacked the Inspired Writings on the foot of critics and men of learning, accordingly have been treated as such: and though a shorter way might have been gone to work, which was, that as their accusations reached no farther than the bare words and phraseology of the Bible, they, in no wise affected the sentiments and soundness of the doctrines, which were conveyed with as much clearness and perspicuity to mankind, as they could have been, had the language been written with the utmost elegance and grammatical nicety. And even though the charge of barbarous idioms could be made out; yet the cause of Christianity was thereby no ways affected, but remained just in the state they found it. Yet (unhappily for them) they even miscarried in their favourite point; there being few, if any at all, of the Scripture expressions, which may not be justified by numbers of parallel modes of speaking, made use of amongst the purest and most authentic Greek authors. This, an able hand amongst us, has sufficiently made out, and thereby baffled and exposed all their presumptuous and ridiculous assertions. These persons, bad and deceitful as they were, are yet far out-gone by a third set of men (I wish we had not too many instances of them) who, like foul stomachs, that turn the sweetest food to bitterness, upon all occasions endeavour to make merry with Sacred Scripture, and turn every thing they meet with therein into banter and burlesque. But as men of this stamp, by their excess of wickedness and weakness together, have entirely disarmed us from arguing with them as reasonable creatures, it is not only making them too considerable, but likewise to no purpose to spend much time about them; they being, in the language of the apostle, “creatures of no understanding, speaking evil of things they know not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.” Of these two last, the one is disqualified for being argued with, and the other has no occasion for it; they being already silenced. Yet those that were first mentioned, may not altogether be thought unworthy our endeavours; being persons, as was hinted above, who, though their tastes are so far vitiated, that they cannot relish the Sacred Scriptures, yet have imaginations capable of being raised by the fancied excellencies of classical writers. And indeed these persons claim from us some degree of pity, when through
the

the unskilfulness of preceptors in their youth, or some other unhappy circumstance in their education, they have been taught to form false and wretched notions of good writing. When this is the case it is no wonder they should be more touched and affected with the dressed up trifles and empty conceits of poets and rhetoricians, than they are with that true sublimity and grandeur of sentiment, which glow throughout every page of the Inspired Writings. By way of information, such should be instructed, there are two sorts of eloquence, the one indeed scarce deserves the name of it, which consists chiefly in laboured and polished periods, an over curious and artificial arrangement of figures tinselled over with a gaudy embellishment of words, which glitter, but convey little or no light to the understanding. This kind of writing is for the most part much affected and admired by people of weak judgments and vicious taste, but is a piece of formality the Sacred Writers are utter strangers to. It is a vain and boyish eloquence; and as it has always been esteemed below the great geniuses of all ages, so much more so, with respect to those writers who were actuated by the Spirit of infinite wisdom, and therefore wrote with that force and majesty with which never man writ. The other sort of eloquence is quite the reverse of this, and which may be said to be the true characteristic of the Holy Scriptures; where the excellence does not arise from a laboured and far fetched elocution, but from a surprizing mixture of simplicity and majesty, which is a double character, so difficult to be united, that it is seldom to be met with in compositions merely human. We see nothing in Holy Writ of affectation and superfluous ornament. As the infinitely wise Being has condescended to stoop to our language, thereby to convey to us the light of revelation, so has he been pleased graciously to accommodate it to us, with the most natural and graceful plainness it would admit of. Now, it is observable, that the most excellent profane authors, whether Greek or Latin, lose most of their graces whenever we find them literally translated. Homer's famed representation of Jupiter, in his first book; his cried-up description of a tempest; his relation of Neptune's shaking the earth, and opening it to its centre; his description of Pallas's horses; with numbers of other long-since-admired passages; flag, and almost vanish away, in the vulgar Latin translation.

Let any one but take the pains to read the common Latin interpretation of Virgil, Theocritus, or even Pindar, and one may venture to affirm, he will be able to trace out but

few remains of the graces which charmed him so much in the original. The natural conclusion from hence is, that in the classical authors, the expression, the sweetness of the numbers, occasioned by a musical placing of words, constitute a great part of their beauties; whereas in the Sacred Writings, they consist more in the greatness of the things themselves, than in the words and expressions. The ideas and conceptions are so great and lofty in their own nature, that they necessarily appear magnificent in the most artless dress. Look but into the Bible, and there we see them shine through the most simple and literal translations. That glorious description which Moses gives of the creation of the heavens and the earth, which Longinus, the best critic the eastern world ever produced, was so justly taken with, has not lost the least whit of its intrinsic worth; and though it has undergone so many translations, yet triumphs over all, and breaks forth with as much force and vehemence as in the original. Of this stamp are numbers of passages throughout the Scriptures; instance, that celebrated description of a tempest in the 107 psalm; those beautiful reflections of holy Job upon the shortness of life, and instability of human affairs; that lively description of a horse of war in the 39 chapter of Job, in which there is scarce a word which does not merit a particular explication to display the beauties of it. I might add to these those tender and pathetic expostulations with the children of Israel, which run throughout all the prophets, and which the most uncritical reader can scarce help being affected with: “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done? Wherefore when I expected that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?—And yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?—Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, and not that he should return from his ways and live?—I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master’s crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.”—There is nothing in all the eloquence of the Heathen world comparable to the vivacity and tenderness of these reproaches: there is something in them so thoroughly affecting, and so noble and sublime withal, that one might challenge the writings of the most celebrated orators of antiquity to produce any thing like them.

These

These observations upon the superiority of the inspired penmen to Heathen ones, in that which regards the composition, more conspicuously hold good, when they are considered upon the foot of historians. Not to mention, that profane histories give an account only of human achievements and temporal events, which, for the most part, are so full of uncertainty and contradictions, that we are at a loss where to seek for truth; but that the Sacred History is the history of God himself; the history of his omnipotence and infinite wisdom, his universal providence, his justice and mercy, and all his other attributes, displayed under a thousand different forms, by a series of the most various and wonderful events that ever happened to any nation or language: not to insist upon this visible superiority in Sacred History, there is yet another undoubted excellence the profane historians seldom arrive at, which is almost the distinguishing character of the Sacred Ones; namely, that unaffected, artless manner of relating historical facts, which is so intirely of a piece with every other part of the Holy Writings. What I mean will be best made out by a few instances: In the history of Joseph, which certainly is told with the greatest variety of beautiful and affecting circumstances when Joseph makes himself known and weeps aloud upon the neck of his dear brother Benjamin, that all the house of Pharaoh heard him; at that instant, none of his brethren are introduced as uttering ought, either to express their present joy, or palliate their former injuries to him. On all sides there immediately ensues a deep and solemn silence; a silence infinitely more eloquent and expressive, than any thing else that could have been substituted in its place. Had any of the celebrated classical historians been employed in writing this history, when they came to this point, they would doubtless have exhausted all their fund of eloquence in furnishing Joseph's brethren with laboured and studied harangues, which, however fine they might have been in themselves, would nevertheless have been unnatural and altogether improper on the occasion: for when such a variety of contrary passions broke in upon them, what tongue was able to utter their hurried and distracted thoughts? When remorse, surprize, shame, joy, and gratitude struggled together in their bosoms, how uneloquently would their lips have performed their duty? How unfaithfully their tongues have spoken the language of their hearts? In this case, silence was truly eloquent and natural, and tears expressed what oratory was incapable of.

If ever these persons I have been addressing myself to can be persuaded to follow the advice of our Saviour and “ search “ the Scriptures,” the work of their salvation will be begun upon its true foundation: for, first, they will insensibly be led to admire the beautiful propriety of their language; when a favourable opinion is conceived of this, next, they will more closely attend to the goodness of the moral, and the purity and soundness of the doctrines; the pleasure of reading will still be increased by that near concern which they will find themselves to have in those many important truths, which they will see so clearly demonstrated in the Bible, that grand charter of our eternal happiness. *Sermons.*

50. BISHOP NEWCOME.

THE writings of the prophets bear plain signatures of their divine authority. Examine the books of the Greek and Roman sages; and observe what discordant opinions they contain on almost every point of theology and philosophy. But in the Hebrew prophets there is a wonderful harmony of doctrine for above a thousand years; unparalleled in the writings of any country. History teaches us what a great number of their prophecies has been accomplished; and we know that some of them are accomplishing at this day. It also peculiarly deserves our notice, that these holy men entertained the most worthy conceptions of the Deity in the midst of an idolatrous nation; and inculcated the supreme excellence of moral duties, when all around them, even the few worshippers of Jehovah himself, were solely intent on ritual observances.

The writings which these men of God have transmitted down to us will be eminently useful in every age of the Christian church not only as they contain illustrious prophecies of many events and especially of our blessed Lord's appearance, but for their magnificent descriptions of the Deity, for their animating lessons of piety and virtue, and for the indignation which they express and the punishments which they denounce against idolatry and vice; which particular topics, among many other instructive and important ones, are treated by them with uncommon variety, beauty, and sublimity, and with an authority becoming ambassadors of the Most High. *Preface to the Minor Prophets.*

Of the Beauties which sometimes occur in our Saviour's discourses.

OUR Lord's discourses are void of artificial and studied ornaments, but have a force and energy which no art can equal. The general characteristics of his manner, are simplicity, affection and dignity: qualities of speech which are the immediate sources of beauty and sublimity.

We may observe a lively use of the interrogation in some places: "Ye shall know false prophets by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns? or figs of thistles?—Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?—Whereunto shall I liken this generation? and to what are they like?—Suppose ye that I am come to send peace on earth? I tell you nay: but only division.—Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?—How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go into the mountains, and seek that which is gone astray?—What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft clothing are in kings houses. But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet."

In the fourth beatitude the figure is strong, and expressively continued: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." He censures the doctrines and practices of the Pharisees under a striking allegory: "Every plant, which my heavenly father hath not planted, shall be rooted out." And he beautifully uses the same figure to shew the propriety of displaying his miraculous power on a particular occasion: "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work." The large return, likely to be received by the bountiful man, is thus described with a very pertinent amplification: "Give, and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." In the same style is the following reproof to the Apostles: "Why reason ye because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?"

When our Lord had spoken a parable denouncing a fearful destruction of the Jews, which the Chief Priests and Scribes deprecated with horror, he looked on them, and said; "What is this then which is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?" And the image is thus pursued by him with great sublimity: "Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Whosoever shall strike against it in a hostile manner, will prove a vain and defeated assailant: the gospel will prevail against all opposition, with damage or destruction to its opposers: "but on whomsoever this stone shall fall, it shall crush him to powder:" against whomsoever the vengeance of the Messiah shall be exerted, he shall perish exemplarily.

There is an elegant antithesis in the address to Simon the Pharisee: "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."

The similitudes with which the discourse on the mount is concluded please the imagination by the justness and strength of the colouring. "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house on 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 doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, who 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."

A writer of very superior taste has this remark: Where is there so just, and so elegant a reproof of eagerness and anxiety in worldly pursuits, closed with so forcible an exhortation to confidence in the goodness of our creator, as in these words? "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly father feedeth them: are not ye much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider how the lilies of the field grow: they

“ they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto
 “ you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed
 “ like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grais
 “ 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?”

Our Lord's discourses are occasionally raised and animated by short comparisons. Speaking of the final judgment he says, “ Then shall the righteous shine forth as the Sun, in
 “ the kingdom of their Father.—Before the Son of Man shall
 “ be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one
 “ from another, as a shepherd separateth his sheep from the
 “ goats.” He shews it by an apt image that the day of God's vengeance on the Jews would be sudden and unexpected: “ As a snare, shall it come on all them that dwell on the
 “ face of the whole land.” And their general and swift destruction is thus described by him: “ 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.” He thus strongly illustrates the specious hypocrisy and inward pollution of the Scribes and Pharisees: “ Ye are as graves that
 “ appear not: and the men that walk over them are not
 “ aware of them:—Ye are like unto whited sepulchres;
 “ which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full
 “ of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.” When he had privately explained many parables to his disciples, so that they understood them, he adds: “ Every scribe, who is in-
 “ structed into the kingdom of heaven, is like an householder
 “ who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and
 “ old.” And speaking of the sanctity which the Apostles would derive from his doctrine, and of the power with which they would be invested by the Spirit, he uses the following natural similitude: “ As the branch cannot bear fruit of it-
 “ self, unless it abide in the vine; no more can ye, unless
 “ ye abide in me.”

The secular employments of men before the flood while the divine vengeance impended over them, are thus vividly represented, and, as it were, multiplied. “ They ate, they
 “ drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage.” And, when the days of Lot are spoken of, the conjunctive particles are omitted in the same rapid manner: “ They ate,
 “ they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they
 “ builded.” The same lively and dramatic figure occurs in the parable of the covetous rich man: “ Soul, thou hast
 “ much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat,
 “ drink, be merry.” The

The most august scene which imagination can conceive is represented with a mixture of simplicity and pathos in our Lord's largest description of the proceedings at the last day. The glory and majesty of the Judge and King are contrasted by his humility and benevolence. The righteous resume his words in the most natural manner; and, by resuming them, seem to inculcate anew the duties of humanity, never elsewhere so forcibly recommended. In like manner, when the wicked recapitulate the omissions with which they are charged, we seem a second time warned against the guilt of such crimes. "But when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separateth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I hungered, and ye gave me meat; I thirsted 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. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, 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, 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. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I thirsted 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 hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into everlasting life." The elegant writer above-mentioned asks, From the words of what sage of antiquity can be produced so pathetic a recommendation

tion of benevolence to the distressed, and enforced by such assurances of a reward, as in these words of Christ?

From the many exquisite beauties in our Lord's parables, I shall select some that appear the most remarkable. In the parable of the barren fig-tree we have an instance of easy and natural narration, in which the fact is not coldly related, but enlivened by the introduction of a dialogue. "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he to the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? And he answered and said unto him Master, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it. And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

The opposition between the religious pride of the Pharisee, and the humility of the Publican, is strongly marked. "The Pharisee stood by himself, and prayed thus: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican stood afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

In the parable of the ten talents, related by St. Luke, there is a fine allusion to historical facts; which, I believe, Le Clerc first observed, "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.—But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us." Thus Herod the Great solicited the kingdom of Judea at Rome, and was appointed King by the interest of Antony with the senate: and afterwards he sailed to Rhodes, divested himself of his diadem, and received it again from Augustus. In like manner his sons Archelaus and Antipas repaired to the imperial city, that they might obtain the kingdom on their father's death: and we read that the Jews sent an embassy thither, with accusations against Archelaus.

In the following parable there is an ornamental addition, like what sometimes occurs in the best poetical descriptions. "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but, when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree: so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

It

It has been observed with respect to the parable of the good Samaritan, that there is great propriety in laying the scene of the transaction; as the mountainous desert between Jerusalem and Jericho was likely to be infested by robbers. The parable was also delivered soon after the feast of tabernacles; and therefore at a time when many were actually going down from Jerusalem to different parts of the country; and when the train of ideas in the minds of our Lord's hearers would lead them to aggravate the inhumanity of the Priest and Levite, by the reflection that they had been celebrating a religious festival, partaking of the oblations which the law assigned them, and reminded of their duty to relieve a distressed brother. The traveller is represented as the object of pity in plain and affecting terms: "He had fallen among thieves, " who had stripped him of his raiment, had wounded him, " and had departed, leaving him half dead." There cannot be a stronger opposition of character than between a Priest and a Levite, teachers and ministers of a law abounding in precepts of mercy to their brethren; and one who bore a religious enmity to the Jewish nation heightened by reciprocal acts of hatred and contempt. And yet even a Samaritan, whose name was a proverb of reproach, when he saw the wounded Jew "passed not by on the other side," like the countrymen of the Jew who were equally eye-witnesses of his distress; but "had compassion on him, and went to him, " and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and "set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, " and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pieces of money, and gave them "to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and "whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I "will repay thee." No moral teacher has exhibited a more illustrious triumph of compassion over principles by which it was most forcibly counteracted.

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus begins with descriptions of the principal persons, which reflect additional beauty on each other by the contrast. "There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, " and fared sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate full "of sores, and [in vain] desiring to be fed with the crumbs "which fell from the rich man's table." The picture is heightened by the following circumstance of horror: "moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores." But the narrative seems to imply much more than what is expressed: it
seems

seems to intimate that the sufferings of Lazarus were insupportable to human nature: for it is added, "And it came to pass that the beggar died.—The rich man, also, died; and was buried" with funeral pomp. After their death, a second contrast begins. "The beggar is carried by angels into Abraham's bosom:" he reclines at a heavenly banquet in a most distinguished place, the bosom of the great progenitor of the Jewish nation, the father of the faithful, and the friend of God. But the rich man is in torments, he sees afar off the happiness enjoyed by him whom he lately despised, and in vain beseeches Abraham that he would "send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool his tongue." Here the parable assumes a dramatic form; and it closes with an admonition and prophecy to which, in the opinion of the hearers, the greatest weight is given, as they are uttered by Abraham himself. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

The state of extreme wretchedness to which the Prodigal Son had reduced himself is painted with great expression in the parable so called. "When he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want; and he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country: and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he desired to fill his belly with the husks which the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him." In his hour of reflection and remorse, which his distress naturally awakened, he says; "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Make me as one of thy hired servants:" Accordingly when he comes to his father, he addresses him in these very words: "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." The compassion of the Father, and the strength of natural affection, which is weak in comparison of God's goodness, are thus beautifully represented: "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him." He seems also to interrupt his son in his act of confession and self-abasement, by the command "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand; and shoes on his feet: and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry:" for it remained that the son should add, "Make me as one of thy hired servants."

The

The jealousy and indignation of the Jews at the admission of the Gentiles into God's favour, their rejection of the gospel on that account, and God's benevolent endeavours to overcome their prejudices, are set forth with equal excellence in the remaining part of the parable. When the elder son knew the cause of the rejoicing, "he was angry and would not go in: therefore came his father out and intreated him. "And he answered and said to his father, Behold, 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: but as this thy Son was come, who hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." Here is ostentation of his own obedience; a charge of unkindness against his father; aggravation of the younger Son's conduct, for he does not vouchsafe him the endearing appellation of Brother; and expostulation with his father for an act of the greatest placability and goodness. The father replies with the most perfect mildness. The claim of uninterrupted obedience is not denied; and thus the case is put as favourably as possible for the Jews; and they are left, with much delicacy, to collect their guilt from their former history and present conduct. And whereas the angry language of this thy Son had been used, the father endeavours to raise the most tender sensations by changing it into this thy brother. "Son thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." We shall in vain search the treasures of ancient and modern learning for apologues equal in beauty to our Lord's parables in general, and particularly to the three last; which I have therefore somewhat largely illustrated.

In some of our Lord's discourses the sedate and composed affections prevail, displaying the humane and attractive virtues of the Speaker, penetrating and possessing the heart of the hearers, and clearly reflecting back the mild lustre of an amiable character: than which natural species of eloquence none is more persuasive and delightful. The best illustrations of this may be taken from our Lord's addresses to the companions of his ministry, and the future preachers of his gospel, on the night before his crucifixion.

He thus comforts them on his departure: "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God; believe also in me. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you. "And

“ 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 pray the Father, and he shall give
 “ you another advocate, that he may abide with you for ever.
 “ I will not leave you in an orphan state: I will come 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.”

He thus arms them against the persecutions which they were to undergo. “ If the world hate you, ye know that it
 “ hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world,
 “ the world would love his own: but because ye are not of
 “ the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, there-
 “ fore the world hateth you.—All these things will they do
 “ unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him
 “ that sent me.—They will put you out of the synagogues:
 “ yea the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think
 “ that he doeth God service.—But these things have I
 “ told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remem-
 “ ber that I told you of them.”

He thus exhorts them to the discharge of their duty as his disciples. “ If ye love me, keep my commandments. 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 manifest myself unto
 “ him. Herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much
 “ fruit: so shall ye be my disciples. If ye keep my com-
 “ mandments, ye shall abide in my love: even as I have kept
 “ my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. This
 “ is my commandment; that ye love one another, as I have
 “ loved you. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I com-
 “ mand you.”

And he thus supports and animates them, in the prayer with which he concludes these affectionate discourses. “ Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As
 “ thou hast given him power over all flesh; that he should
 “ give everlasting life to as many as thou hast given him.—
 “ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be
 “ with me where I am; that they may behold my glory
 “ which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the
 “ foundation of the world.”

But our Lord occasionally moves as well as persuades; and commands our passions as well as conciliates our affections. This will appear from the following instances; in which pity, terror, and hatred of vice, are strongly excited.

“ O Jerusalem,

“ O Jerufalem, Jerufalem, which killeft the prophets, and
 “ ſtoneft them that are ſent unto thee; how often would I
 “ have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth
 “ her brood under her wings; and ye would not? Behold
 “ your houfe is left unto you deſolate.—If thou hadft
 “ known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things
 “ which belong unto thy peace—But now they are hidden
 “ from thine eyes. For the days ſhall come upon thee, when
 “ thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs
 “ thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide: and ſhall lay
 “ thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee:
 “ and they ſhall not leave in thee one ſtone upon another:
 “ becauſe thou kneweſt not the time of thy viſitation.—Woe
 “ unto them that are with-child, and unto them that give
 “ ſuck, in thoſe days.—Behold, the days are coming in
 “ which they ſhall ſay, Bleſſed are the barren, and the
 “ wombs that never bare, and the breasts which never gave
 “ ſuck.”

“ Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to
 “ kill the ſoul: but rather fear him who is able to deſtroy
 “ both ſoul and body in hell.—Nation ſhall riſe againſt na-
 “ tion, and kingdom againſt kingdom: and there ſhall be
 “ famines, and peſtilences, and earthquakes, in divers
 “ places. All theſe are the beginning of ſorrows.—Immedi-
 “ ately 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. And there ſhall be ſigns in the ſun, and
 “ in the moon and in the ſtars; and upon the earth diſtreſs
 “ of nations with perplexity, the ſea and the waves roaring;
 “ men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after
 “ thoſe things which are coming on the earth: for the pow-
 “ ers of heaven ſhall be ſhaken.—Then ſhall they begin to
 “ ſay to the mountains, Fall on us: and to the hills, Cover
 “ us.—Then ſhall appear the ſign of the Son of Man in
 “ heaven; and then ſhall all the tribes of the land mourn:
 “ and they ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the clouds of
 “ heaven with power and great glory. And he ſhall ſend his
 “ angels with a trumpet of a great ſound, and ſhall gather
 “ together his elect, from the four winds, from one end of
 “ heaven to the other.”

“ O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, ſpeak
 “ good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the
 “ mouth ſpeaketh.—Every plant which my heavenly Father
 “ hath not planted ſhall be rooted up.—Let them alone.

“ They

“ They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind
 “ lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.—O ye hypo-
 “ crites, ye can discern the face of the sky: but can ye not
 “ discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous
 “ generation seeketh after a sign: and there shall be no sign
 “ given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.—Ye are
 “ of your father the devil, and the desires of your father ye
 “ seek to 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.”

But in our Lord's last address to the Scribes and Pharisees we have the most remarkable example of grave and sharp reproof, dictated by so perfect a knowledge of the heart, that every word must have stung the conscience of his hearers to the quick; and uttered, we may well suppose, with an earnestness and vehemence becoming the justest indignation against vice, and the dignity of a rejected and persecuted prophet.

The audience consisted of the disciples, the persons reprov'd, and all the people. The scene was the temple; now last filled with glory by the presence of Jesus. The time was the paschal week, the fourth day before our Lord's crucifixion, and that on which he concluded his public instructions.

The remote occasion of this severe reprehension was the conduct of the Scribes and Pharisees throughout our Lord's ministry. Before he had finished half his course, they twice sought to kill him for healing on the Sabbath; though we have seen that he defended these acts of humanity and mercy, by invincible arguments. They hardened themselves in their disbelief of him, notwithstanding the witness which God gave of him at his birth, at his baptism, and during his whole intercourse among them; notwithstanding the testimony of his Fore-runner whom all held to be a prophet, the excellence of his doctrine, the sinless rectitude of his life, his acquaintance with all their thoughts, his appeals to Moses and the prophets whose predictions of the Messiah he was daily fulfilling, and his own great and numerous miracles: ascribing these to Satan, though designed to subvert the kingdom of Satan; and endeavouring to compass Jesus's death for the most illustrious of them, the raising of Lazarus after he had lain four days in the grave.

The immediate occasion of our Lord's asperity was, that the chief priests and scribes questioned him by what authority he

he acted, with a design of putting him to death for avowing that authority; that the Pharisees sought to apprehend him for describing the punishment of their unbelief in a parable; that they suborned spies to ensnare him in his discourse, in order to deliver him up to the Roman governor; and that their malice prompted a feeble attempt to lessen his public reputation for wisdom by proposing to him difficult questions. These, we must observe, were the preceding events of this very day.

The subject of this intrepid, eloquent, and pathetic animadversion is, the attention due to the Scribes and Pharisees as teachers of Moses's law, notwithstanding the strange inconsistency between their doctrines and practice; their rigorous exaction of traditionary observances, burthens which they refused to alleviate in the smallest degree, though they saw the people sinking under the weight of them; their ostentation in all their works, pompous shew of reverence for the law, pride, love of reputation for religious wisdom, and of uncontrolled authority in religious decisions. A woe is denounced against them for excluding men from the Messiah's kingdom by the terrors of temporal punishments; for devouring the substance of widows, and hiding their rapacity under the cloak of superior holiness; for their unwearied zeal in making proselytes to doctrines and practices which plunged men in destruction; for their blindness and infatuation in deciding, that oaths by the gold of the temple and by the gift on the altar, were obligatory, and discharging those from all obligation, who swore by the temple and altar, to which the gold and the gift owed their sanctity; for their scrupulousness in performing the minuter parts of the law, and their flagrant guilt in omitting the weightier; for cleaning the outside of vessels, which they filled by means of rapine and injustice; for the speciousness of their external appearance, when all within was the rankest foulness and pollution; for honouring the memories of former prophets, and disclaiming the conduct of their forefathers who slew them, while they persecuted and crucified those of their own times. The whole concludes with a prophecy of their rencour against the Christian church, with a denunciation of present and future vengeance for their subtle and dangerous malignity, with a most affecting apostrophe to Jerusalem, an allusion to the destruction of the temple, and a prediction of the Messiah's future glorious appearance, when every knee should bow to him and every tongue confess him.

“ We

We read in the gospels that the people were astonished at our Lord's doctrine, "because he taught them as one having authority;" that when he visited Nazareth the second time during his ministry, the inhabitants of that city asked, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?" and that the Jewish officers, who were sent to apprehend him, made the following remarkable confession, "Never man spake like this man." And we further read, that, when he first preached the gospel in the synagogue at Nazareth, "all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;" and that two of his disciples, with whom he conversed after his resurrection, said one to another on his departure from them, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?" We have therefore testimonies to our Lord's eloquence, as well as to his authority and wisdom. Sublimity is inseparable from great minds and great subjects: every natural expression either of the amiable qualities of the heart, or of its stronger emotions, cannot but affect and strike us; and the highest truths delivered with simplicity, and often with the bold ornaments of eastern metaphor, proverb, or parable, have a diversified beauty, which the human mind is prone to acknowledge and admire in whatever shape it appears. In the mean time, the great and uniform object of our heavenly teacher was to communicate religious and moral instruction, and to sanctify the heart: his ornaments are unsought, and arise out of the subject with the greatest ease and majesty.

I shall digress an instant to consider the following question: why did not God inspire the preachers of the gospel, and the writers of the new testament, with the most perfect language and manner? I answer, that God has preferred affording internal evidence of the Christian revelation by the truth and purity of its doctrines and precepts, and external evidence of it by miracles and prophecies, perhaps for these among other reasons: that the faith of Christ's disciples "might not," originally, "stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God;" which is St. Paul's reason for not preaching "with the persuasive words of man's wisdom;" that, in after ages, the framing of the Christian system might not be attributed to the superior abilities of such consummate writers: that the sacred records might carry plain marks that they were written by those whose names they bear: that the attention of men might be principally turned to the authority of the lawgiver, and the reasonableness of his laws: and that no superfluous miracle might be wrought; as such an

interposition would not have answered any religious purpose, and mankind are equally instructed in the present way.

It is true that nothing can exceed the high poetical ornaments in many parts of the Old Testament. In the earliest times, previous to the knowledge of letters and the existence of records, poems were most likely to be remembered, admired, and sent down to posterity. And God was pleased to consecrate poetry to the service of religion occasionally in the Hebrew historians; and especially in the writings of Job, David, Solomon, and those whom the Jews call The latter prophets. I conjecture that the Hebrew poets were early trained up to compositions of this kind, accompanied with music: and God seems graciously to have inspired them in the same form, to engage the attention, to impress the memory, to animate the affections, and to kindle the devotions, of a people prone to idolatry.

The recorded poetry of the New Testament occurs only in the hymns of Elizabeth, Mary, Zacharias, and Simeon: though it appears that hymns were also inspired, by the Spirit in devout assemblies of Christians. Christianity, an universal religion, is recommended to the reason and veneration of all mankind by its intrinsic excellence and supernatural proofs, and by the dignity and majesty with which it is delivered.

Observations on our Lord's Conduct.

51. MR. JOHN RANDALL.

IN the Sacred Writings the reader will find, in a higher degree, besides the amazing plan of God's providence to conduct men to heaven, the ornaments of sublimity of thought, moving tenderness of passion, and vigorous strength of expression, than are to be found in any of the most celebrated authors, ancient or modern. The metaphors are apposite and lively, and raise the admiration of the modest reader, who, upon perusal, would see that these Holy Books have at least every beauty and excellence to be found in all the Greek and Roman authors, and a great many more and stronger than in all the most admired classics. Where shall we meet with the neat plainness, natural eloquence, and variety of circumstances, as we find in the history of the antediluvian patriarchs, of Abraham and his descendants, of Joseph and his brethren? In short, run the comparison throughout the Sacred Pages with the finest authors, and these will, in general, fall very short, in point of purity, propriety, and true eloquence. Then, surely, it is at least worth a young gentleman's

gentleman's time to apply himself to the store-house of such excellencies of expression, and sublime beauties of thought.
Analysis of the Old and New Testament.

52. REV. THOMAS AMORY, D. D.

THE poetical parts of Scripture, in grand and affecting descriptions of the divine perfections and works, in dignity of sentiment, and strong and beautiful colouring, far exceed Homer, Virgil, and the most admired writers of Paganism. And for true eloquence, whether of the awful and commanding, the clear and convincing, the tender or persuasive kinds; the exhortations of Moses, Isaiah, or Jeremiah, several of St. Paul's speeches, and his fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, will stand a comparison with the most celebrated orations of Demosthenes or Cicero.

Sermons on various Subjects.

53. BISHOP NEWTON.

IN the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah there is an Epinikion, or a triumphant ode upon the fall of Babylon. It represents the infernal mansions as moved, and the ghosts of deceased tyrants as rising to meet the king of Babylon, and congratulate his coming among them. It is really admirable for the severest strokes of irony, as well as for the sublimest strains of poetry. The Greek poet Alcæus, who is celebrated for his hatred to tyrants, and whose odes are animated with the spirit of liberty no less than with the spirit of poetry, we may presume to say, never wrote any thing comparable to it.

Dissertations on the Prophecies.

54. DR. WITHERSPOON.

Language of the gospel wonderfully sublime.

A SERIOUS and attentive mind, on perusing the Sacred Volume, can hardly help being often struck both with the sentiments and language of the inspired writers on the subject of redemption. With what a deep veneration of soul, with what warmth of affection, with what transports of adoring thankfulness do they speak of the plan laid by divine wisdom, for the salvation of lost sinners by the cross of Christ! A person possessed only of understanding and taste, may admire these sallies of holy fervour, for the elevation of thought, and boldness of expression, which a man's being in good earnest on an interesting subject doth naturally inspire.

Sermons.

55. REV. PHILIP SKELTON.

THE style of the Scriptures is, in one respect, as various as the ages in which it was dictated, or the peculiar genius of each prophet or apostle who committed it to writing, can well be supposed to have made it, had no common inspirer or dictator directed their pens. Their different choice of words, and use of phrases, are apparent not only in the originals, but even in the translations. Yet, in another respect, there are several peculiarities that seem to distinguish it from the writings of men, though under the disadvantage of a translation, made by mere men; which does not hinder it from demonstrating infinitely more beauty in one part; more force and pathos in another; more true sublimity, and yet simplicity, in all; than the most exquisite productions of human genius in their original dress. It is delivered in a species of writing quite distinct from that of the classics, and more natural. Those justly admired performances shew the highest improvement to which the mind of man can, by its own efforts, ascend. They are perfectly exact and delicate. They are so highly polished and finished, that hardly a single thought or word can be replaced by another, without a sensible loss. But then, with all this, they are really stiff, laboured, low, and languid, in comparison of the Scriptures. The art with which they are penned discovers itself, in spite of all their care to conceal it, not only in the texture of the work at large, and the nice adjustment of its matter, but in the choice of every phrase, and the very cadence of every period. It is quite otherwise in the Bible. We have there no appearance of art; no manner of care about minutenesses, about polished words, and prim phrases, and little prettinesses. It does not appear, from any one passage of the whole, that the writer had the least intention to strike the minds of his readers with any thing else than the force of his thoughts, conveyed in a rough and masculine dress. Hence arises this admirable effect, that no part of our attention is impudently amused with the words, but all given to the sentiment, which goes naked to the heart with an energy not to be resisted. When men speak, they require art and address to give strength and persuasion to what they say. But it is not so with God. He can speak to the mind by spirit and thought alone; and never uses words, but for a memorial of what he says. When he condescends to deliver himself in this human vehicle, he will not vouchsafe to borrow any thing from it, but mere conveyance; nay, he

disdains

disdains the low assistance of method, because it borders on art. He scatters flowers and fruit with such an unaffected profusion, as sets the art of the gardener in a very contemptible light, on the comparison. Hence it is, that a garden can please us but for a very little time, whereas the face of nature is ever new and delightful; so the finical performances of writers uninspired, howsoever pleasing they may be at first, soon grow dull and languid on the taste; while such as God vouchsafes to dictate, not only bear, but improve on a thousand readings. New sense, new beauty, new force, spring up at every repetition, as if all the sentiments had vegetated since the last. But this is owing to the prodigious depth of what he says, which does not, like the thoughts of men, ostentatiously display all its strength and beauty on the surface, but reserves enough to invite and reward every return of our attention. What other stories affect us like that of Joseph and his brethren? What fables, produced by human wit, strike the mind like the parables of Christ, or like that of Nathan to David? How poor and unaffecting are all the descriptions of God's works in other performances, to those we find in the book of Job? How low and spiritless are all the attempts of other writers to raise our idea of the divine Majesty, in comparison of those we find in the Psalms, and in the prophecies of Isaiah, and in the Apocalypse? How shall we account for it, that all other writers, who made it their sole business to aim at force, at dignity and sublimity, should fall so infinitely short of the Scriptural writers, who certainly aimed at no such thing? *Works.*

56. PHILIP DE MORNAY.

IN Scripturis habemus prophetias, et in his, minas, conciones, vehementes motus: in eo verò argumento tonant, et cothurnum induunt, quo in genere Latini Ciceronem mirantur. Testor hic, quicumque eadem mente, eodem animi flatu, utrumque legerunt; Quid ad Isaiam Cicero? Et quid Ciceronis blandæ ille insinuationes, ad viva et gravia, venerandaque ipsâ majestate, Esaïæ exordia? Quid longæ illæ, quanquam numerosæ, illius periodi; quibus sibi ipsi blanditur, ad illa hujus commata, tum concisa tum planè incisoria, quibus, tanquam conduplicatis fulminibus, contumacissimos quosque stupefacit et terret? Sed et inter Græcos, Cicero ipse Æschinem, in illâ scâ adversus Demosthenem oratione, miratur; quo loco sese ille in furores et convicia, effundit, fanatico quam mentis compoti proprio:—Quid illa eloquentiæ, vehementiæ, sublimitatis, habent, lectores utrinque rogo,

ad hæc nostri Iſaie paucula verba? “ Audite, cæli, et auribus
 “ percipe, &c.” *De Veritate Relig. Chriſt.*

57. MR. THOMAS SCOTT.

THE majesty and ſublimity of the book of Job have been admired by writers of the firſt rank in genius, taſte, and learning. Mr. Pope, in particular, ſays, that the whole book, with regard both to ſublimity of thought and morality, exceeds beyond all compariſon the moſt noble parts of Homer. —And I add, it excels in concifenefs, force, and fulneſs of expreſſion, in maſterly painting both of the violent and tender paſſions, in moving representations of human life, great powers of deſcription, and the noble ſimplicity of its theology and ethics.

On the book of Job.

58. BISHOP BROWNE.

Compariſon between the eloquence of Jeſus Chriſt and that of the ancient Heathens.

I SHALL only obſerve in ſhort, that they adapted themſelves and all they ſaid to men's luſts and paſſions; to their corrupt appetites and inclinations, and took all advantages of their ignorance, and prejudice, and credulity; whereas our Saviour laid all that aſide, and applied himſelf only to the pureſt reaſon of men, and their beſt and moſt regular inclinations; having no end but one, namely to lay a firm foundation for holineſs. They perſuaded by ſoothing and cheriſhing the imperfections of nature; his diſcourſes tended only to heal and rectify them. They moved with ſenſible representations only: he inſiſted on things ſpiritual and inſenſible. Their great topics were riches, and honours, and pleaſures, and caſe, and ſplendor; his rhetoric was croſſes and miſfortunes, afflictions and miſeries, torments and death; inſomuch, that he preached what was altogether new to the world, that they were bleſſed that mourn; and that through much tribulation men muſt enter into the kingdom of heaven. They uſed all the methods of deluſion and fallacy, thoſe words of men's wiſdom; he overcame only by undiſguiſed and naked truth. By this ſhort compariſon, we ſee how little thoſe mighty ſtandards of Heathen eloquence begin to appear already; for in truth their oratory was but one great art of deceiving. How very different from this is that of our Saviour, who never ſpoke but that men might become more wiſe, and virtuous, and holy?—As he was the moſt excellent perſon that ever was, ſo he was the greateſt orator.

The

The tongues of men and angels are not able to describe this divine eloquence, according to the worth and dignity of it.

Sermons on various subjects.

59. DIONYSIUS.

THE Gospel and Epistles of St. John are not only written most correctly and agreeable to the purity of the Greek tongue, but they are also composed with great elegance in the words, in the argumentations and whole contexture of the discourse: so impossible is it to find any barbarism or solecism, or lastly, any idiotism in them.

60. REV. JOSEPH WHITE, B. D.

I BEG your permission to introduce some interesting, and, I hope, not impertinent reflections on the nature of that historical form in which the Christian revelation has been transmitted to us.

This form involves the correctness of system without its obtrusiveness, and the energy of eloquence without its ostentation. It happily unites the brightness of example with the precision and perspicuity of precept. To the minuteness of detail which belongs to biography, it adds much of that regular arrangement, and of that vivid colouring, by which the more eminent writers of poetry have endeavoured to mark the distinguishing and appropriate qualities of their favourite heroes.

Instead of sometimes amusing, and sometimes astonishing us, with those brilliant, but indistinct and fleeting impressions, which are excited by general descriptions, or elaborate panegyric, it leads us through a series of uniform and characteristic actions, into a clear and full knowledge of the agent. It enables, and gently impels the mind to combine by its own operation all the detached instances of virtue into one bright assemblage. It transports the imagination, as it were, into the presence of the person whose excellencies are recorded, and gives all the finer sensibilities of the soul an immediate and warm interest in every word and every action. Hence, the manner in which the sacred writers have described the actions of Christ, not only increases the efficacy of his instructions, but constitutes a new, a striking, and peculiar species of evidence for the truth of his religion.

This position, it may be of use for us, to illustrate yet further.

To compare the character of Socrates with that of Christ, is foreign to our present purpose: but of the manner in which
their

their lives have been respectively written, we may properly take some notice. On the history of Socrates then, have been employed the exquisite taste of Xenophon, and the sublime genius of Plato. The virtues of this extraordinary man are selected by them as the noblest subjects for the fullest display and most active exertion of their talents; and they have brought to the task, not merely the sagacity of philosophers, but the affection of friends, and the zeal of enthusiasts.

Now the different style of their writings, and the different tempers as well as capacities of the writers themselves, have produced some variety both in the scenes in which they have exhibited their master, and in the opinions which they have ascribed to him. But in the composition of each, Socrates is distinguished by a noble contempt of popular prejudice, and perverted science; by an ardent admiration and steady pursuit of virtue; by an anxious concern for the moral improvement of his hearers; and by an heroic superiority to the pleasures of life, and to the terrors of impending death. What his illustrious biographers have performed in such a manner as to engage the attention, and excite the admiration of successive ages, has been accomplished with yet greater success by the sacred writers. They have attained the same end under heavier difficulties, and by the aid of means, which if they are considered as merely human, must surely be deemed inadequate to the task which they undertook. They were by no means distinguished by literary attainments, or by intellectual powers. Their education could not bestow on them very exalted or correct ideas of morality; and their writings were destitute of every recommendation from the artificial ornaments of style. Yet have these four unlearned men effected by their artless simplicity a work, to which the talents of the two greatest writers of antiquity were not more than equal.

They have exhibited a character far more lively in itself, and far more venerable, than fiction has ever painted; and in their mode of exhibiting it, they surpass the fidelity, the distinctness, and precision, which two of the most celebrated writers have been able to preserve, when exerting the whole powers of their genius, and actuated by the fondest attachment, they were endeavouring to do justice to the noblest pattern of real virtue of which antiquity can boast. In Jesus have the Evangelists described brighter and more numerous virtues, than Socrates is said even by his professed admirers to have possessed. In their descriptions they have without effort,

effort, and under the influence, it must be allowed, of sincere conviction only, maintained a greater uniformity than the most prejudiced reader can discover in the beautiful compositions of Plato and Xenophon.

If the desire of communicating their own favourite opinions, or the mutual jealousy of literary fame, be assigned as a reason for the diversity of representation in the two Greek writers, we allow the probability of both suppositions: but we contend, that each of these motives is inconsistent with that love of truth, which is necessary to establish the credibility of a biographer. We also contend, that the evangelists were really possessed of this excellent quality; that they never deviated from it, in order to indulge their enmity or envy; and that with apparent marks of difference in their language, their dispositions, and perhaps in their abilities, they have yet exhibited the character of Christ the most striking, if their narratives be separately considered; and the most consistent, if they be compared with each other. Be it observed too, that the difficulty of preserving that consistence increases both with the peculiarity and magnitude of the excellencies described, and with the number of the persons who undertake the office of describing them.

If it be said, that the superior pretensions of Christ, as a divine teacher, required more splendid virtues than what are expected from Socrates, who taught morality upon principles of human reason only; whence is it that the unpolished, uncultivated minds of the evangelists should even conceive a more magnificent character than the imaginations of a Plato, or a Xenophon? What aids did they apparently possess for representing it more advantageously? That those four unlettered men should have drawn such a character, with more uniformity in the whole, and with more sublimity in the parts, is therefore a fact which can be accounted for only, by admitting the constant and immediate guidance of the Holy Spirit, the real existence of Christ's perfections, and the strong and lasting impression they made upon those who conversed with him. Those perfections themselves were, indeed, extraordinary both in kind and in degree. In their kind they are admirable patterns for the conduct of Christ's followers: and in their degree, they are eminently and indisputably proportioned to the transcendent and unrivalled dignity of his own mission,

Every reader of discernment is disgusted at the fictitious representation of those faultless monsters which the world ne'er saw: every writer of taste finds it necessary to procure credit

to his representations, by throwing some shades of error and infirmity over the wisest and best of men: every impartial and profound enquirer into the constitution of the human mind, is aware that the ruling passion, by which the most amiable and venerable of men are distinguished, sometimes degenerates into excess, that the indiscriminate and eager pursuit of virtue itself imperceptibly leads into vice; that the most illustrious characters are distinguished by some predominant excellence; that he who surpasses his fellow creatures in some instances, falls below them in others; and that, among the sons of men, no one has yet existed, in whom every great and good quality, every religious and social perfection, have been at once united.

To these incontrovertible and general rules, the life of Christ affords one glorious exception. There is a variety in his virtues which never shocks probability; and at the same time there is an uniformity, which never creates satiety. Upon the most common actions he bestows a novelty in his manner of performing them: the uncommon he recommends by a simplicity, which adds to their charms, without degrading their dignity.

Here, indeed, it becomes me to observe, that in all his actions he, without any appearance of design, preserves that decorum which the ancient philosophers have explained with so much ingenuity, and which is utterly beyond the reach of affectation or imposture. In abstaining from licentious pleasures he was equally free from ostentatious singularity, and churlish fullness. In partaking, as he sometimes did, the innocent enjoyment of life, he never fell into the gaiety of the Epicurean; in relinquishing them, when the great ends of his mission required it, he was equally free from the assumed and unnatural insensibility of the Stoic. When he complied with the established ceremonies of his countrymen, that compliance was not accompanied by any marks of bigotry or superstition: when he opposed their rooted prepossessions, his opposition was perfectly exempt from the captious petulance of a controversialist, and the undistinguishing zeal of an innovator.

It is well known, that some virtues owe much of their lustre to local and temporary circumstances; and that the same actions which may be highly, nay even justly extolled in one age or country, are in others surveyed with listless indifference. In antiquity, says an acute observer, the heroes of philosophy, as well as those of war and patriotism, have a grandeur and force of sentiment which astonishes our narrow
souls,

fouls, and is rashly considered as extravagant and supernatural. They, in their turn, I allow, would have equal reason to consider as romantic and incredible, the degree of humanity, clemency, order, tranquility, and other social virtues, to which in the administration of government we have attained in modern times, had any one been then alive to have made a fair representation of them.

The life of Christ blends these opposite and seemingly irreconcilable excellencies. It avoids their extravagance, and supplies their defects. The courage of our Lord was active in encountering the dangers to which he was exposed, and passive under the aggravated calamities which the malice of his foes heaped upon him. Yet his fortitude was remote from every appearance of rashness; and his patience was equally exempt from abject pusillanimity and stupid apathy. He was firm without obstinacy, and humble without meanness. In the general tenor of his life he was mild and gentle; the promoter of peace amongst other men, and the strictest observer of it in his own behaviour. But when great and real occasions called for different deportment, he displayed a nobleness of mind, a contempt of danger and death, such as the importance of his mission required from him, and such as the conscientiousness of rectitude could alone inspire.

To the virtues of Christ, whether we consider them as too sublime to excite any sentiments of presumptuous emulation, or too rational not to justify our endeavours to imitate them; whether we examine his private or his public conduct; may in a nobler sense be applied the beautiful and animated language, in which a celebrated orator of antiquity has extolled those arts, by which he was himself distinguished:

Adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.

Those virtues, indeed, will in no age and no country lose either their usefulness, their beauty, or their merit. They are, in various degrees practicable; under every form of government, whether free or despotic; under every modification of manners, whether barbarous or refined; and in every state of knowledge, whether it be imperfect or improved. In the lowest condition of the world, they tend to lessen the miseries and disorders to which the unsearchable providence of God has subjected our species: they will increase the stock of our happiness, and exalt our nature to the highest perfection, when accompanied by every assistance which reason,
which

which philosophy and civilization can bestow in forming the moral or the religious character of man.

These observations will, I trust, both elucidate and justify the biographical form in which revelation is conveyed to us. God, it is true, might have made known to us his will, by a series of laws, by abstract reasonings, by short instructive sentences, by copious and regular systems, or by any of the various modes of human composition. But Christianity aims at a nobler end, and pursues it by the most proper and efficacious methods. We read, indeed, the opinions and the belief of Socrates, and the commands and promises of Mahomet. But by Jesus Christ, virtue of every kind and in every degree, is exemplified as well as taught. He is the pattern as well as the teacher of the duties we are to perform. His precepts shew us what we ought to practise; his conduct convinces us that it is practicable; and the rewards which he has offered, are powerful incentives to us to practise it from the best motives, and in the best manner. His resurrection from the grave confirms our faith; his ascension to glory animates our hopes; the actions of his life, and the circumstances of his death, enlarge and invigorate our charity. By these means all the parts of Christianity form one great and consistent whole: every moral rule is realized, and becomes a proof of religious truth; whilst every religious truth, in its turn, illustrates and enforces every moral rule. The actions of God himself are, indeed, invisible; those of men are imperfect; but the actions of Christ (considered in his human character) are both visible and perfect: they are level to our apprehensions, and most worthy of our imitation.

Religion is thus made intelligible to all, because all are bound to obey it. It is accompanied by a species of demonstration, which the meanest cannot misunderstand; it is recommended by such an instance of its beauty and its usefulness, as is calculated to remove every scruple, and to silence every objection.

Comparison between Christ and Mahomet.

CONSIDERED in all its circumstances, the History of Christ shirks not from comparison with the most partial and lofty representation of the prophet of Arabia.

Of both we find, that the earlier part of life, before the publications of their respective missions, passed away in silence, private and undistinguished. The first years of Mahomet were busied in the cares of merchandize; till returning to his native city, he devoted to solitude and retirement the leisure

leisure which his opulence had procured. The youth of Jesus was spent in domestic privacy, and was remarkable only for affectionate and dutiful submission to his parents: unless, indeed, when in the temple, he by his ready answers to the questions of the Rabbins, and his skilful exposition of the Scriptures, astonished those that heard him, and gave an omen of his future greatness.

The designs of Mahomet were gradually and cautiously unfolded; and in order to prepare the minds of his countrymen for the reception of his faith, he first artfully persuaded his own relations and domestics, and drew to his side the most powerful of his neighbours.

“Jesus walked forth by the sea of Galilee, and saw fishers “casting their nets.” These were his first converts and disciples. Though they were destitute of riches and of power, he found in them what his ministry required, an honest and a willing spirit. He won them neither by subtle arguments, nor crafty persuasions; but bade them forsake their nets and follow him, to see his humble dwelling, to hear his heavenly discourses to the people, and witness the wonders he was going to perform.

Jesus called his hearers to repentance, but Mahomet to conquest.

At their first appearance they were both compelled to avoid the rage of the multitude, who would have destroyed them: but Mahomet escaped by a secret, ignominious flight, and Jesus by a public miracle.

The revelation of the Arabian prophet was inconsistent; a system of contradiction, continually thiving with the views of his policy, and the necessities of his imposture; now looking towards Mecca and now to Jerusalem. Widely different was the conduct of Christ. He did not seek to accommodate his doctrine to fortuitous changes in his external circumstances; he did not at one time revoke what he had asserted, or contradict what he had enjoined, at another. Every part of his teaching was regular and consistent in the objects to which it was directed, and the language in which it was conveyed.

Mahomet allured his followers with the glories of a visible monarchy, and the splendor of temporal dominion. In him we behold the Lord of war, and the destroyer of mankind, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands who fell by his desolating sword; laying cities in flames; carrying misery and bloodshed through the earth; and pursued in his victorious career by the lamentations and curses of its inhabitants.

bitants. In Jesus we see the adoreable prince of peace, the friend and saviour of the world, riding meekly to the holy city, hailed with the acclamations and blessings of much people, whom he had rescued from sin and death, wiping the tears from all eyes, and healing every sickness and every disease.

And here the comparison must cease. The events that followed in our Saviour's life are too august to be placed in competition with any mortal power, and can be comprehended only by minds habituated to the contemplation of heavenly objects. Let us consider the passion of our Lord, and the magnificent scenes of his resurrection and ascension; and then ask, in what part of all the history of Mahometanism any parallel or resemblance can be found? Let us consider the last days of Christ's continuance upon earth, and how does the prophet of Mecca sink in the comparison? Let us in imagination hear and see the blessed Jesus, when he gives his Apostles authority to go forth and baptize all nations, and preach in his name repentance and remission of sins; when he empowers them to cast out evil spirits, to speak with new tongues, and to work wonders; when he holds up to them the promise of the comforter and power from on high; and when having blessed them, he ascends into heaven, where he is for ever seated in glory on the right hand of God.

But chiefly, what raises Christ and his religion far above all the fictions of Mahomet, is that awful alternative of hopes and fears, that looking for judgment, which our Christian faith sets before us.

At that day, when time, the great arbiter of truth and falsehood, shall bring to pass the accomplishment of the ages, and the Son of God shall make his enemies his foot-stool; then shall the deluded followers of the great impostor, disappointed of the expected intercession of their prophet, stand trembling and dismayed at the appearance of the glorified Messiah.

Then shall they say, Yonder cometh in the clouds that Jesus whose religion we laboured to destroy, whose temples we profaned, whose servants and followers we cruelly oppressed! Behold he cometh: but no longer the humble son of Mary, no longer a mere mortal prophet, the equal of Abraham and of Moses, as that deceiver taught us; but the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father! The Judge of mankind! The Sovereign of Angels! The Lord of all things both in earth and heaven

Comparison

Comparison between the Gospel of Christ and the Alcoran of Mahomet.

THE first praise of all the productions of genius, is invention; that quality of the mind, which, by the extent and quickness of its views, is capable of the largest conceptions, and of forming new combinations of objects the most distant and unusual. But the Koran bears little impression of this transcendent character. Its materials are wholly borrowed from the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, from the Talmudical legends and apocryphal gospels then current in the East, and from the traditions and fables which abounded in Arabia. The materials collected from these several sources, are here heaped together, with perpetual and needless repetitions, without any settled principle or visible connection.

When a great part of the life of Mahomet had been spent in preparatory meditation on the system he was about to establish, its chapters were dealt out slowly and separately during the long period of three and twenty years. Yet thus defective in its structure, and not less exceptionable in its doctrines, was the work which Mahomet delivered to his followers as the oracles of God.

The most prominent feature of the Koran, that point of excellence in which the partiality of its admirers has ever delighted to view it, is the sublime notion it generally impresses of the nature and attributes of God. If its author had really derived these just conceptions from the inspiration of that Being whom they attempt to describe, they would not have been surrounded, as they now are on every side, with error and absurdity. But it might easily be proved, that whatever it justly defines of the divine attributes, was borrowed from our Holy Scripture; which even from its first promulgation, but especially from the completion of the New Testament, has extended the views, and enlightened the understandings of mankind; and thus furnished them with arms, which have too often been ineffectually turned against itself by its ungenerous enemies.

In this instance particularly, the copy is far below the great original, both in the propriety of its images, and the force of its descriptions. Our Holy Scriptures are the only compositions that can enable the dim sight of mortality to penetrate into the invisible world, and to behold a glimpse of the divine perfections. Accordingly, when they would represent to us the happiness of heaven, they describe it, not by any thing minute and particular, but by something general and great; something, that without descending to any
determinate

determinate object, may at once by its beauty and immensity, excite our wishes and elevate our affections. Though in the prophetic and evangelical writings the joys that shall attend us in a future state are often mentioned with ardent admiration, they are expressed rather by indefinite and figurative terms, than by any thing fixed and determinate. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." What a reverence and astonishment does this passage excite in every hearer of taste and piety? What energy, and at the same time what simplicity in the expression? How sublime, and at the same time, how obscure is the imagery?

Different was the conduct of Mahomet in his descriptions of heaven and of Paradise. Unassisted by the necessary influence of virtuous intentions and divine inspiration, he was neither desirous, nor indeed able to exalt the minds of men to sublime conceptions, or to rational expectations. By attempting to explain what is inconceivable, to describe what is ineffable, and to materialize what in itself is spiritual; he absurdly and impiously aimed to sensualize the purity of the divine essence. Thus he fabricated a system of incoherence, a religion of depravity, totally repugnant indeed to the nature of that Being, who, as he pretended, was its object; but therefore more likely to accord with the appetites and conceptions of a corrupt and sensual age.

That I may not appear to exalt our Scriptures thus far above the Koran by an unreasonable preference, I shall produce a part of the second chapter of the latter, which is deservedly admired by the Mahometans, who wear it engraved on their ornaments, and recite it in their prayers.

God! there is no God but he; the living, the self-subsisting: neither slumber nor sleep seizeth him: to him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven and on earth. Who is he that can intercede with him but through his good pleasure? He knoweth that which is past, and that which is to come. His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the preservation of both is to him no burden. He is the high, the mighty.

To this description who can refuse the praise of magnificence? Part of that magnificence however is to be referred to that verse of the Psalmist, whence it was borrowed, "He that keepeth Israel, shall neither slumber nor sleep."

But

But if we compare it with that other passage of the same inspired Psalmist, all its boasted grandeur is at once obscured, and lost in the blaze of a greater light.

“ O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days ;
 “ thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast
 “ thou laid the foundations of the earth ; and the heavens
 “ are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou
 “ shalt endure : yea all of them shall wax old as doth a gar-
 “ ment ; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they
 “ shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and thy years
 “ shall not fail.”

The Koran, therefore, upon a retrospective view of these several circumstances, far from supporting its arrogant claim to a supernatural work, sinks below the level of many compositions confessedly of human original : and still lower does it fall in our estimation, when compared with that pure and perfect pattern which we justly admire in the Scriptures of truth.

Sermons at Bampton's Lecture, passim.

61. CORNELIUS A LAPIDE.

OBSERVE what is the length of eternity. How long shall God and his saints reign ? How long shall the damned burn in hell ? For ever. How long is that ? Imagine a hundred thousand years : but that is nothing in respect of eternity. Imagine ten hundred thousand years, yea, as many ages : but that also is nothing in comparison of eternity. Imagine a thousand million of years : still they are nothing. Eternity is the same, and will always be so. Proceed and number as many more as you can : add millions to millions as long as you please, and then suppose the damned to burn in hell all this vast duration : when you have done all this you have not yet found the end of eternity. Imagine again as many millions of millions of years as there are drops in the sea, and you cannot yet come to the end of eternity. Such is the duration of that eternity of happiness, which the saints and angels enjoy in heaven ; and such is the duration of that eternity of torments which God hath decreed to the damned in hell.

In Exodum.

62. MR. JAMES FERGUSON.

Concerning the prophet Daniel's seventy weeks.

Dan. Chap. ix, from V. 24 to the end.

IN the beginning of this part of the prophecy, it is asserted, that from the time the commandment was given to

restore and build Jerufalem, to the expiation made for fin, there fhould be feventy weeks : and every one will allow that this expiation was made by the death of Chrift.

In the 7th chapter of Ezra, we are informed that this commandment was given to Ezra by Artaxerxes, king of Perfia, in the 7th year of his reign ; which, according to Ptolemy's canon (reckoning by years of the Julian period) was the 457th year before the vulgar æra of Chrift's birth, which was in the 4713th year of the Julian period.

It is demonftrable, by the unerring motions of the fun and moon, that Chrift was crucified in the 33d year of his age, accounted from the vulgar date of his birth. For the gospels affure us that he was crucified on the day next before the Jewifh fabbath, and at the time of the paffover, which was always kept on a full moon day. But our Saturday is the Jewifh fabbath, and therefore the crucifixion was on a Friday : and it is remarkable, that the only paffover full moon that fell on a Friday, between the 20th and 40th year after Chrift's birth, was in the 33d year of his age ; and that year was the 4746th year of the Julian period.

Hence it is plain, that there were 490 years between the time of Ezra's commiffion and the death of Chrift. But if we fhould take the above-mentioned weeks to be only common weeks of days, it would make the interval no more than 70 times 7 days, or one year and 125 days : fo that, 'tis impoffible that thefe weeks fhould mean weeks of days.

In the 6th verfe of the 4th chapter of Ezekiel, we have thefe remarkable words of God to that prophet, " I have appointed thee each day for a year." And now, if we take Daniel's weeks, not for weeks of days but for weeks of years, we fhall have the interval of time between Ezra's commiffion and the death of Chrift to confift of 490 years, in full agreement with Ptolemy's canon, and the method of afcertaining the true year of our Saviour's death by Aftronomy.

And here let it be obferved, that the two Hebrew words which are tranflated feventy weeks, in our Englifh Bible, ought ftrictly to have been tranflated feventy fevens ; which fevens may be underftood as well to mean fevens of years as fevens of days.

Taking them then in the largeft fenfe, as weeks or fevens of years, and reading that prophecy from the 24th verfe (where it begins) to the end of the chapter, we fhall find, that 49 years were allotted for making the proper repairs in Jerufalem and reftoring the ftate of the Jews : from the end
of

of that time to the promulgation of Christ by his messenger John the Baptizer, 62 weeks or 434 years; from which time there remained no more than 1 week or 7 years till the finishing of the expiation for sin by the death of Christ.

In the 27th verse, according to our English translation, Christ the Messiah was to abolish all the Jewish sacrifices and oblations in the middle of the 70th (or last) week, by his being then cut off. But what is translated the midst of the week is in the original the half part of the seven; and this half part might be either the former or the latter half part of that week of years.

If we suppose Christ to have been crucified at the end of the first half of the 70th week of years, we cut off three years and an half from the prophetic time of the crucifixion, and consequently limit the time between Ezra's commission and the death of Christ to 436 years and an half: but if we hold to the year of his death as it is astronomically ascertained to have been in the 4746th year of the Julian period, we must believe that it was at the end of the last half part of the 70th prophetic week: and then we shall have the whole 70 weeks of years compleat.

And when we consider, that John preached for some length of time before he baptized Christ, who then, and not till then, took the public ministry upon himself; I think we cannot be mistaken if we allow the first half part (or three years and an half) of the 70th week to John's preaching, and the last half part of it to Christ's public ministry (signified in the prophecy by his confirming the covenant with many) to contain 3 years and an half. And by the strictest search I could never find account of more than three passovers, in all the four gospels, that he kept between the time of his baptism and his death; for the Jews had other feasts besides passovers.

The Number of the Beast, Rev. xiii, 18 ; and xvii, 5.

EXPLANATION.	IN HEBREW.	IN GREEK.	IN LATIN.
The account of the beast and Babylonish whore, in the Revelations, is so fully descriptive of modern or papal Rome, that it seems to mean nothing else; and indeed it agrees with no other thing that we know of. We are there informed that the number of the beast is 666.	ק — 60	Α — 30	V — 5
	ה — 400	Α — 1	I — 1
	ו — 6	Τ — 300	C — 100
	י — 200	Ε — 5	A
	Sum 666	Ι — 10	R
	ה — 400	N — 50	I — 1
	Sum 666	O — 70	V — 5
	Sum 666	Σ — 200	S
	Sum 666	Sum 666	D — 500
	Sum 666	Sum 666	E
All the letters, both of the Hebrew and Greek Alphabet stand for numbers, as some of the modern or Roman Alphabet do. The Hebrew word סתור (Sathor) signifies mystery, concealing, or hiding. But mystery is the name of the whore, written in her forehead; and the Romish Church conceals the Scriptures from the people, and amuses them with mysteries and falsehoods.	ו — 6	Ν — 50	L — 50
	י — 200	Ι — 1	I — 1
	Sum 666	S	S
	Sum 666	I — 1	I — 1
	Sum 666	N	N
	Sum 666	T	T
	Sum 666	E	E
	Sum 666	R	R
	Sum 666	R	R
	Sum 666	I — 1	I — 1
St. John wrote in the Greek language, and the Greeks call the church of Rome ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ (Lateinos) or the Latin church. The sum of the numbers denoted by all the letters in this term is 666 also.—But lastly,	Sum 666	Sum 666	Sum 666
	Sum 666	Sum 666	Sum 666

The angel in the Revelations declares that the number of the beast is likewise the number of a man, and it appears very plain that the Pope is the man there meant; for the motto on his palace is VICARIUS DEI GENERALIS IN TERRIS. And the sum of all the numeral letters in this motto is 666 exactly—

And thus, in all these cases, we have the exact number of the whore, the beast, and the man, as specified in the Revelations, where the whore is said to be drunk with the blood of the saints. How well this agrees with the cruel, blood-thirsty, persecuting spirit of the church of Rome, is too plain to need any description. *A Manuscript.*

63. REV. JAMES HERVEY, M. A.

Ther. THE Scriptures are certainly an inexhaustible fund of materials for the most delightful and ennobling discourse. When we consider the author of those Sacred Books,—that they came originally from heaven,—were dictated by divine wisdom,—have the same consummate excellence as the works of creation;—it is really surprizing, that we are not always searching, by study, by meditation, or converse, into one or other of those grand volumes.

Afp. When Secker preaches, or Murray pleads; the church is crowded, and the bar thronged. When Spence produces the refinements of criticism, or Young displays the graces of poetry; the press toils, yet is scarce able to supply the demands of the public.—Are we eager to hear, and impatient to purchase, what proceeds from such eloquent tongues, and masterly pens? And can we be coldly indifferent, when—not the most accomplished of mankind,—not the most exalted of creatures,—but the adorable Author of all wisdom, speaks in his Revealed Word? Strange! that our attention does not hang upon the venerable accents, and our talk dwell upon the incomparable truths!

Ther. I admire, I must confess, the very language of the Bible. In this, methinks, I discern a conformity between the book of nature and the book of Scripture. In the book of nature, the divine Teacher speaks, not barely to our ears, but to all our senses. And it is very remarkable, how he varies his address!—Observe his grand and august works. In these he uses the style of majesty. We may call it the true sublime. It strikes with awe, and transports the mind.—View his ordinary operations. Here he descends to a plainer dialect. This may be termed, the familiar style. We comprehend it with ease, and attend to it with pleasure.—In the more ornamented parts of the creation, he clothes his meaning with elegance. All is rich and brilliant. We are delighted; we are charmed. And what is this but the florid style?

A variety, somewhat similar, runs through the Scriptures.—Would you see history in all her simplicity, and all her force; most beautifully easy, yet irresistibly striking? See her, or rather feel her energy, touching the nicest movements of the soul, and triumphing over our passions, in the inimitable narrative of Joseph's life.—The representation of Esau's bitter distress; the conversation-pieces of Jonathan, and his gallant friend; the memorable journal of the disciples going to Emmaus; are finished models of the impassioned and

affecting.—Here is nothing studied; no flights of fancy; no embellishments of oratory. Yet how inferior is the episode of Nifus and Euryalus, though worked up by the most masterly hand in the world, to the undiffembled artless fervency of the Scriptural sketches! Are we pleased with the elevation and dignity of an heroic poem, or the tenderness and perplexity of a dramatic performance? In the book of Job, they are both united, and both unequalled.—Conformably to the exactest rules of art, as the action advances, the incidents are more alarming, and the images more magnificent. The language glows, and the pathos swells; till, at last, the DEITY himself makes his entrance. He speaks from the whirlwind, and summons the creation; summons heaven, and all its shining host; the elements, and their most wonderful productions; to vouch for the wisdom of his providential dispensations.—His word strikes terror, and flashes conviction; decides the momentous controversy, and closes the august drama, with all possible solemnity and grandeur.

If we sometimes chuse a plaintive strain, such as softens the mind, and soothes an agreeable melancholy; are any of the ancient tragedies superior, in the eloquence of mourning, to David's pathetic elegy on his beloved Jonathan; to his most passionate and inconsolable moan over the lovely but unhappy Absalom; or to that melodious woe, which warbles and bleeds, in every line of Jeremiah's Lamentations?

Would we be entertained with the daring sublimity of Homer, or the correct majesty of Virgil? with the expressive delicacy of Horace, or the rapid excursions of Pindar? Behold them joined, behold them excelled; in the odes of Moses, and the eucharistic hymn of Deborah; in the exalted devotion of the psalms, and the glorious enthusiasm of the prophets.

Alp. Only with this difference, that the former are tuneful triflers, and amuse the fancy with empty fiction; the latter are teachers sent from God, and make the soul wise unto salvation.—The Bible is not only the brightest ornament, but the most invaluable depositum. On a right, a practical knowledge of these lively oracles, depends the present comfort, and the endless felicity of mankind. Whatever, therefore, in study or conversation, has no connection with their divine contents, may be reckoned among the toys of literature, or the cyphers of discourse.

Ther. Here again the book of Scripture is somewhat like the magazine of nature. What can we desire for our accommodation and delight, which this store-house of conveniencies

niencies does not afford? What can we wish for our edification and improvement, which that fund of knowledge does not supply? Of these we may truly affirm, each, in its respective kind, is profitable unto all things.

Are we admirers of antiquity?—Here we are led back, beyond the universal deluge, and far beyond the date of any other annals.—We are introduced among the earliest inhabitants of the earth. We take a view of mankind in their undisguised primitive plainness, when the days of their life were but little short of a thousand years.—We are brought acquainted with the original of nations; with the creation of the world; and with the birth of time itself.

Are we delighted with vast achievements?—Where is any thing comparable to the miracles in Egypt, and the “wonders in the field of Zoan?” to the memoirs of the Israelites, passing thro’ the depths of the sea, sojourning amidst the inhospitable deserts, and conquering the kingdoms of Canaan?—Where shall we meet with instances of martial bravery, equal to the prodigious exploits of the judges; or the adventurous deeds of Jesse’s valiant son, and his matchless band of worthies?—Here we behold the fundamental laws of the universe, sometimes suspended, sometimes reversed; and not only the current of Jordan, but the course of nature controlled. In short, when we enter the field of Scripture, we tread—on enchanted, shall I say? rather—on consecrated ground; where astonishment and awe are awakened at every turn; where is all, more than all, the marvellous of romance, connected with all the precision and sanctity of truth. If we want maxims of wisdom, or have a taste for the laconic style; how copiously may our wants be supplied, and how delicately our taste gratified! especially in the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and some of the minor prophets.—Here are the most sage lessons of instruction, adapted to every circumstance of life, formed upon the experience of preceding ages, and perfected by the unerring Spirit of inspiration.—These delivered with such remarkable conciseness, that one might venture to say, every word is a sentence. At least, every sentence may be called an apophthegm, sparkling with brightness of thought, or weighty with solidity of sense. The whole like a profusion of pearls,—each containing, in a very small compass, a value almost immense,—all heaped up (as an ingenious critic speaks) with a confused magnificence, above the little niceties of order.

If we look for the strength of reasoning, and the warmth of exhortation; the insinuating arts of genteel address, or the
manly

manly boldness of impartial reproof; all the thunder of the orator, without any of his ostentation; all the politeness of the courtier, without any of his flattery:—let us have recourse to the acts of the apostles, and to the epistles of St. Paul. These are a specimen, or rather these are the standard, of them all. I do not wonder, therefore, that a taste so refined, and a judgment so correct as Milton's, should discern higher attractions in the volume of inspiration, than in the most celebrated authors of Greece and Rome:

—————Yet not the more

Cease I to wander, where the muses haunt,
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Sinit with the love of sacred song: but CHIEF
Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry banks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit.

Asp. Another recommendation of the Scriptures is, that they afford the most awful and most amiable manifestations of the GODHEAD. His glory shines, and his goodness smiles, in those divine pages, with unparalleled lustre.—Here we have a satisfactory explanation of our own state. The origin of evil is traced: the cause of all our misery discovered; and the remedy, the infallible remedy, both clearly shewn, and freely offered.—The merits of a bleeding Jesus lay a firm foundation for all our hopes; while gratitude for his dying love suggests the most winning incitements to every duty.—Morality, Theron, your (and let me add, my) admired morality, is delineated in all its branches, is placed upon its proper basis, and raised to its highest elevation.—The SPIRIT of God is promised to enlighten the darkness of our understandings, and strengthen the imbecility of our wills. What an ample—Can you indulge me, on this favourite topic?

Ther. It is, I assure you, equally pleasing to myself. Your enlargements, therefore, need no apology.

Asp. What ample provision is made, by these blessed books, for all our spiritual wants! And, in this respect, how indisputable is their superiority to all other compositions!

Is any one convinced of guilt, as provoking heaven, and ruining the soul?—Let him ask Reason to point out a means of reconciliation, and a refuge of safety. Reason hesitates, as she replies; The DEITY may, perhaps, accept our supplications, and grant forgiveness.—But the Scriptures leave us not to the sad uncertainty of conjecture. They speak the language of clear assurance. “God has set forth a propitiation:

“He

“ He does forgive our iniquities: He will remember our
“ sins no more.”

Are we assaulted by temptation, or averse to duty? Philosophy may attempt to parry the thrust, or to stir up the reluctant mind, by disclosing the deformity of vice, and urging the fitness of things. Feeble expedients! Just as well calculated to accomplish the ends proposed, as the flimsy fortification of a cobweb to defend us from the ball of a cannon; or, as the gentle vibrations of a lady's fan to make a wind-bound navy fail.—The Bible recommends no such incompetent succours. “ My grace,” says its almighty AUTHOR, “ is sufficient for thee.—Sin shall not have dominion over
“ you.”—The great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlasting strength, he “ worketh in us both to will, and to do, of his
“ good pleasure.”

Should we be visited with sickness, or overtaken by any calamity, the consolation which Plato offers, is, That such dispensations coincide with the universal plan of divine government. Virgil will tell us, for our relief, That afflictive visitations are, more or less, the unavoidable lot of all men. Another moralist whispers in the dejected sufferer's ear, Impatience adds to the load; whereas a calm submission renders it more supportable.—Does the Word of Revelation dispense such spiritless and fugitive cordials? No: those Sacred Pages inform us, that tribulations are fatherly chastisements; tokens of our Maker's love, and fruits of his care: that they are intended to “ work in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness,” and to “ work out for us an eternal weight of
“ glory.”

Should we, under the summons of death, have recourse to the most celebrated comforters in the Heathen world; they would encrease our apprehensions, rather than mitigate our dread. Death is represented, by the great master of their schools, as the most formidable of all evils. They were not able positively to determine, whether the soul survived; and never so much as dreamed of the resurrection of the body.—Whereas, the Book of God strips the monster of his horrors, or turns him into a messenger of peace; gives him an angel's face, and a deliverer's hand; ascertaining to the souls of the righteous, an immediate translation into the regions of bliss; and ensuring to their bodies, a most advantageous revival, at the restoration of all things.

Inestimable book! It heals the maladies of life, and subdues the fear of death. It strikes a lightsome vista, through the
gloom

gloom of the grave; and opens a charming, a glorious prospect of immortality in the heavens.

These, with many other excellencies peculiar to the Scriptures, one would imagine more than sufficient to engage every sensible heart in their favour, and introduce them, with the highest esteem, into every improved conversation.—They had such an effect upon the finest genius, and most accomplished person, that former or latter ages can boast. Inasmuch, that he made, while living, this public declaration; and left it, when he died, upon everlasting record;—“How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey unto my mouth.—O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.—Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I may be occupied in thy precepts; and I will speak of thy testimonies even before kings.”—If David tasted so much sweetness in a small, and that the least valuable, part of the Divine Word; how much richer is the feast to us? since the gospel is added to the law, and the canon of Scripture completed! since (to borrow the words of a prophet) “the LORD GOD has sealed up the sum;” has put the last hand to his work; and rendered it full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

Ther. Another very distinguishing peculiarity of the Sacred Writings just occurs to my mind. The method of communicating advice, or administering reproof, by parables. A method which levels itself to the lowest apprehension, without giving offence to the most supercilious temper: yet it is as much superior to plain unornamented precept, as the enlivened scenes of a well wrought tragedy, are more impressive and affecting, than a simple narration of the plot.

Our LORD was asked by a student of the Jewish law, “Who is my neighbour?” which implied another question, How is he to be loved? The enquirer was conceited of himself; yet ignorant of the truth, and deficient in his duty. Had the wise INSTRUCTOR of mankind abruptly declared, You neither know the former, nor fulfil the latter; probably the querist would have reddened with indignation, and departed in a rage.—Therefore, to teach, and not disgust; to convince the man of his error, and not exasperate his mind; the blessed JESUS frames a reply, as amiable in the manner, as it was pertinent to the purpose.

A certain person going down from Jerufalem to Jericho, fell among thieves. Not content to rob him of his treasure, they strip him of his garments; wound him with great barbarity; and leave him half dead.—Soon after this calamitous
accident,

accident, a traveller happens to come that way on the road. And what renders him more likely to administer relief, he is one of the sacred order: one who taught others the lovely lessons of humanity and charity; and was, therefore, under the strongest obligations to exemplify them in his own practice. He just glances an eye upon the deplorable object; sees him stretched on the cold ground, and weltering in his blood: but takes no farther notice; nay, to avoid the trouble of an inquiry, passes by on the other side.—Scarce was he departed, when a Levite approaches. This man comes nearer, and looks on the miserable spectacle; takes a leisurely and attentive survey of the case. And tho' every gash in the bleeding flesh cried and pleaded for compassion, this minister of the sanctuary neither speaks a word to comfort, nor moves a hand to help.—Last comes a Samaritan; one of the abhorred nation, whom the Jew hated with the most implacable malignity. Tho' the Levite had neglected an expiring brother; tho' the priest had withheld his pity from one of the LORD's peculiar people; the very moment this Samaritan sees the unhappy sufferer, he melts into commiseration. He forgets the embittered foe, and considers only the distressed fellow-creature. He springs from his horse, and resolves to intermit his journey. The oil and wine, intended for his own refreshment, he freely converts into healing unguents. He binds up the wounds; sets the disabled stranger upon his own beast; and with all the assiduity of a servant, with all the tenderness of a brother, conducts him to an inn. There he deposits money for his present use; charges the host to omit nothing that might conduce to the recovery or comfort of his guest; and promises to defray the whole expence of his lodging, his maintenance, and his cure.

What a lively picture this of the most disinterested and active benevolence! A benevolence which excludes no persons, not even strangers or enemies, from its tender regards; which disdains no condescension, grudges no cost, in its labours of love. Could any method of conviction have been more forcible, and at the same time more pleasing, than the interrogatory, proposed by our LORD, and deduced from the story? “Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?” Or can there be any advice more suitable to the occasion, more important in its nature, or expressed with a more sententious energy, than “Go thou and do likewise?”—In this case, the learner instructs, the delinquent condemns, himself: bigotry bears away its prejudices; and pride (when the moral so sweetly, so imperceptibly

imperceptibly insinuates) even pride itself lends a willing ear to admonition.

A/p. It has been very justly remarked, that this eloquence of similitudes is equally affecting to the wise, and intelligible to the ignorant. It shews, rather than relates, the point to be illustrated. It has been admired by the best judges in all ages; but never was carried to its highest perfection, till our LORD spoke the parable of the prodigal: which has a beauty, that no paraphrase can heighten; a perspicuity, that renders all interpretation needless; and a force, which every reader, not totally insensible, must feel.

The condescension and goodness of GOD are every where conspicuous.—In the productions of nature he conveys to us the most valuable fruits, by the intervention of the loveliest blossoms. Though the present is in itself extremely acceptable, he has given it an additional endearment, by the beauties which array it, or the perfumes which surround it. In the pages of revelation likewise, he has communicated to us the most glorious truths, adorned with all the graces of composition: such as may polish the man of genius, and improve the man of worth; such as highly delight our imagination, even while they cultivate and refine our morals.—So that they really are, as one of their divine authors very elegantly speaks, like “apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

A/p. Who then would not gladly receive that gracious exhortation, “Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly?” Who would not willingly obey that benign command, “Thou shalt talk of it, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down, and when thou risest up?”

When I consider the language of the Scriptures, and sometimes experience their energy on my soul, I am inclined to say,—Other writings, though polished with the nicest touches of art, only tinkle on the ear, or affect us like the shepherd’s reed. But these, even amidst all their noble negligence, strike—alarm—transport us—somewhat like the voice of thunder, or the archangel’s trumpet.

When I consider the contents of the Scriptures, and believe myself interested in the promises they make, and the privileges they confer, I am induced to cry out,—What are all the other books in the world, compared with these invaluable volumes? No more than an entertaining novel, or a few prudential rules for domestic œconomy, compared with a
parent’s

parent's will ; a royal charter ; or an imperial grant of titles and manors.

All these circumstances remind me of an encomium most deservedly given to the BIBLE ; which, though quite artless, is, I think, abundantly more expressive than the most elaborate efforts of rhetoric.—It came from the lips of a martyr, who, being condemned to die, for his inviolable adherence to the doctrines of Scripture ; when he arrived at the stake, and had composed himself for execution, took his final leave in these affecting words : Farewel, sun and moon ! farewel, all the beauties of creation, and comforts of life ! farewel, my honoured friends ! farewel, my beloved relations ! and farewel, thou precious, precious Book of GOD.

Mr. ADDISON has a fine remark on a female warrior, celebrated by Virgil. He observes, that, with all her other great qualities, this little foible mingled itself ; because, as the poet relates, an intemperate fondness for a rich and splendid suit of armour, betrayed her into ruin. In this circumstance, our critic discovers a moral concealed ; this he admires, as a neat, though oblique satire, on that trifling passion. Spect. vol. 1. No. 15.

I would refer it to the judicious reader, whether there is not a beauty of the same kind, but touched with a more masterly hand, in the song of Deborah.—Speaking of Sisera's mother, the sacred eucharistic ode represents her as anticipating, in her fond fancy, the victory of her son ; and indulging the following soliloquy :—“ Have they not sped ? “ have they not divided the prey ? to Sisera a prey of divers “ colours ; a prey of divers colours of needle-work ; of “ divers colours of needle-work on both sides ; meet for the “ necks of them that take the spoil ?”—She takes no notice of the signal service, which her hero would do to his country, by quelling so dangerous an insurrection. She never reflects on the present acclamations, the future advancement, and the eternal renown, which are the tribute usually paid to a conqueror's merit. She can conceive, it seems, nothing greater, than to be clad in an embroidered vesture ; and to trail along the ground, a robe of the richest dyes. This is, in her imagination, the most lordly spoil he can win ; the most stately trophy he can erect.—It is also observable, how she dwells upon the trivial circumstance, reiterating it again and again. It has so charmed her ignoble heart, so entirely engrossed

groffed her little views, that ſhe can think of nothing elſe, ſpeak of nothing elſe, and can hardly ever deſiſt from the darling topic.—Is not this a keen, though delicately couched cenſure, on that poor contemptible, grovelling taſte, which is enamoured with filken finery, and makes the attributes of a butterfly the idol of its affections?

How conſpicuous is the elevated and magnificent ſpirit of that venerable mother in Iſrael, when viewed in compariſon with the low, the deſpicable turn of this Canaanitiſh lady!—Such ſtrong and beautiful conſtrasts are, I think, ſome of the moſt ſtriking excellencies of poetic painting: and in no book are they more frequently uſed, or expreſſed with greater life, than in the Sacred Volumes of Inſpiration.

IF we conſider David, in the great variety of his fine qualifications;—the ornaments of his perſon, and the far more illuſtrious endowments of his mind; the ſurpriſing revolutions in his fortune; ſometimes reduced to the loweſt ebb of adverſity; ſometimes riding upon the higheſt tide of proſperity;—his ſingular dexterity in extricating himſelf from difficulties, and peculiar felicity in accommodating himſelf to all circumſtances;—the prizes he won, as a youthful champion; and the victories he gained, as an experienced general; his maſterly hand upon the harp, and his inimitable talent for poetry;—the admirable regulations of his royal government, and the incomparable uſefulneſs of his public writings;—the depth of his repentance, and the height of his devotion;—the vigour of his faith in the divine promiſes, and the ardour of his love to the divine MAJESTY:—If we conſider theſe, with ſeveral other marks of honour and grace, which enoble the hiſtory of his life; we ſhall ſee ſuch an aſſemblage of ſhining qualities, as perhaps were never united in any other merely human character.

2 Sam. xviii. 33. “THE King was vehemently affected” אבן “and went up to the chamber, and wept: and “as he went, he ſaid, O my ſon Abſalom! my ſon, my “ſon Abſalom! Would to GOD I had died for thee! O “Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon!”—Such a picture, and ſo much pathos; ſo artleſs both, and both ſo exquisite: I muſt acknowledge, I never met with, among all the representations of dignity in diſtreſs.—The king's troops had gained a ſignal victory. His crown and his life were reſcued from the
moſt

most imminent danger. Yet all the honours and all the joys of this successful day, were swallowed up and lost in the news of Abfalom's death.—The news of Abfalom's death struck, like a dagger, the afflicted father. He starts from his seat. He hastens into retirement, there to pour out his soul in copious lamentation. But his anguish is too impetuous to bear a moment's restraint. He bursts immediately into a flood of tears; and cries as he goes, "O Abfalom," &c.

What says Mezentius, when his son is slain? when, to sharpen his sorrow, the pale corpse, the miserable spectacle, is before his eyes, and within his arms? The most pathetic word he utters, is,

— Heu! nunc misero mihi demum
Exilium infelix, nunc alte vulnus adauctum.

How languid is Virgil! how inexpressive the prince of Latin poetry! compared with the royal mourner in Israel! Most evident, from this, and many other instances, is the superiority of the Scriptures, in copying nature, and painting the passions.

HOW grand is the idea, when David prays! "Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and come down; touch the mountains, and they shall smoke."—Much grander is the image, when he says, "The springs of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered, at thy chiding, O LORD, at the blast of the breath of thy displeasure."—Transcendently and inimitably grand is this description, though given us by the most plain and artless writer in the world: "I saw a great white throne, and HIM THAT SAT ON IT, from whose face the heavens and the earth fled away, and there was no place found for them." Rev. xx. 11.

In Virgil's admired representation, Jupiter hurls his thunder, and a mountain falls at the stroke;

————— Ille flagranti
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia telo
Dejicit.

In Homer's more terror-striking piece, Neptune shakes the wide extended earth. The mountains tremble to their centre; the ocean heaves its billows; and cities reel on their foundations.

— — — — — Αὐτὰρ ἐνερθε Ποσειδάων ἐτιναξέ
 Γαίαν ἀπειρῆσιν, ὄρεων τ' αἰπεινὰ κάρηνα
 Πάντες δ' ἐσσειοντο ποδὲς πολυπίδακ' Ἰδης
 Καὶ κορυφαί, Τρῶων τε πόλις, καὶ νῆες Ἀχαιῶν.

Iliad. τ. 57.

Here the SON of the eternal GOD appears only, and all nature is alarmed: nor heaven nor earth can keep their standing; they flee away, like the frightened roe.—How grovelling are the loftiest flights of the Grecian and Roman muse, compared with this magnificence and elevation of the prophetic spirit!

Let us consider the passage a little more attentively. *Voleat hæc sub luce videri.* Masterly performances, the more closely they are examined, the more highly they charm.—It is not said, they were thrown into great commotions, but they fled entirely away; not, they started from their foundations, but they fell into dissolution; not, they removed to a distant place, but there was found no place for them; they ceased to exist; they were no more.—And all this, not at the strict command of the LORD JESUS; not at his awful menace, or before his fiery indignation; but at the bare presence of his majesty, sitting with serene but adorable dignity on his throne.

If this is not the true sublime, in its utmost scope, force, and beauty, I must confess, I never saw it, nor ever expect to see it.

1 Kings viii. 27. “BUT will.”—A fine abrupt beginning, most significantly describing the amazement and rapture of the royal prophet's mind!—“God:” he uses no epithet, where writers of inferior discernment would have been fond to multiply them; but speaks of the Deity, as an incomprehensible Being, whose perfections and glories are exalted above all praise.—“Dwell:” to bestow on sinful creatures a propitious look, to favour them with a transient visit of kindness; even this were an unutterable obligation. Will he then vouchsafe to fix his abode among them, and take up his stated residence with them?—“Indeed:” a word, in this connection, peculiarly emphatical; expressive of a condescension, wonderful and extraordinary almost beyond all credibility.—“Behold the heaven:” the spacious concave of the firmament, that wide-extended azure circumference, in which worlds unnumbered perform their revolutions, is too scanty an apartment for the Godhead.—Nay, “the heaven
 “ of

“ of heavens :” those vastly higher tracts, which lie far beyond the limits of human survey, to which our very thoughts can hardly soar ; even these (unbounded as they are) cannot afford an adequate habitation for JEHOVAH ; even these dwindle into a point, when compared with the infinitude of his essence ; even these “ are as nothing before him.”—How much less proportionate is this poor diminutive speck (which I have been erecting and embellishing) to so august a Presence, so immense a Majesty !

Job 4, 12, 14, &c. 'T WAS in the “ dead of night.” All nature lay shrouded in darkness. Every creature lay buried in sleep. The most profound silence reigned through the universe. In these solemn moments, Eliphaz alone, all wakeful and solitary, was musing upon sublime and heavenly subjects.—When lo ! an awful being, from the invisible realms, burst into his apartment. “ A spirit passed before “ his face.” Astonishment seized the beholder. His bones shivered within him ; his flesh trembled all over him ; and the hair of his head stood erect with horror.—Sudden and unexpected was the appearance of the phantom ; not such its departure. “ It stood still,” to present itself more fully to his view. It made a solemn pause, to prepare his mind for some momentous message.—After which, a voice was heard ; a voice, for the importance of its meaning, worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance ; for the solemnity of its delivery, enough to alarm a heart of stone.—It spoke ; and this was the purport of its words :—“ Shall man, frail man, be “ just before the mighty God ? Shall even the most accomplished of mortals be pure in the sight of his Maker ! Behold,” and consider it attentively, “ He put no” such “ trust in” his most exalted “ servants,” as could bespeak them incapable of defect. “ And his” very “ angels he “ charged with folly ;” as sinking, even in the highest perfection of their holiness, infinitely beneath his transcendent glories ; as falling, even in all the fidelity of their obedience, inexpressibly short of the homage due to his adorable majesty. If angelic natures must presume to justify either themselves or their services, before uncreated purity ; how much more absurd is such a notion, how much more impious such an attempt, in “ them that dwell in houses of clay ;” whose original is from the dust, and whose state is all imperfection !

THIS brings to our remembrance a most sublime description of the divine POWER, which arises in a beautiful climax, and terminates in this grand idea. “The voice of the LORD is mighty in operation, the voice of the LORD is a glorious voice. The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.” Psa. xxix. 4, 5, 6.

“The voice of the LORD is mighty in operation.” This is the general proposition; which, in the following sentences, we see most magnificently illustrated.—“The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars;” when he speaks in thunder, and bids the lightning execute his orders, the trees, the cedar-trees, those sturdiest productions of the earth, are shivered to pieces.—“Yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon;” which, for stateliness and strength, surpass the oaks of the forest, surpass every tree of the field, almost as much as the oak exceeds a shrub.—It is a small thing with JEHOVAH, to rend the trunks, to tear up the roots, and make those massy bodies skip like a calf; “even Lebanon and Sirion,” the mountains on which they grow, tremble before their GOD. They are thrown into strange commotions; they are ready to spring from their foundations; and, with all their load of woods and rocks, appear like some affrighted or some sportive animal, that starts with horror, or leaps with exultation.

THE Scriptures, speaking of the Supreme Being, say,—“He walketh upon the waves of the sea,” to denote his uncontrollable power, Job ix. 8.—“He walketh in the circuit of heaven,” to express the immensity of his presence, Job xxii. 14.—“He walketh upon the wings of the wind,” to signify the amazing swiftness of his operations, Psa. civ. 3.—In which last phrase, there is, I think, an elegance and emphasis, not taken notice of by our commentators, yet unequalled in any writer. Not, he “flieth; he runneth;” but, “he walketh:” and that “on the very wings of the wind;” on the most impetuous of elements, roused into its utmost rage, and sweeping along with inconceivable rapidity.—A tumult in nature, not to be described, is the composed and sedate work of the DEITY. A speed, not to be measured, is (with reverence I use the expression, and to comport with our low methods of conception) the solemn

lemon and majestic foot-pace of Jehovah.—How flat are the following lines, even in the great master of lyric song,

*Ocyor cervis, et agente nimbos
Ocyor Euro,*

when compared with this inimitable stroke of divine poetry :
“ He walketh upon the wings of the wind !”

If. vi. 3. THE poets and writers of a bold imagination, are particularly fond of machinery ; of introducing celestial beings, in order to give some peculiar dignity to their plan, or some additional strength to their sentiments. With inimitable propriety, and surprising emphasis, is this species of fine writing used in Scripture ; especially in the passage quoted above.

Let us only consider—The personages. These are the seraphim ; pure and active spirits. Likened, by the Psalmist, to flames of fire ; styled, by the Apostle, dominions and principalities of heaven. Who excel in strength and wisdom, in every high and bright accomplishment.—Their attitude. They wait around the KING immortal, seated on his exalted throne. They stand ; are in a posture of service ; with their wings outstretched, ready to fly at the first signal. They stand, not with their eyes reverently cast down ; but with their faces covered, to denote the deepest self-abasement ; as creatures, that are conscious and ashamed of their own meanness ; or as overcome with the unsupportable glories which beam from uncreated majesty.—Their action. They celebrate, not in cold conversation, but with rapturous songs ; not with single voices, but in a grand choir (הַשֵּׁרָפִים see Psal. lxxxvii. 5, 6.) the amiable yet tremendous sanctity of the LORD Almighty.—Their manner of expression. Tho' filled and penetrated with the prodigious theme, they attempt not to describe it. Impracticable that, even by the tongues of angels ! They express themselves, therefore, in the language of profound admiration ; in repeated, in reiterated acclamations to the wonderful attribute ; “ Holy ! “ Holy ! Holy !”—The effects of this august appearance. The posts of the door shake at the voice : the ponderous and magnificent pillars of brass (see 2 Chron. iii. 17.) tremble like a leaf. The spacious and beautiful house is filled with tokens of the divine indignation ; is involved in clouds of smoke ; and joins with the trembling columns, and adoring seraphs, to tell the thoughtless world, “ What a fearful thing

“ it is to fall into the hands of the living God !” The prophet himself is struck with astonishment ; is overwhelmed with awe ; and cries out, “ as a woman in her pangs.”—Can any thing be more enlivened, impressive, and alarming ?

Isaiah 28. 16. “ BEHOLD ! I lay in Zion, for a foundation, a stone ; a tried stone ; a precious corner-stone : a sure foundation : he that believeth, shall not make haste.”

How beautiful the gradation ! how lively the description ! and how very important the practical improvement ! or, I might say, the inscription which is engraven on this wonderful stone.—“ Behold,” intended to rouse and fix our most attentive regard. The God of heaven speaks. He speaks, and every syllable is balm ; every sentence is rich with consolation. If ever therefore we have ears to hear, let it be this speaker, and on this occasion.

“ A stone.” Every thing else is sliding sand, is yielding air ; is a breaking bubble. Wealth will prove a vain shadow ; honour an empty breath ; pleasure a delusory dream ; our own righteousness a spider’s web. If on these we rely, disappointment must ensue, and shame be inevitable. Nothing but Christ, nothing but Christ, can stably support our spiritual interests, and realize our expectations of true happiness. And, blessed be the divine goodness ! he is, for this purpose, not a stone only, but

“ A tried stone.” Tried, in the days of his humanity, by the vehemence of temptations, and all the weight of afflictions ; yet, like gold from the furnace, rendered more shining and illustrious by the fiery scrutiny.—Tried, under the capacity of a Saviour, by millions and millions of depraved, wretched, and ruined creatures ; who have always found him perfectly able, and as perfectly willing, to expiate the most enormous guilt,—to deliver from the most inveterate corruptions,—and save, to the very uttermost, all that come unto God through him.

“ A corner stone :” which not only sustains, but unites the edifice ; incorporating both Jews, and Gentiles, believers of various languages, and manifold denominations,—here in one harmonious bond of brotherly love,—hereafter in one common participation of eternal joy.

“ A precious stone.” More precious than rubies, the pearl of great price ; and the desire of all nations. Precious, with regard to the divinity of his person, and the unequalled

equalled excellency of his mediatorial offices. In these, and in all respects, greater than Jonah,—wiser than Solomon,—fairer than the children of men,—chiefest among ten thousand,—and, to the awakened sinner, or enlightened believer, altogether lovely.

“A sure foundation:” such as no pressure can shake: equal, more than equal to every weight; even to sin, the heaviest load in the world.—The rock of ages; such as never has failed, never will fail, those humble penitents, who cast their burden upon the Lord Redeemer; who roll all their guilt, and fix their whole hopes, on this immovable basis.—Or, as the words may be rendered, “a foundation! a foundation!” There is a fine spirit of vehemency in the sentence, thus understood. It speaks the language of exultation, and expresses an important discovery. That which mankind infinitely want, that which multitudes seek, and find not; it is here! it is here! This is the foundation for their pardon, their peace, their eternal felicity.

“Whosoever believeth:” though pressed with adversaries, or surrounded by dangers, “shall not make haste: but, free from tumultuous and perplexing thoughts, preserved from rash and precipitate steps, he shall possess his soul in patience; knowing the sufficiency of those merits, and the fidelity of that grace, on which he has reposed his confidence, shall quietly and without perturbation wait for an expected end.—And not only amidst the perilous or disastrous changes of life, but even in the day of everlasting judgment, such persons shall stand with boldness.—They shall look up to the grand Arbitrator,—look round on all the solemnity of his appearance,—look forward to the unalterable sentence,—and neither feel anxiety, nor fear damnation.

Sach, in that day of terrors, shall be seen
 To face the thunders with a god-like mien.
 The planets drop: their thoughts are fixt above:
 The centre shakes: their hearts disdain to move.

If. 40. 15, 16, 17. MAY I be allowed to elucidate the noble passage quoted above? Sure I am, the reader will not be displeas'd with the digression, unless the annotator fails in the execution, and has the misfortune

—————Egremium opus
 Culpa deterere ingeni.

The prophet, struck with the contemplation of a most glorious personage, cries out, like one transported and

amazed, "Who?" Never was any thing comparable to him, either existing in nature, or imaged by fancy. "Who hath measured the waters," the unfathomable deep, and the boundless wave; measured them, not in his capacious cistern, but "in the hollow of his hand? Who hath meted out heaven," an expanse in which worlds revolve, and extended to immensity; meted it, not with an outstretched line, but "with the span" of his fingers? "Who hath comprehended the dust of the earth," all the solid contents of this prodigiously large globe, as a little pittance in the smallest measure? "Who hath weighed the mountains," with all their ponderous ridges, and the hills with all their massy rocks, as a man weigheth an ounce or a dram "in" his "scales?"—Here I would only observe the judicious choice of objects. By far the most distinguished and magnificent, that the universe affords. The abyss of waters, and the circuit of the skies! the dimensions of the earth, and the elevation of the mountains! Compared with which, the loftiest groves are less than the hyssop on the wall; and the most ample cities are smaller than a grain of mustard seed.

Then follows a comparison, more admirable, if it be possible, than this fine description. "Behold!" the nations, whether on the neighbouring continent or in the remotest isles, are, before this exalted Being, as the small drop of a bucket, which is almost too scanty to deserve our notice. They are as the smaller dust upon the balance, which is not sufficient even to turn the hovering scale. They are as the smallest atom, which has not weight enough to reach the ground, nor force enough to resist the slightest undulations of the air. Yea, all the nations of the earth, amidst all their pomp and grandeur, with all their boasted accomplishments and admired works, are, before this incomprehensible God, as a mere nothing.—Can language go farther? Can imagination take up a bolder flight? Yes; the astonishingly rich ideas of the prophet add a heightening, a redoubled heightening even to this inimitable picture. The kingdoms of the world, with all their inhabitants, and all their honours, are "less than nothing;" are less than "vanity itself," in the estimate of the almighty JEHOVAH.

This if I am not greatly mistaken, is one of the most highly finished sketches of the beautiful and sublime, extant in the whole compass of letters.—Let us always remember, that the majestic person, whom it describes, is our atonement and righteousness (ver. 2.), is our shepherd and guide (ver. 11.); it will then be one of the most consolatory and
delightful

delightful truths, in all the book of God.—And O! may we never forget, “that the small drop of the bucket,” the smaller dust in the balance, the volatile atom, and that which is less than nothing, are intended to shew us, what figure our own endeavours, works, and duties make in the sight of almighty God. We shall then have a doctrine, most powerful to humble us, to abase us, and to teach us to renounce our own righteousness.

IT is a most charming description, as well as a most comfortable promise, which we find in *Is. xl. 29, 30, 31.*—He “giveth power to the feeble, and to them that have no “might,” at all, “he” not only imparted, but “increaseth “strength;” making it to abound, where it did not so much as exist.—Without this aid of *JEHOVAH*, “even the youths,” amidst the very prime of their vigour and activity, “shall “become languid” in their work, “and weary” in their course. “And the young men,” to whose resolution and abilities nothing seemed impracticable, “shall” not only succeed, but “utterly fall,” and miscarry in their various enterprises.—“Whereas they that wait upon the *LORD*,” and confide in his grace, shall press on, with a generous ardour, from one degree of religious improvement to another. Instead of exhausting, they “shall renew their “strength;” difficulties shall animate, and toil invigorate them. “They shall mount up,” as “with” soaring “wings,” above all opposition; they shall be carried through every discouragement, “as eagles” cleave the yielding air. “They “shall run,” with speed and alacrity, the way of God’s commandments, “and not be weary: they shall hold on” (*גוֹלְדִים* progredientur, *carpent iter*) with constancy and perseverance, in those peaceful paths, “and not faint;” but arrive at the end of their progress, and receive the prize of their high calling.

To this most cheering doctrine, permit me to add its no less beautiful and delightful contrast. *Eliphaz*, speaking of the enemies of the righteous, says—*לֹא גִבּוֹר קִימָךְ*—which is rendered by a great critic in sacred learning *Nihil excisum factio nobis adversaria*—We should reckon our language acquitted itself tolerably well, if, when depreciating the abilities of an adversary, it should represent them weak as the scorched thread, feeble as the dissolving smoke. But these are cold forms of speech, compared with the eloquence of the cast. According to the genius of our Bible, all the power that

that opposes the godly, is a mere nothing; or, to speak with a more emphatical air of contempt, a destroyed, an extirpated nothing.—Admire this expression, ye that are charmed with daring images, and (what Tully calls *verbum ardens*) a spirited and glowing diction.—Remember this declaration, ye that fight the good fight of faith. The united force of all your enemies, be it ever so formidable to the eye of flesh, is before your almighty Guardian, *nihil nihilifimum*, not only nothing, but less than nothing and vanity. Job 22. 20.

THE tenderness and faithfulness of God to his people are finely pictured by the prophet Isaiah, chap. xlii. ver. 3. Which passage, because of its rich consolation, and uncommon beauty, is deservedly adopted by St. Matthew, and ingrafted into the system of evangelical truths.—“He will “not” himself “break” nor suffer to be broken by any other, “the bruised reed; nor quench the smoking flax.” Was it possible to have chosen two more delicate, and expressive representations?—Could any image be more significant of a very infirm and enfeebled faith, than the flexible reed, that bends before every wind? which, besides its natural weakness, is made abundantly weaker by being bruised, and so is ready to fall in pieces of itself.—Or could any thing, with a more pathetic exactness, describe the extreme imbecility of that other principle of the divine life, love? The state of the flax, just beginning to burn, is liable to be put out by the least blast: more liable still is the wick of the lamp, when it is not so much as kindled into a glimmering flame, but only breathing smoke, and uncertain whether it shall take fire or no.—Yet true faith, and heavenly love, though subsisting amidst such pitiable infirmities, will not be abandoned by their great Author; shall not be extinguished by any temptations; but be maintained, invigorated, and made finally triumphant. Matth. xii. 20.

Is. xlix. 15. “CAN a woman forget her sucking child, “that she should not have compassion on the son of her “womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee.”—How delicate and expressive are the images in this charming scripture! How full of beauty, if beheld in a critical, how rich with consolation, if considered in a believing view!—“Can a woman!” one of the softer sex; whose nature is
most

most impressible, and whose passions are remarkably tender; can such a one, not barely disregard, but entirely “forget;” not suspend her care for a while, but utterly erase the very memory—of “her child;” her own child, not another’s; a child that was formed in her womb, and is a part of herself? Her “son;” the more important, and therefore more desirable species; to whom it peculiarly belongs to preserve the name, and build up the family:—her only son; for the word is singular, and refers to a case, where the off-spring, not being numerous, but centered in a single birth, must be productive of the fondest endearment:—Can she divert herself of all concern for such a child; not when he is grown up to maturity, or gone abroad from her house; but while he continues in an infantile state, and must owe his whole safety to her kind attendance; while he lies in her bosom, rests on her arm, and even “sucks” at her breast?—Especially, if the poor innocent be racked with pain, or seized by some severe affliction; and so become an object of compassion, as well as of love. Can she hear its piercing cries; can she see it all restless, all helpless, under its misery; and feel no emotions of parental pity?—If one such monster of inhumanity might be found; could all (here the prophet, to give his comparison the utmost energy, changes the singular number into the plural. It is not *אם אחת*, or *אם אחת* but *אם כל* could all) mothers be so degenerate? This, sure, cannot be suspected, need not be feared. Much less need the true believer be apprehensive of the failure of my kindness. An universal extinction of those strongest affections of nature, is a more supposable case, than that I should ever be unmindful of my people, or regardless of their interests.

Isaiah 63. 1, 2, 3. “WHO is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?—I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. —Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat?—I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me.”

The prophet, like one thrown into a sudden surprize, with a beautiful abruptness, cries out, “Who is this?” What extraordinary appearance discovers itself to my sight? Is it a human, or divine form, that I behold? He “cometh from Edom” the country, “from Bozrah” the capital, of our professed national enemies. Is he for us, or for our adversaries?

ries?—The first question seems to proceed from a distant and indistinct view. He then takes a nearer survey, and describes the wonderful personage with greater particularity. This that cometh “with dyed garments,” like some terrible and victorious warrior, that hath scarcely sheathed the sword of slaughter; who is all encrimsoned, and still reeking with the blood of the slain.

The vision becomes clearer and clearer. I see him (adds the rapturous prophet) “glorious in his apparel.” Highly graceful, as well as extremely awful. Bearing in his aspect, in his whole person, in his very dress, the marks of transcendent dignity. “Travelling in the greatness of his strength.” Not faint with toil, nor wearied with the fatigue of the dreadful action; but like one, that is indefatigable in the zeal, and irresistible in his power; and therefore still pressing forwards, to new victories; still going on, from conquering to conquer.

The majestic object is, all this while, advancing. At length, he approaches near enough, to hold a conference with this devout enquirer. One would naturally expect, that his speech should be like his aspect, alarming and tremendous. But grace is on his tongue, and his lips drop balm. “I that speak in righteousness:” all whose words are faithfulness and truth; an immovable foundation for the faith of my people. “That speak of righteousness,” of that mysterious righteousness, which is the delight of my Father, and the life of the world. To bring in which, is the design of my appearance on earth, and to reveal it is the office of my Spirit. By means of this righteousness, I am mighty to save: to save thee; to save any lost sinner; to save them, as with the arm of omnipotence, beyond all that they can think, even to the very uttermost.

Here the prophet seems to be somewhat at a loss, and takes leave to renew his inquiry. If thou art come, not to destroy men’s lives, but to save; “wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?” These indicate, not deliverance, but destruction. These are tokens, not of forbearing mercy, but of inexorable vengeance.—’Tis true, replies the illustrious hero, “I have trodden the wine-press;” I have crushed my foes; I have trampled them under my feet and repentance was hid from my eyes. But thy enemies were the object of mine indignation. Sin, and death, and hell, are the vanquished adversaries. It is their blood, that is sprinkled upon my garments, and that stains all my raiment.—This victory
I have

I have gained by myself "alone." Being infinitely too great in my power, to want an associate; and equally too jealous of my honour, to accept of any assistance. "Of the people," whether in heaven or on earth, "there was none with me; to afford the least succour, or to take the least share in the glorious work. The salvation of sinners; their deliverance from wrath, and their redemption to God, is, in all its parts, my act, even mine, and mine only. Your's be all the benefit; mine all the glory.

*Hervey's
Letters to W. C. D.
p 109
11*

Zech. vi. 12, 13. THESE two verses contain a brief, but very fine description of the REDEEMER; of his person, his office, and his glory; together with the all-gracious cause, and ever blessed fruit of our redemption.

His person: He is "the man;" or, as the Hebrew imports, the real, but at the same time, the illustrious man.—"Whose name is the BRANCH;" being the new origin of a new race; the father of a spiritual seed, who are children, not of the flesh, but of the promise.—A branch that shall spring, not from a common root, not from any human planting, but מִתַּחַת "from under himself;" being born of a pure virgin, and by the power of his own SPIRIT, he shall be both stock and stem to himself.

His office: It is to "build the temple," the church of the elect; which is the house of the living God; in which he dwells, and by whom he is worshipped; laying the foundation of this spiritual edifice in his cross, and cementing it with his blood.—Which he shall rule as a "king," after having redeemed it as a priest; uniting the sacerdotal center with the regal diadem, and being "a priest upon his throne." Hence proceeds his glory: for he stands not, like other priests, offering daily the same oblations; but having, by one sacrifice, obtained eternal redemption for us, is set down at the right hand of the MAJESTY on high.

What is the cause of these great events? What, but that most sacred and august convention, "the counsel of peace?" which was settled "between them both;" between the LORD JEHOVAH on one hand, and the man whose name is the BRANCH on the other.—Called a counsel, from the entire consent, which actuated each party; and the transcendent wisdom, displayed in the whole scheme.—The counsel of peace, because of its sovereign efficacy, to make peace with an offended God, peace in the accusing conscience, peace among people of jarring tempers and discordant principles.

Mark ix. 3. THE evangelist's description is, like the scene, remarkably bright; and the gradation of his images is almost as worthy of observation, as the memorable fact.—“The garments were white,—exceeding” white,—white “as the snow,” whiter than any fuller on earth could make them;—surpassing all the works of art, equalling the first and finest productions of nature.—Nay, so great was the lustre, that it glistened, *εγενετο σιλιβουτα*, like the lightning, and even dazzled the sight.

LET a person of true taste peruse, in a critical view, the two first chapters of St. Luke. He will there find a series of the most surprising incidents, related with the greatest simplicity, yet with the utmost majesty.—All which, extremely affecting in themselves, are heightened and illuminated, by a judicious intermixture of the sublimest pieces of poetry. For my own part, I know not how to characterize them more properly than by Solomon's elegant comparison;—“They are as gold rings set with the beryl, or as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.” Cant. v. 14.

Luke 10. 32. IF this was a parable, we cannot but admire the accuracy of our LORD, both in laying the scene, and selecting the circumstances.—It is the maxim of a great critic,

Ficta voluptatis causa sint proxima veris.

And how very apparent is the air of probability in this sacred apologue!—The way from Jerusalem to Jericho, lying thro' a desert, was much infested by thieves, and too commodious for their purposes of violence.—What could be more likely to happen, than the passage of a priest and Levite along that road? Ince Jericho was a city appropriated to the Levitical order, and contained no less than twelve thousand attendants on the service of the temple.

How judiciously is the principal figure circumstanced!—Had the calamity befallen a Samaritan, it would have made but feeble impressions of pity; and those, perhaps, immediately effaced by stronger emotions of hate. But, when it was a Jew that lay bleeding to death, the representation was sure to interest the hearer in the distress, and awaken a tender concern.—Had the relief been administered by a Jew, the benevolence would have shone, but in a much fainter light. Whereas, when it came from the hands of a Samaritan,

whom

whom all the Jews had agreed to execrate, and rank with the very fiends of hell, how bright—how charmingly and irresistibly bright—was the lustre of such charity!

Let the reader consider the temper expressed in that rancorous reflection; “Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil,” John viii. 48.—Let him compare that inveterate malevolence, with the benign and compassionate spirit of our amiable traveller.—Then let him say, whether he ever beheld a finer or a bolder contrast? whether, upon the whole, he ever saw the ordonnance of descriptive painting, more justly designed, or more happily executed?

I would beg leave to observe further, that the virulent animosity of the Jew discovers itself even in the lawyer’s reply: “He that shewed mercy on him.” He will not so much as name the Samaritan; especially in a case, where he could not be named without an honourable distinction.—So strongly marked, and so exactly preserved, are the *τα ἄλλα* the manners or distinguishing qualities of each person, in the sacred narrations!

THE circumstances of this miracle, as related by the evangelists, are truly wonderful, and to the last degree picturesque.

“Master! Master! we perish!” How concise, how abrupt, and how ardent is this exclamation! Therefore how strongly significant of imminent danger, and of the utmost distress! They have not time to be explicit. A moment’s delay may be fatal. What they utter is conciseness itself, and all rapidity, Luke viii. 24.—This is nature; this is the genuine language of the heart; this is true historic painting. Every impartial reader must admire this exquisitely just and fine stroke, far beyond the diffuse and (I had almost said impertinently) florid speech, which Virgil puts into the mouth of his hero on a like occasion. *Æn.* l. 98. *Σιωπή, πεφύμισσ.* What a majesty in this command! ’Tis admirable; ’tis inimitable; ’tis worthy of God.—I think, we may observe a peculiarly proper word, addressed and adapted to each element, the first enjoining a cessation of the winds, the second a quiescence of the waves; silence in all that roared, composure in all that raged. As tho’ (to give a short paraphrase on the grand injunction) it had been said, Winds, “be hush’d;” Waves, “be calm.” Mark iv. 39.

The effect on the disciples is described, with all the force of imagination, and all the energy of diction. To represent

in colours, what the evangelical historian has left upon record, would be a subject fit for the immortal Raphael; and perhaps not to be equalled even by his masterly pencil. *Λιπὴν ἐκπερισσῶς ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἐξίζαντο καὶ θαυμάζον*—*θαυμάζον*, they were amazed—*ἐξίζαντο* they were transported with amazement—*λιπὴν* to the very greatest degree—*ἐκπερισσῶς* exceeding all that language can express. Mark 6. 51.

THIS brings to my mind one of the deepest mourning-pieces extant in the productions of the pen. The sacred historian paints it in all the simplicity of style, yet with all the strength of colouring.—“When Jesus came nigh to the gate of the city, behold! there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother and she was a widow.”—What a gradation is here! How pathetically beautiful! Every fresh circumstance widens the wound; aggravates the calamity; till the description is worked up into the most finished picture of exquisite and inconsolable distress.—He was a young man; cut off in the flower of life, amidst a thousand gay expectations, and smiling hopes. A son; an only son; the afflicted mother’s all: so that none remained to preserve the name, or perpetuate the family. What rendered the case still more deplorable, “she was a widow:” left entirely desolate: abandoned to her woes; without any to share her sorrows, or to comfort her under the irreparable loss.—Is not this a fine sketch of the impassioned and picturesque? Who can consider the narrative with any attention, and not feel his heart penetrated with a tender commiseration? Luke vii. 12.

WITH what amiable and affecting colours is the mercy of God represented in the parable of the prodigal! What could induce that foolish youth to forsake his father’s house? Had he not been tenderly cherished by the good parent, and loaded with benefits from his indulgent hand? Were not the restraints of parental government an easy yoke? or rather a preservative from ruin? Notwithstanding every endearing obligation, he revolts from his duty; and launches into such scandalous irregularities as were dishonourable to his family, and destructive to himself.—When necessity, not choice, but sharp necessity drove him to a submissive return; does the injured father stand aloof, or shut his doors? Quite the reverse. He espies him, while he is yet a great way off; and, the moment

moment he beholds the profligate youth, he has compassion on him. His bowels yearn; they sound like an harp, touched with notes divinely soft. He never once thinks of his ungracious departure, and infamous debaucheries. Pity, parental pity, passes an act of oblivion; and, in one instant, cancels a series of long-continued provocations.—So strong are the workings of fatherly affection, that he is almost impatient to embrace the naked and destitute wretch. The son's pace is slow; he arose and came: the father's is swift; he sprung forth (aged as he was) and "ran." And is there a single frown in his brow, or one upbraiding word on his tongue?—Instead of loathing the sordid creature, or reproaching him for his odious excesses; he "falls on his neck," clasps him in his arms, and hugs him to his bosom. Instead of disowning the riotous spendthrift, or rejecting him for his unedifying behaviour; he receives and welcomes him with kisses of delight. He rejoices at his return from extravagance and vice, as he formerly rejoiced on the day of his nativity.—When this companion of harlots opens his mouth, before he speaks, the father hears. He interrupts him, in the midst of his intended speech. The overflowings of his compassionate heart can brook no delay. He seems to be uneasy himself, till he has made the afflicting penitent glad, with the assurance of his acceptance, and the choicest of his favours.—While the poor abashed offender seeks nothing more than not to be abhorred, he is thoroughly reconciled, and honoured before the whole family. While he requests no other indulgence, than only to be treated as the "meanest servant;" he is clothed with the "best robe;" he is feasted with "the fatted calf;" he is caressed as the dearest of children.—Was there ever so bright and winning a picture of the tenderest mercy, most freely vouchsafed, even to the most unworthy of creatures? Yet thus, my soul; and thus, my fellow sinner; will the Lord God of everlasting compassions receive us, if, sensible of our misery, and thirsting for salvation, we turn to him through Jesus Christ!

ACTS ix 1. ΣΑΤΑΩΣ ΕΤΙ ΕΜΠΝΕΩΝ ΑΠΕΙΛΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΟΝΟΣ "Saul yet breathing out threatening and slaughter."—What a representation is here of a mind, mad with rage, and abandoned to the fiercest extremes of barbarity! I scarce know, whether I am more shocked at the persecutor's savage disposition, or charmed with the evangelist's lively description.—The adverb *ετι* seems referable to chap. viii. ver. 3. and has,
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in this connexion, a peculiar force. The havock he had committed, the inoffensive families he had already ruined, were not sufficient to assuage his vengeful spirit. They were only a taste; which, instead of glutting the blood-hound, made him more closely pursue the track, and more eagerly pant for destruction.—He is still athirst for violence and murder. So eager and insatiable is his thirst, that he even breathes out threatening and slaughter. “His words are spears and arrows, and his tongue a sharp sword.” ’Tis as natural for him to menace the Christians, as to breathe the air.—Nay, they bleed every hour, every moment, in the purposes of his rancorous heart. It is only owing to want of power, that every syllable he utters, every breath he draws, does not deal about deaths, and cause some of the innocent disciples to fall.

ANOTHER very remarkable instance of propriety in St. Paul's writings, is, that tho' diffuse in the doctrinal, they are concise in the preceptive parts. On the former, it was absolutely necessary to enlarge. On the latter it is always judicious to be short. The celebrated rule of Horace,

Quicquid præcipies, esto brevis,

was never more exactly observed, nor more finely exemplified, than by our apostolic author. See that noble string of precepts, 1 Theff. v. 16, 17, &c.—See another choice collection of the same kind, Rom. xii. 9, 10, &c. In which the energy of the diction is no less admirable, than the conciseness of the sentence. *Αποσυγνυτες—κολλωμενοι—Φιλοσοργοι—ξεοντες—προσκαρτερευντες—διωκοντες*—are some of the most vigorous words that language can furnish, and form the most animated meaning, that imagination can conceive.

1 Cor. v. 7. WOULD any one venture to say, Paul our passover is sacrificed for us? Yet this, I think, may be, or rather is in effect said, by the account which some persons give of Christ's satisfaction. — The very thought of such a blasphemous absurdity, is too painful and offensive for the serious Christian to dwell upon. I would therefore divert his attention to a more pleasing object. Let him observe the exquisite skill, which, here and every where, conducts the zeal of our inspired writer.—The odes of Pindar are celebrated for their fine transitions; which, though bold and surprising, are perfectly natural. We have, in this place, a very matterly

terly stroke of the same beautiful kind. The apostle, speaking of the incestuous criminal, passes, by a most artful digression to his darling topic, a crucified Saviour. Who would have expected it, on such an occasion? Yet, when thus admitted, who does not see and admire, both the propriety of the subject, and the delicacy of its introduction?

2 Cor. iv. 17. THE great Stephens, that oracle of Grecian learning, translates καθ' υπερβολην, Quo nihil majus dici aut fingi potest. But how does the sense rise! how is the idea enlarged, under two such forcible expressions! καθ' υπερβολην εις υπερβολην.—The whole verse is a master-piece of the beautiful antithesis, the lively description, and the nervous diction. It is one of those exquisite passages in the Inspired Writings, which, like some rich aromatic plants, cannot be transferred from their own generous and native soil, without being impaired in their vivacity, and losing much of their delicacy. Perhaps, the following version may be somewhat less injurious to the sacred original, than the common translation:—"Our very light affliction, which is but just for the present moment, worketh out a far more exceeding, an incomparably great, and eternal weight of glory."

What are all the consolatory expedients prescribed in all the volumes of Heathen morality, compared with this one recipe of Revelation? They are, in point of cheering efficacy, soineewhat like the froth on the conflux of a thousand rapid streams, compared with a single draught of Homer's Nepenthe; which, he tells us, was

Temper'd with drugs of sov'reign use, t' assuage
 The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage:
 To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care,
 And dry the tearful sluices of despair.
 Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted mind
 All sense of woe delivers to the wind. Odyss. iv.

Did ever grace stoop so low?

THIS reminds me of a very noble piece of sacred oratory, where, in a fine series of the most beautiful gradations, the apostle displays the admirably-condescending kindness of our Saviour.—"He thought it no robbery," it was his indisputable right, to be equal with the infinite, self-existent, immortal God. Yet, in mercy to finners, "he emptied himself" of the incommunicable honours, and laid aside

the robes of incomprehensible glory.—When he entered upon his mediatorial state, instead of acting in the grand capacity of universal Sovereign, “he took upon him the form “of a servant:” and not the form of those ministering spirits, whose duty is dignity itself; who are throned, tho’ adoring.—“He took not on him the nature of angels,” but stooped incomparably low; assumed a body of animated dust, and “was made in the likeness of men; those inferior and depraved creatures.—Astonishing condescension! but not sufficient for the overflowing richness of the Redeemer’s love. For, “being found in fashion as a man, he humbled “himself” farther still; occupied the lowest place, where all was low and ignoble. He not only submitted to the yoke of the law, but also bore the infirmities, and ministered to the necessities of mortals. He even washed the feet of others, and had “not where to lay his own head.”—Yea, he carried his meritorious humiliation to the very deepest degrees of possible abasement. “He became obedient unto death;”—and not to a common or natural death, but a death more infamous than the gibbet; more torturous than the rack; “eventhe” accured “death of the cross.” Phil. 2. 6. 7. 8.

1 Pet. xi. 2. THIS comparison is, perhaps, the most exact and expressive that words can form, or fancy conceive. Babes covet nothing but the milk of the breast. They are indifferent about all other things. Give them riches, give them honours, give them whatever you please, without this rich, delicious, balmy nutriment, they will not, they cannot be satisfied.—How finely does this illustrate, and how forcibly inculcate, what our LORD styles, “the single eye,” and “the one thing needful!” or the salutary doctrines and delightful privileges of the gospel; together with that supreme value for them, and undivided complacency in them, which are the distinguishing character of the Christian!

2 Pet. iii. 10. I HAVE often thought this verse an eminent instance of that kind of beautiful writing, in which the very sound bears a sort of significancy; at least, carries an exact correspondence with the sense. The original expression—*κατακλιθήσεται*—is one of the hoarsest and deepest words in language. Nothing could be more exquisitely adapted to affect the ear, as well as impress the imagination, with the wreck of nature, and the crash of a falling world.—I scarce
 ever

ever read this clause, but it brings to my mind that admired description in Milton :

— — On a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound,
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.—

Book II. 879.

It is a pleasing employ, and a very laudable office of true criticism, to point out these inferior recommendations of the Sacred Classics. Tho' I believe, the inspired writers themselves, amidst all the elevation and magnificence of their divine ideas, disdained a scrupulous attention to such little niceties of style.

“GOD is love.” This I call inimitable! Nothing can be more simple, yet nothing is more sublime. For my part, I know not how to attempt an illustration of the noble sentiment. It strikes the mind, as light strikes the eye. No art can make this more bright; and no paraphrase can make that more delicate, more majestic, more affecting.

“*Time shall be no longer.*”

THIS alludes to the beginning of Revelations the xth; which, abstracted from its spiritual meaning, and considered only as a stately piece of machinery, well deserves our attention; and, I will venture to say, has not its superior, perhaps not its equal, in any of the most celebrated masters of Greece and Rome.—All that is gloomy or beautiful in the atmosphere, all that is striking or magnificent in every element, is taken to heighten the idea. Yet nothing is disproportionate; but an uniform air of ineffable majesty greatens, exalts, ennobles the whole.—Be pleased to observe the aspect of this august personage. All the brightness of the sun shines in his countenance; and all the rage of the fire burns in his feet.—See his apparel. The clouds compose his robe, and the drapery of the sky floats upon his shoulders. The rainbow forms his diadem; and that which compasseth the heaven with a glorious circle, is the ornament of his head.—Behold his attitude. One foot stands on the ocean, the other rests on the land. The wide extended earth, and the world of waters, serve as pedestals for those mighty columns.—Consider the action. His hand is lifted up to the height of the stars. He speaks; and the regions of the firmament echo with the mighty accents, as the midnight desert resounds

with the lion's roar. The artillery of the skies is discharged at the signal; a peal of seven-fold thunders spreads the alarm, and prepares the universe to receive his orders.—To finish all, and to give the highest grandeur, as well as the utmost solemnity, to the representation, hear the decree that issues from his mouth. “He swears by HIM that liveth for ever and ever.” In whatever manner so majestic a person had expressed himself, he could not fail of commanding universal attention. But when he confirms his speech by a most sacred and inviolable oath, we are not only wrapt in silent suspense, but overwhelmed with the profoundest awe.—He swears, “that time shall be no longer.” Was ever voice so full of terror; so big with wonder? It proclaims, not the fall of empires, but the final period of things. It strikes off the wheels of nature; bids ages and generations cease to roll; and, with one potent word, consigns a whole world over to dissolution.—This is one among a multitude of very sublime and masterly strokes, to be found in that too much neglected book—THE BIBLE. *Works, passim.*

64. BISHOP LOWTH.

The writings of the Prophets, in general, poetical and sententious.

POETRY must be allowed to stand eminent among the other liberal arts; inasmuch as it refreshes the mind when it is fatigued, soothes it when it is agitated, relieves and invigorates it when it is depressed. These observations are remarkably exemplified in the Hebrew poetry, than which the human mind can conceive nothing more elevated, more beautiful, or more elegant; in which the almost ineffable sublimity of the subject is fully equalled by the energy of the language, and the dignity of the style. But since it appears essential to every species of poetry, that it be confined to numbers, and consist of some kinds of verse, in treating of the poetry of the Hebrews, it appears absolutely necessary to demonstrate, that those parts, at least, of the Hebrew writings, which we term poetic, are in a metrical form, and to inquire whether any thing be certainly known concerning the nature and principles of this versification or not. And if there should appear a manifest conformity between the prophetic style, and that of the books supposed to be metrical; a conformity in every known part of the poetical character, which equally discriminates the prophetic and the metrical books, from those acknowledged to be prose: it will be of use to trace out and to mark this conformity with all possible accuracy; to observe, how far the peculiar characteristics of each

each style coincide; and to see, whether the agreement between them be such, as to induce us to conclude, that the poetical and the prophetic character of style and composition, though generally supposed to be different, yet are not really one and the same.

Now the first and most manifest indication of verse in the Hebrew poetical books presents itself in the Acrostic or Alphabetical poems: of which there happily remain many examples, and those of various kinds; so that we could not have hoped, or even wished, for more light of this sort to lead us on in the very entrance of our inquiry. The nature, or rather the form of these poems is this: the poem consists of twenty two lines, or of twenty two systems of lines, or periods, or stanzas, according to the number of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; and every line, or every stanza, begins with each letter in its order, as it stands in the alphabet; that is, the first line, or first stanza, begins with א, the second with ב, and so on. This was certainly intended for the assistance of the memory; and was chiefly employed in subjects of common use, as maxims of morality, and forms of devotion; which being expressed in detached sentences, or aphorisms, the inconvenience arising from the subject, the want of connection in the parts, and of a regular train of thought carried through the whole, was remedied by this artificial contrivance in the form. There are still extant in the books of the Old Testament, twelve of these poems, namely, Psalms 25. 34. 37. 111. 112. 119. 145. Proverbs 31. 10—31. Lamentations 1. 2. 3. 4. Three of these poems are perfectly alphabetical; namely, Psalms 111 and 112, and Lamentations 3; in which every line is marked by its initial letter; the other nine less perfectly alphabetical, in which every stanza only is distinguished. Of the three former it is to be remarked, that not only every single line is distinguished by its initial letter, but that the whole poem is laid out into stanzas; two of these poems, namely Psalms 111 and 112, each into ten stanzas, all of two lines, except the two last stanzas in each, which are of three lines: in these the sense and the construction manifestly point out the division into stanzas, and mark the limit of every stanza. The third of these perfectly alphabetical poems consists of twenty two stanzas, of three lines: but in this the initial letter of every stanza is also the initial letter of every line of that stanza; so that both the lines, and the stanzas, are infallibly limited. And in all the three poems the pauses of the sentences coincide with the pauses of the lines and stanzas.

It is also further to be observed of these three poems, that the lines, so determined by the initial letters, in the same poem, are remarkably equal to one another in length, in the number of words nearly, and probably in the number of syllables: and that the lines of the same stanza have a remarkable congruity one with another, in the matter and the form, in the sense and the construction.

Of the other nine poems less perfectly alphabetical, in which the stanzas only are marked with initial letters, six, namely, Psalm, 25. 34. 119. 145. Prov. 31. and Lament. 4. consist of stanzas of two lines; two, namely, Lament. 1 and 2. of stanzas of three lines, and one, namely, Psalm 37. of stanzas of four lines: not taking into the account at present some irregularities, which in all probability are to be imputed to the mistakes of transcribers. And these stanzas likewise naturally divide themselves into their distinct lines, the sense and the construction plainly pointing out their limits; and the lines have the same congruity one with another in matter and form, as was above observed in regard to the poems more perfectly alphabetical.

Another thing to be observed of the three poems perfectly alphabetical, is, that in two of them, namely, Psalms 111 and 112, the lines are shorter than those of the third, namely, Lament. 3. by about one third part, or almost half: and of the other nine poems, the stanzas only of which are alphabetical, that three, namely, Lament. 1, 2 and 4. consist of the longer lines, and the six others of the shorter.

Now from these examples, which are not only curious, but of real use, and of great importance in the present inquiry, we may draw some conclusions, which plainly follow from the premises, and must be admitted in regard to the alphabetical poems themselves; which also may by analogy be applied with great probability to other poems, where the lines and stanzas are not so determined by initial letters; yet which appear in other respects to be of the same kind.

In the first place, we may safely conclude, that the poems perfectly alphabetical consist of verses properly so called; of verses regulated by some observation of harmony or cadence; of measure, numbers, or rhythm. For it is not at all probable in the nature of the thing, or from examples of the like kind in other languages, that a portion of mere prose, in which numbers and harmony are totally disregarded, should be laid out according to a scale of division, which carries with it such evident marks of study and labour, of art in the contrivance, and exactness in the execution. And I presume

perfume it will be easily granted in regard to the other poems, which are divided into stanzas by the initial letters, which stanzas are subdivided by the pauses of the sentence into lines easily distinguished one from another, commonly the same number of lines to a stanza in the same poem: that these are of the same kind of composition with the former, and they equally consist of verses. And in general, in regard to the rest of the poems of the Hebrews, bearing evidently the same marks and characteristics of composition with the alphabetical poems in other respects, and falling into regular lines, often into regular stanzas, according to the pauses of the sentences; which stanzas and lines have a certain parity or proportion to one another; that these likewise consist of verse; of verse distinguished from prose, not only by the style, the figures, the diction; by a loftiness of thought, and richness, of imagery; but by being divided into lines, and sometimes into systems of lines; which lines, having an apparent equality, similitude, or proportion, one to another, were in some sort measured by the ear, and regulated according to some general laws of metre, rhythm, harmony, or cadence.

Further, we may conclude from the example of the perfectly alphabetical poems, that whatever it might be that constituted Hebrew verse, it certainly did not consist in rhyme, or similar and correspondent sounds at the ends of the verses: for as the ends of the verses in those poems are infallibly marked; and it plainly appears, that the final syllables of the correspondent verses, whether in distichs or triplets, are not similar in sound to one another; it is manifest, that rhymes, or similar endings, are not an essential part of Hebrew verses. The grammatical forms of the Hebrew language in the verbs, and pronouns, and the plurals of nouns, are so simple and uniform, and bear so great a share in the termination of words, that similar endings must sometimes happen, and cannot well be avoided; but so far from constituting an essential or principal part of the art of Hebrew versification, they seem to have been no object of attention and study, nor to have been industriously sought after as a favourite accessory ornament.

Thus much then, I think, we may be allowed to infer from the alphabetical poems; namely, that the Hebrew poems are written in verse, properly so called; that the harmony of the verses does not arise from rhyme, that is, from similar corresponding sounds terminating the verses; but from some sort of rhythm, probably from some sort of metre,
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the laws of which are now altogether unknown, and wholly undiscoverable; yet that there are evident marks of a certain correspondence of the verses with one another, and of a certain relation between the composition of the verses and the composition of the sentences; the formation of the former depending in some degree upon the distribution of the latter; so that generally periods coincide with stanzas, members with verses, and pauses of the one with pauses of the other; which peculiar form of composition is so observable, as plainly to discriminate in general the parts of the Hebrew scriptures, which are written in verse, from those, which are written in prose. This will require a larger and more minute explication; not only as a matter necessary to our present purpose; that is, to ascertain the character of the prophetic style in general; but as a principle of considerable use, and of no small importance, in the interpretation of the poetical parts of the Old Testament.

The correspondence of one verse, or line, with another, I call Parallelism. When a proposition is delivered, and a second is subjoined to it, or drawn under it, equivalent, or contrasted with it, in sense; or similar to it in the form of grammatical construction; these I call parallel lines; and the words or phrases, answering one to another in the corresponding lines, parallel terms.

Parallel lines may be reduced to three sorts; Parallels Synonymous, Parallels Antithetic; and Parallels Synthetic. Of each of these I shall give a variety of examples, in order to shew the various forms, under which they appear: first, from the books universally acknowledged to be poetical; then, correspondent examples from the prophets; to shew, that the form and character of the composition is in all the same.

As some of the examples, which follow, are of many lines, the reader may perhaps note a single line or two intermixed, which do not properly belong to that class, under which they are ranged. These are retained, to preserve the connection and harmony of the whole passage: and it is to be observed, that the several sorts of parallels are perpetually mixed with one another; and this mixture gives a variety and beauty to the composition.

First, of Parallel Lines Synonymous: that is, which correspond one to another by expressing the same sense in different, but equivalent terms; when a proposition is delivered, and is immediately repeated, in the whole or in part, the expression being varied, but the sense entirely, or nearly the same. As in the following examples:

“ O Jehovah,

“ O Jehovah, in thy strength the king shall rejoice ;”
 “ And in thy salvation how greatly shall he exult !”
 “ The desire of his heart thou hast granted unto him ;”
 “ And the request of his lips thou hast not denied.”

Psalms 21. 1, 2.

“ When Israel went out from Egypt ;”
 “ The house of Jacob from a strange people ;”
 “ Judah was his sacred heritage :”
 “ Israel his dominion.”
 “ The sea saw, and fled ;”
 “ Jordan turned back :”
 “ The mountains leaped like rams ;”
 “ The hills like the sons of the flock.”
 “ What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest ;”
 “ Jordan, that thou turnedst back :”
 “ Mountains, that ye leaped like rams ;”
 “ And hills, like the sons of the flock !”
 “ At the presence of the Lord tremble, thou earth ;”
 “ At the presence of the God of Jacob !”
 “ Who turned the rock into a lake of waters ;”
 “ The flint into a water spring.”

Psalms 114.

“ Because I called, and ye refused ;”
 “ I stretched out my hand, and no one regarded :”
 “ But ye have defeated all my counsel ;”
 “ And would not incline to my reproof :”
 “ I also will laugh at your calamity ;”
 “ I will mock, when what you feared cometh ;”
 “ When what you feared cometh like a devastation ;”
 “ And your calamity advanceth like a tempest ;”
 “ When distress and anguish come upon you :”
 “ Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer ;”
 “ They shall seek me early, but they shall not find me :”
 “ Because they hated knowledge ;”
 “ And did not choose the fear of Jehovah ;”
 “ Did not incline to my counsel !”
 “ Contemptuously rejected all my reproof :”
 “ Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own ways ;”
 “ And shall be satiated with their own devices.”
 “ For the defection of the simple shall slay them ;”
 “ And the security of fools shall destroy them.”

Proverbs 1. 24—32.

The prophetic Muse is no less elegant and correct :

“ Arise, be thou enlightened ; for thy light is come ;”

“ And

“ And the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee.”

“ For behold darkness shall cover the earth ;”

“ And a thick vapour the nations :”

“ But upon thee shall Jehovah arise ;”

“ And his glory upon thee shall be conspicuous.”

“ And the nations shall walk in thy light ;”

“ And kings in the brightness of thy rising.”

Isaiah 60. 1—3.

“ Seek ye Jehovah, while he may be found ;”

“ Call ye upon him, while he is near :”

“ Let the wicked forsake his way ;”

“ And the unrighteous man his thoughts :”

“ And let him return to Jehovah, and he will compassionate him ;”

“ And unto our God, for he aboundeth in forgiveness.”

Isaiah 55. 6, 7.

“ Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness ;”

“ The people in whose heart is my law :”

“ Fear not the reproach of wretched man ;”

“ Neither be ye borne down by their revilings ;”

“ For the moth shall consume them like a garment ;”

“ And the worm shall eat them like wool :”

“ But my righteousness shall endure for ever ;”

“ And my salvation to the age of ages.” *Isaiah 51. 7, 8.*

Observe also that famous prophecy concerning the humiliation, and expiatory sufferings of the Messiah :

“ Who hath believed our report ;”

“ And to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been manifested ?”

“ For he groweth up in their sight like a tender sucker ;”

“ And like a root from a thirsty soil ;”

“ He hath no form, nor any beauty that we should regard him ;”

“ Nor is his countenance such, that we should desire him.”

“ Despised, nor accounted in the number of men ;”

“ A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ;”

“ As one that hideth his face from us :”

“ He was despised, and we esteemed him not.”

“ Surely our infirmities he hath borne.”

“ And our sorrows he hath carried them.”—

“ Yet we thought him judicially stricken ;”

“ Smitten of God and afflicted.”

“ But he was wounded for our transgressions ;”

“ Was

- “ Was finitten for our iniquities :”
 “ The chastifement by which our peace was effected was
 laid upon him ;”
 “ And by his bruifes we are healed.” *Ifaiah 53. 1—5.*

Ifaiah is indeed excellent, but not unrivalled in this kind of composition : there are abundant examples in the other prophets ; I fhall, however, only add one from Hofea, which is exquisitely pathetic ; and one from Joel :

- “ How fhall I resign thee, O Ephraim !”
 “ How fhall I deliver thee up, O Ifrael !”
 “ How fhall I resign thee as Admah !”
 “ How fhall I make thee as Zeboim !”
 “ My heart is changed within me ;”
 “ I am warmed alfo with repentance towards thee.”
 “ I will not do according to the fervour of my wrath,”
 “ I will not return to deftroy Ephraim :”
 “ For I am God, and not man ;”
 “ Holy in the midft of thee, though I inhabit not thy
 cities.” *Hofea 11. 8, 9.*
 “ Like mighty men fhall they rufh on ;”
 “ Like warriors fhall they mount the wall :”
 “ And every one in his way fhall they march ;”
 “ And they fhall not turn afide from their paths.”
Joel 2. 7.
 “ Bleffed is the man that feareth Jehovah ;”
 “ That greatly delighteth in his commandments.”
Pfalm 112. 1.
 “ Harken unto me, O houfe of Jacob ;”
 “ And all the remnant of the houfe of Ifrael.”
Ifaiah 46. 3.
 “ Honour Jehovah with thy riches ;”
 “ And with the firft-fruits of all thine increafe.”

Proverbs 3. 9.

- “ Incline your ear, and come unto me ;”
 “ Harken, and your foul fhall live.” *Ifaiah 55. 3.*

In the foregoing examples may be obferved the different degrees of Synonymous Parallelifm. The Parallel Lines fometimes confift of three or more Synonymous terms ; fometimes of two ; which is generally the cafe, when the verb, or the nominative cafe of the firft fentence is to be carried on to the fecond, or underftood there ; fometimes of one only ; as in the four laft examples. There are alfo among the foregoing a few instances, in which the lines confift each

of double members, or two propositions. I shall add one or two more of these, very perfect in their kind :

“ Bow thy heavens, O Jehovah, and descend ;”

“ Touch the mountains, and they shall smoke :”

“ Dart forth lightning, and scatter them ;”

“ Shoot out thine arrows, and destroy them.”

Psaln 144. 5, 6.

“ And they shall build houses, and shall inhabit them ;”

“ And they shall plant vineyards, and shall eat the fruit thereof :”

“ They shall not build, and another inhabit ;”

“ They shall not plant, and another eat :”

“ For as the days of a tree, shall be the days of my people ;”

“ And they shall wear out the works of their own hands.”

Isaiah 65. 21, 22.

Parallels are also sometimes formed by a repetition of part of the first sentence :

“ My voice is unto God, and I cry aloud ;

“ My voice unto God, and he will hearken unto me.”

“ I will remember the works of Jehovah ;”

“ Yea, I will remember thy wonders of old.”

“ The waters saw thee, O God ;

“ The waters saw thee ; they were seized with anguish.”

Psaln 77. 1, 11. 16.

“ What shall I do unto thee, O Ephraim !”

“ What shall I do unto thee, O Judah !”

“ For your goodness is as the morning cloud,”

“ And as the early dew it passeth away.” *Hosea 6. 4.*

Sometimes in the latter line a part is to be supplied from the former to complete the sentence :

“ And those that persecute me thou wilt make to turn their backs to me ;”

“ Those that hate me, and I will cut them off.”

2 Sam. 22. 41.

“ The mighty dead tremble from beneath ;”

“ The waters, and they that dwell therein.” *Job 26. 5.*

“ I looked, and there was no man ;”

“ Even among the idols, and there was no one that gave advice ;”

“ And I inquired of them, and” (there was no one) “ that returned an answer.”

Isaiah 41. 28.

Further,

Further, there are Parallel Triplets; when three lines correspond together, and form a kind of stanza; of which however only two commonly are Synonymous:

“ The wicked shall see it and it shall grieve him ;”
 “ He shall gnash his teeth and pine away ;”
 “ The desire of the wicked shall perish.” *Pfalm 112. 10.*

“ That day, let it become darkness ;”
 “ Let not God from above inquire after it ;”
 “ Nor let the flowing light radiate upon it.”
 “ That night, let utter darkness seize it ;”
 “ Let it not be united with the days of the year ;”
 “ Let it not come into the number of the months.”
 “ Let the stars of its twilight be darkened :”
 “ Let it look for light, and may there be none ;”
 “ And let it not behold the eyelids of the morning.”

Job 3. 4, 6, 9.

“ And he shall snatch on the right, and yet be hungry ;”
 “ And he shall devour on the left, and not be satisfied ;”
 “ Every man shall devour the flesh of his neighbour.”

Isaiah 9. 20.

“ Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe ;”
 “ Come away, get you down, for the wine-press is full ;”
 “ The vats overflow; for great is their wickedness.”

Joel 3. 13.

There are likewise Parallels consisting of four lines: two distichs being so connected together, by the sense and the construction, as to make one stanza. Such is the form of the 37th psalm; which is evidently laid out by the initial letters in stanzas of four lines; though in regard to that disposition some irregularities are found in the present copies. From this psalm, which gives us a sufficient warrant for considering the union of two distichs as making a stanza of four lines, I shall take the first example:

“ Be not moved with indignation against the evil-doers ;”
 “ Nor with zeal against the workers of iniquity :”
 “ For like the grass they shall soon be cut off ;”
 “ And like the green herb they shall wither.”

Pfalm 37, 1, 2.

“ The ox knoweth his possessor ;”
 “ And the ass the crib of his lord ;”
 “ But Israel doth not know me ;”
 “ Neither doth my people consider.” *Isaiah 1. 3.*

“ And I said, I have laboured in vain ;”
 “ For nought and for vanity I have spent my strength :”
 “ Nevertheless

- “ Nevertheless my cause is with Jehovah ;”
 “ And the reward of my work with my God.”

Isaiah 49. 4.

- “ Jehovah shall roar from Sion ;”
 “ And shall utter his voice from Jerusalem :”
 “ And the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn ;”
 “ And the head of Carmel shall wither.”

Amos 1. 2.

In like manner some periods may be considered as making stanzas of five lines ; in which the odd line, or member, either comes in between two distichs, or after two distichs makes a full close :

- “ If thou wouldst seek early unto God ;”
 “ And make thy supplication to the Almighty ;”
 “ If thou wert pure and upright :”
 “ Verily now would he rise up in thy defence ;”
 “ And make peaceable the dwelling of thy righteousness.”

Job 8. 5, 6.

- “ They bear him on the shoulder ; they carry him about ;”
 “ They set him down in his place, and he standeth ;”
 “ From his place he shall not remove ;”
 “ To him, that crieth unto him, he will not answer ;”
 “ Neither will he deliver him from his distress.”

Isaiah 46. 7.

- “ Who is wise, and will understand these things ?”
 “ Prudent, and will know them ?”
 “ For right are the ways of Jehovah ;”
 “ And the just shall walk in them ;”
 “ But the disobedient shall fall therein.”

Hosea 14. 9.

- “ And Jehovah shall roar out of Sion ;”
 “ And from Jerusalem shall utter his voice ;”
 “ And the heavens and the earth shall tremble :”
 “ But Jehovah will be the refuge of his people ;”
 “ And a strong defence to the sons of Israel.”

Joel 3. 16.

- “ Who establisheth the word of his servant ;”
 “ And accomplisheth the counsel of his messengers :”
 “ Who saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited ;”
 “ And to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built ;”
 “ And her desolate places I will restore.”

Isaiah 44. 26.

In stanzas of four lines sometimes the parallel lines answer to one another alternately ; the first to the third, and the second to the fourth :

- “ As the heavens are high above the earth ;”
 “ So high is his goodness over them that fear him :”

“ As

“ As remote as the east is from the west ;”

“ So far hath he removed from us our transgressions.”

Psalms 103. 11, 12.

“ And ye said : Nay, but on horses will we flee ;”

“ Therefore shall ye be put to flight :”

“ And on swift coursers will we ride ;”

“ Therefore shall they be swift that pursue you.”

Isaiah 30. 16.

And a stanza of five lines admits of the same elegance :

“ Who is there among you, that feareth Jehovah ?”

“ Let him hearken unto the voice of his servant :”

“ That walketh in darkness, and hath no light ?”

“ Let him trust in the name of Jehovah ;”

“ And rest himself on the support of his God.”

Isaiah 50. 10.

The second sort of Parallels are the Antithetic : when two lines correspond with one another by an opposition of terms and sentiments ; when the second is contrasted with the first, sometimes in expressions, sometimes in sense only. Accordingly the degrees of antithesis are various ; from an exact contraposition of word to word through the whole sentence, down to a general disparity, with something of a contrariety, in the two propositions.

Thus in the following examples :

“ A wife son rejoiceth his father ;”

“ But a foolish son is the grief of his mother.”

Proverbs 10. 1.

Where every word hath its opposite : for the terms father and mother are, as the Logicians say, relatively opposite.

“ The memory of the just is a blessing ;”

“ But the name of the wicked shall rot.” *Proverbs* 10. 7.

Here are only two Antithetic terms : for memory and name are synonymous.

“ There is that scattereth, and still increaseth ;”

“ And that is unreasonably sparing, yet groweth poor.”

Proverbs 11. 24.

Here there is a kind of double Antithesis ; one between the two lines themselves ; and likewise a subordinate opposition between the two parts of each.

“ Many seek the face of the prince ;”

“ But the determination concerning a man is from Jehovah.”

Proverbs 29. 26.

Where

Where the opposition is chiefly between the single terms the prince, and Jehovah: but there is an opposition likewise in the general sentiment; which expresses, or intimates, the vanity of depending on the former, without seeking the favour of the latter. In the following there is much the same opposition of sentiment without any contraposition of terms at all:

“ The lot is cast into the lap;”

“ But the whole determination of it is from Jehovah.”

Proverbs 16. 33.

That is, the event seems to be the work of chance; but is really the direction of providence.

The foregoing examples are all taken from the Proverbs of Solomon, where they abound: for this form is peculiarly adapted to that kind of writing; to adages, aphorisms, and detached sentences. Indeed the elegance, acuteness, and force, of a great number of Solomon's wife sayings arise in a great measure from the Antithetic form, the opposition of diction and sentiment. We are not therefore to expect frequent instances of it in the other poems of the Old Testament; especially those, that are elevated in the style, and more connected in the parts. However, I shall add a few examples of the like kind from the higher poetry.

“ These in chariots, and those in horses;”

“ But we in the name of Jehovah our God will be strong.”

“ They are bowed down, and fallen;”

“ But we are risen and maintain ourselves firm.”

Psalms 20. 7, 8.

“ For his wrath is but for a moment, his favour for life;”

“ Sorrow may lodge for the evening, but in the morning

“ gladness.”

Psalms 30. 5.

“ Yet a little while, and the wicked shall be no more;”

“ Thou shalt look at his place, and he shall not be found:”

“ But the meek shall inherit the land;”

“ And delight themselves in abundant prosperity.”

Psalms 37. 10, 11.

In the last example the opposition lies between the two parts of a stanza of four lines, the latter distich being opposed to the former. So likewise the following.

“ For the mountains shall be removed;”

“ And the hills shall be overthrown:”

“ But my kindness from thee shall not be removed;”

“ And the covenant of my peace shall not be overthrown.”

Isaiah 54. 10.

“ The

“ The bricks are fallen, but we will build with hewn-stone ;”

“ The fycamores are cut down, but we will replace them with cedars.”

Iſaiah 9. 10.

Here the lines themselves are Synthetically parallel; and the opposition lies between the two members of each.

The third sort of Parallels I call Synthetic or Constructive: where the parallelism consists only in the similar form of construction; in which word does not answer to word, and sentence to sentence, as equivalent or opposite; but there is a correspondence and equality between different propositions, in respect of the shape and turn of the whole sentence, and of the constructive parts; such as noun answering to noun, verb to verb, member to member, negative to negative, interrogative to interrogative.

“ Praise ye Jehovah, ye of the earth ;”

“ Ye sea-monsters, and all deeps :”

“ Fire and hail, snow and vapour ;”

“ Stormy wind, executing his command :”

“ Mountains, and all hills ;”

“ Fruit-trees, and all cedars :”

“ Wild beasts, and all cattle ;”

“ Reptiles, and birds of wing :”

“ Kings of the earth, and all peoples ;”

“ Princes, and all judges of the earth :”

“ Youths, and also virgins ;”

“ Old men, together with the children :”

“ Let them praise the name of Jehovah ;”

“ For his name alone is exalted ;”

“ His majesty above earth and heaven.”

Pſalm 148. 7—13.

“ With him is wisdom and might ;”

“ To him belong counsel and understanding.”

“ Lo! he pulleth down, and it shall not be built ;”

“ He incloseth a man, and he shall not be set loose.”

“ Lo! he withholdeth the waters, and they are dried up ;”

“ And he fendeth them forth, and they overturn the earth.”

“ With him is strength, and perfect existence ;”

“ The deceived, and the deceiver, are his.”

Job 12. 13—16.

“ Is such then the fast which I choose?”

“ That a man should afflict his soul for a day?”

“ Is it, that he should bow down his head like a bulrush ;”

- " And spread sackcloth and ashes for his couch ?"
 " Shall this be called a fast ;"
 " And a day acceptable to Jehovah ?"
 " Is not this the fast that I choose ?"
 " To dissolve the bands of wickedness ;"
 " To loosen the oppressive burthens ;"
 " To deliver those that are crushed by violence ;"
 " And that ye should break asunder every yoke ?"
 " Is it not to distribute thy bread to the hungry ;"
 " And to bring the wandering poor into thy house ?"
 " When thou seest the naked, that thou clothe him ;"
 " And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh ?"
 " Then shall thy light break forth like the morning ;"
 " And thy wounds shall speedily be healed over :"
 " And thy righteousness shall go before thee ;"
 " And the glory of Jehovah shall bring up thy rear."

Isaiah 58. 5—8.

Of the Constructive kind is most commonly the Parallelism of stanzas of three lines ; though they are sometimes Synonymous throughout, and often have two lines Synonymous ; examples of both which are above given. The following are constructively parallel :

- " Whatsoever Jehovah pleaseth,"
 " That doeth he in the heavens, and in the earth ;"
 " In the sea and in all the deeps :"
 " Causing the vapours to ascend from the ends of the
 " earth ;"
 " Making the lightnings with the rain ;"
 " Bringing forth the wind out of his treasures."
- Psalms 135. 6, 7.*
- " The Lord Jehovah hath opened mine ear,"
 " And I was not rebellious ;"
 " Neither did I withdraw myself backward,"
 " I gave my back to the smiters,"
 " And my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair ;"
 " My face I hid not from shame and spitting."
- Isaiah 50. 5, 6.*
- " Thou shalt sow, but shalt not reap,"
 " Thou shalt tread the olive, but shalt not anoint thee
 " with oil ;"
 " And the grape, but shalt not drink wine."

Micah 6. 15.

Of the same sort of Parallelism are those passages, frequent in the poetic books, where a definite number is twice put for

for an indefinite; this being followed by an enumeration of particulars naturally throws the sentences into a Parallelism, which cannot be of any other than the Synthetic kind. This seems to have been a favourite ornament. There are many elegant examples of it in the 30th chapter of Proverbs, to which I refer the reader: and shall here give one or two from other places.

- “ These six things Jehovah hateth ;”
 “ And seven are the abomination of his soul.”
 “ Lofty eyes, and a lying tongue ;”
 “ And hands shedding innocent blood :”
 “ A heart fabricating wicked thoughts ;”
 “ Feet hastily running to mischief :”
 “ A false witness breathing out lies ;”
 “ And the sower of strife between brethren.”

Proverbs 6. 16—19.

- “ Give a portion to seven, and also to eight ;”
 “ For thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.”

Ecclesiastes 11. 2.

“ These two things have befallen thee; who shall bemoan thee?”

- “ Desolation and destruction, the famine and the sword ;”
 “ who shall comfort thee?”

Isaiah 51. 19.

that is, taken alternately, desolation by famine, and destruction by the sword. Of which alternate construction I shall add a remarkable example or two; where the Parallelism arises from alternation of the members of the sentences:

- “ I am black, but yet beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem :”
 “ Like the tents of Kedar; like the pavilions of Solomon.”

Canticles 1. 5.

that is, black, as the tents of Kedar; (made of dark-coloured goats hair;) beautiful, as the pavilions of Solomon.

- “ On her house-tops, and to her open streets,”
 “ Every one howleth, descendeth with weeping.”

Isaiah 15. 3.

that is, every one howleth on her house-tops, and descendeth with weeping to her open streets.

The reader will observe in the foregoing examples, that though there are perhaps no two lines corresponding one with another as equivalent, or opposite in terms; yet there is a Parallelism equally apparent, and almost as striking, which arises from the similar form and equality of the lines, from the correspondence of the members and the construction;

tion; the consequence of which is a harmony and rhythm, little inferior in effect to that of the two kinds preceding.

Poetic Imagery.

THE images of light and darkness are commonly made use of in all languages to imply or denote prosperity and adversity, agreeably to the common sense and perception which all men have of the objects themselves. But the Hebrews employ those metaphors more frequently, and with less variation than other people; indeed they seldom refrain from them whenever the subject requires, or will even admit of their introduction. These expressions, therefore, may be accounted among those forms of speech, which in the parabolic style are established and defined; since they exhibit the most noted and familiar images, and the application of them on this occasion is justified by an acknowledged analogy, and approved by constant and unvarying custom. In the use of images, so conspicuous and so familiar among the Hebrews, a degree of boldness is excusable. The Latins introduce them more sparingly, and therefore are more cautious in the application of them;

Restore, great chief, thy country's light!
 Dispel the dreary shades of night!
 Thy aspect like the spring shall cheer,
 And brighter suns shall gild the year.

HORACE.

The most respectable of the Roman muses have scarcely any thing more elegant, I will add at the same time, that they have scarcely any thing bolder on any similar occasion. But the Hebrews, upon a subject more sublime indeed in itself, and illustrating it by an idea which was more habitual to them, more daringly exalt their strains, and give a loose rein to the spirit of poetry. They display, for instance, not the image of the spring, of aurore, of the dreary night; but the sun and stars as rising with increased splendor in a new creation, or again involved in chaos and primeval darkness. Does the sacred bard promise to his people a renewal of the divine favour, and a recommencement of universal prosperity? In what magnificent colours does he depict it? such indeed as no translation can illustrate, but such as none can obscure:

“The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun,”
 “And the light of the sun shall be sevenfold.”

Isaiah. 30. 26.

But

But even this is not sufficient :

- “ No longer shalt thou have the sun for thy light by day ;”
 “ Nor by night shall the brightness of the moon enlighten thee :”
 “ For Jehovah shall be to thee an everlasting light ;”
 “ And thy God shall be thy glory.”
 “ Thy sun shall no more decline ;”
 “ Neither shall thy moon wane ;”
 “ For Jehovah shall be thine everlasting light ;”
 “ And the days of thy mourning shall cease.”

Isaiah 60. 19, 20.

In another place he has admirably diversified the same sentiment :

- “ And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun shall be ashamed ;”
 “ For Jehovah God of Hosts shall reign
 “ On mount Sion, and in Jerusalem ;”
 “ And before his ancients shall he be glorified.”

Isaiah 24. 23.

On the other hand, denouncing ruin against the proud king of Egypt :

- “ And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heavens.”
 “ And the stars thereof will I make dark ;”
 “ I will involve the sun in a cloud,”
 “ Nor shall the moon give out her light.”
 “ All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee,”
 “ And I will set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord
 “ Jehovah.”

Ezekiel 32. 7, 8.

These expressions are bold and daring : but the imagery is well known, the use of it is common, the signification definite ; they are therefore perspicuous, clear, and truly magnificent.

Of poetic Imagery from the Sacred History.

IN describing or embellishing illustrious actions, or future events of a miraculous nature, the Hebrew poets are accustomed to introduce allusions to the actions of former times, such as possess a conspicuous place in their history ; and thus they illuminate with colours, foreign, indeed, but similar, the future by the past, the recent by the antique, facts less known by others more generally understood : and as this property seems peculiar to the poetry of the Hebrews,

at least is but seldom to be met with in that of other nations, I have determined to illustrate this part of my subject with a considerable variety of examples. I mean, therefore, to instance in a regular order certain topics or common-places of Scripture, which seem to have furnished, if not all, at least the principal part of these allusions: it will be necessary at the same time to remark their figurative power and effect, and the regular and uniform method pursued in the application of them, which is characteristic of the poetical imagery of the Hebrews.

The first of these topics, or common-places, is the chaos and the creation, which compose the first pages of the sacred history. These are constantly alluded to, as expressive of any remarkable change, whether prosperous or adverse, in the public affairs; of the overthrow or restoration of kingdoms and nations: and are consequently very common in the prophetic poetry, particularly when any unusual degree of boldness is attempted. If the subject be the destruction of the Jewish empire by the Chaldeans, or a strong denunciation of ruin against the enemies of Israel, it is depicted in exactly the same colours, as if universal nature were about to relapse into the primeval chaos. Thus Jeremiah, in that sublime, and indeed more than poetical vision, in which is represented the impending desolation of Judea:

“ I beheld the earth, and lo! disorder and confusion;”

“ The heavens also, and there was no light.”

“ I beheld the mountains, and lo! they trembled;”

“ And all the hills shook.”

“ I beheld, and lo! there was not a man;”

“ And all the fowls of the heavens were fled.”

“ I beheld, and lo! the fruitful field (was become) the desert;”

“ And all its cities were thrown down,”

“ Before the presence of Jehovah,”

“ Before the fierce heat of his anger.”

Jeremiah 4. 23—26.

And on a similar subject Isaiah expresses himself with wonderful force and sublimity:

“ And he shall stretch over her the line of devastation,”

“ And the plummet of emptiness.” *Isaiah 34. 11.*

Each of them not only had in his mind the Mosaic chaos, but actually uses the words of the divine historian. The same subjects are amplified and embellished by the prophets with several adjuncts:

“ The

“ The sun and the moon are darkened,”
 “ And the stars withdraw their shining.”
 “ Jehovah also will thunder from Sion,”
 “ And from Jerusalem will he utter his voice ;”
 “ And the heavens and the earth shall shake.”

Joel 3. 15, 16.

“ And all the host of heaven shall waste away :”
 “ And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll ;”
 “ And all their host shall wither ;”
 “ As the withered leaf falleth from the vine,”
 “ And as the blighted fig from the fig-tree.”

Isaiah 34. 4.

On the contrary, when he foretels the restoration of the Israelites :

“ For I am Jehovah thy God ;”
 “ He who stilleth at once the sea,”
 “ Though the waves thereof roar ;”
 “ Jehovah God of Hosts is his name.”
 “ I have put my words in thy mouth ;”
 “ And with the shadow of my hand have I covered thee :”
 “ To stretch out the heavens, and to lay the foundations
 “ of the earth ;”
 “ And to say unto Sion, Thou art my people.”

Isaiah 51. 15, 16.

“ Thus therefore shall Jehovah console Sion ;”
 “ He shall console her desolations :”
 “ And he shall make her wilderness like Eden ;”
 “ And her desert like the garden of Jehovah :”
 “ Joy and gladness shall be found in her ;”
 “ Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.” *Isaiah 51. 3.*

In the former of these two last-quoted examples the universal deluge is exactly delineated, and on similar subjects the same imagery generally occurs. Thus, as the devastation of the holy land is frequently represented by the restoration of ancient chaos, so the same event is sometimes expressed in metaphors suggested by the universal deluge :

“ Behold, Jehovah emptieth the land, and maketh it
 “ waste ;”
 “ He even turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad
 “ the inhabitants.”
 “ For the flood-gates from on high are opened ;”
 “ And the foundations of the earth tremble.”
 “ The land is grievously shaken ;”
 “ The land is utterly shattered to pieces ;”

“ The

- “ The land is violently moved out of her place ;”
 “ The land reeleth to and fro like a drunkard ;”
 “ And moveth this way and that like a lodge for a night.”
Isaiah 24. 18, 19, 20.

These are great ideas ; indeed the human mind cannot easily conceive any thing greater or more sublime. There is nothing, however, of this kind more forcible and elevated than that imagery which is taken from the destruction of Sodom, that being the next in order of these topics, and generally applied to express the punishments to be inflicted by the Almighty on the wicked :

- “ He shall rain live coals upon the ungodly,”
 “ Fire and sulphur, and a burning storm: this shall be the contents of their cup.” *Psalms 11. 6.*
 “ For it is the day of vengeance to Jehovah ;”
 “ The year of recompence to the defender of the cause of Sion.”
 “ And her torrents shall be turned into pitch,”
 “ And her dust into sulphur ;”
 “ And her whole land shall become burning pitch :”
 “ By night or by day it shall not be extinguished ;”
 “ For ever shall her smoke ascend :”
 “ From generation to generation she shall lie desert :”
 “ To everlasting ages no one shall pass through her.”
Isaiah 34. 8, 9, 10.

The emigration of the Israelites from Egypt, as it affords materials for many magnificent descriptions, is commonly applied in a metaphorical manner to many events, which bear no unapt resemblance to it. Does God promise to his people liberty, assistance, security, and favour? The Exodus occurs spontaneously to the mind of the poet ; the dividing of the sea, the destruction of the enemy, the desert which was safely traversed, and the torrents bursting forth from the rocks, are so many splendid objects that force themselves on his imagination :

- “ Thus saith Jehovah ;”
 “ Who made a way in the sea ;”
 “ And a path in the mighty waters :”
 “ Who brought forth the rider and the horse, the army and the warrior ;”
 “ Together they lay down, they rose no more ;”
 “ They were extinguished, they were quenched like tow :”
 “ Remember not the former things ;”
 “ And the things of ancient times regard not ;”
 “ Behold,

- “ Behold, I make a new thing ;”
 “ Even now shall it spring forth ; will ye not regard it ?”
 “ Yea, I will make in the wilderness a way ;”
 “ In the desert streams of water.” *Isaiah* 43. 16—19.

There is also another prophecy of the same divine poet, which in one sense (though I think not the principal) is to be understood as relating to the liberation of the Israelites from the Babylonish captivity. In the exordium the same imagery is introduced, but in a very noble personification, than which nothing can be more sublime :

- “ Awake, awake, cloath thyself with strength, O arm of Jehovah !”
 “ Awake as in the days of old, the ancient generations.”
 “ Art thou not the same, that smote Rahab, that wounded the dragon ?”
 “ Art thou not the same, that dried up the sea, the waters of the great deep ?”
 “ That made the depths of the sea a path for the redeemed to pass through.” *Isaiah* 51. 9, 10.

Of the same kind is the last of these topics which I shall instance, the descent of Jehovah at the delivery of the law. When the Almighty is described as coming to execute judgment, to deliver the pious, and to destroy his enemies, or in any manner exerting his divine power upon earth, the description is embellished from that tremendous scene which was exhibited upon Mount Sinai : there is no imagery more frequently recurred to than this, and there is none more sublime : I will only trouble you with two examples :

- “ For, behold, Jehovah will go forth from his place ;”
 “ And he will come down, and will tread on the high places of the earth.”
 “ And the mountains shall be molten under him :”
 “ And the vallies shall cleave asunder ;”
 “ As wax before the fire,”
 “ As waters poured down a steep place.” *Micah* 1. 3, 4.
 “ The earth shook and was alarmed,”
 “ And the foundations of the hills rocked with terror,”
 “ For the wrath of Jehovah was hot against them.”
 “ Before his face a smoke ascended,”
 “ And a flame consumed before his presence,”
 “ Burning fires were kindled by it.”
 “ He bowed the heavens and came down,”
 “ And clouds of darkness were beneath his feet.”
 “ He rode upon the pinions of the Cherubin,”

“ And

- “ And flew on the wings of the wind.
 “ He concealed himself in a veil of darkness ;”
 “ A pavilion encompassed him
 “ Of black water, and thick clouds of æther.”
 “ From the brightness before him thick clouds past along.”
 “ Hail-stones and burning fires.”
 “ Jehovah thundered in the heavens ;”
 “ And the most high God sent forth his voice ;”
 “ He shot out his arrows and dispersed the enemies,”
 “ And he multiplied his thunder and confounded them.”
Psalms 18. 7—14.

These examples, though literally translated, and destitute of the harmony of verse, will, I think, sufficiently demonstrate the force, the grandeur and sublimity of these images, which, when applied to other events, suggest ideas still greater, than when described as plain facts by the pen of the historian, in however magnificent terms: for to the greatness and sublimity of the images which are alluded to, is added the pleasure and admiration which results from the comparison between them and the objects which they are brought to illustrate.

It is, however, worthy of observation, that, since many of these images possess such a degree of resemblance as renders them equally fit for the illustration of the same objects, it frequently happens, that several of them are collected together, in order to magnify and embellish some particular event: of this there is an example in that very thanksgiving ode of David, which we have just now quoted. For, after describing the wrath and majesty of God, in imagery taken from the descent upon Mount Sinai, as already explained, in the very next verse, the division of the Red-sea and the river Jordan is alluded to:

- “ Then appeared the channels of the waters ;”
 “ The foundations of the world were discovered ;”
 “ At thy reproofs, O Jehovah !”
 “ At the breathing of the spirit of thine anger.”

Psalms 18. 16.

On Sublimity of Sentiment.

THE Hebrew writers have obtained an unrivalled pre-eminence in sublimity of sentiment. As far as respects the dignity and importance of the subject, they not only surpass all other writers, but even exceed the confines of human genius and intellect. The greatness, the power, the justice, the

the immensity of God; the infinite wisdom of his works and of his dispensations, are the subjects in which the Hebrew poetry is always conversant, and always excels. If we only consider with a common degree of candour how greatly inferior the poetry of all other nations appears, whenever it pretumes to treat of these subjects; and how unequal to the dignity of the matter the highest conceptions of the human genius are found to be; we shall, I think, not only acknowledge the sublimity, but the divinity of that of the Hebrews. Nor does this greatness and elevation consist altogether in the subjects and sentiments, which however expressed, would yet retain some part at least of their native force and dignity, but the manner in which these lofty ideas are arranged, and the embellishments of description with which they abound, claim our warmest admiration: and this whether we regard the adjuncts or circumstances, which are selected with so much judgment as uniformly to contribute to the sublimity of the principal subject; or the amplitude of that imagery, which represents objects the most remote from human apprehension in such enchanting colours, that, although debased by human painting, they still retain their genuine sanctity and excellence. Since, therefore, the sublimity of the sacred poets has been already exemplified in a variety of instances, it will probably be sufficient, in addition to these, to produce a few examples as illustrations of these remarks, chiefly taken from those parts of Scripture, in which a delineation of the Divine Majesty is attempted.

In the first place then let me recal to your remembrance the solemnity and magnificence with which the power of God in the creation of the universe is depicted. And here, I cannot possibly overlook that passage of the sacred historian, which has been so frequently commended, in which the importance of the circumstance and the greatness of the idea (the human mind cannot indeed well conceive a greater) is no less remarkable than the expressive brevity and simplicity of the language:—"And God said, Let there be light, and "there was light." The more words you would accumulate upon this thought, the more you would detract from the sublimity of it: for the understanding quickly comprehends the Divine power from the effect, and perhaps most completely, when it is not attempted to be explained; the perception in that case is the more vivid, inasmuch as it seems to proceed from the proper action and energy of the mind itself. The prophets have also depicted the same conception in poetical language, and with no less force
and

and magnificence of expression. The whole creation is summoned forth to celebrate the praise of the Almighty.

“ Let them praise the name of Jehovah ;”

“ For he commanded, and they were created.”

And in another place :

“ For he spoke, and it was ;”

“ He commanded, and it stood fast.”

The same subject is frequently treated more diffusely, many circumstances being added, and a variety of imagery introduced for the purpose of illustration. Whether this be executed in a manner suitable to the greatness and dignity of the subject, may be easily determined by a few examples :

“ Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the
“ earth ?”

“ If thou knowest, declare.”

“ Say, who fixed the proportions of it, for surely thou
“ knowest ;”

“ Or who stretched out the line upon it ?”

“ Upon what were its foundations fixed ?”

“ Or who laid the corner-stone thereof ?”

“ When the morning stars sung together,”

“ And all the sons of God shouted for joy.”

“ When the sea was shut up with doors,”

“ When it burst forth as an infant that cometh out of the
“ womb.”

“ When I placed the cloud for its robe,”

“ And thick darkness for its swaddling-band.”

“ When I fixed my boundary against it,”

“ When I placed a bar and gates.”

“ When I said, Thus far shalt thou come, and not ad-
“ vance,”

“ And here shall a stop be put to the pride of thy waves.”

Job 38. 4—11.

“ Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his
“ hand ;”

“ And hath meted out the heavens by his span ;”

“ And hath comprehended the dust of the earth in a tierce,”

“ And hath weighed in scales the mountains, and the hills
“ in a balance ?”

“ Lift up your eyes on high ;”

“ And see who hath created these.”

“ He draweth forth their armies by number ;”

“ He calleth them each by its name :”

“ Through

“ Through the greatness of his strength, and the mightiness of his power,”

“ Not one of them faileth to appear.” *Isaiah* 40. 12 and 26.

In these examples, the power and wisdom of the Deity, as demonstrated in the constitution and government of the natural world, you see have suggested a variety of circumstances, a splendid assemblage of imagery, of which it is a sufficient commendation to say, the whole is not unworthy the greatness of the subject. The case is, however, materially different, when the attributes of God are considered in themselves simply and abstractedly, with no illustration or amplification from their operations and effects. Here the human mind is absorbed, overwhelmed as it were in a boundless vortex, and studies in vain for an expedient to extricate itself. But the greatness of the subject may be justly estimated by its difficulty; and while the imagination labours to comprehend what is beyond its powers, this very labour itself, and these ineffectual endeavours, sufficiently demonstrate the immensity and sublimity of the object. On this account the following passage is truly sublime. Here the mind seems to exert its utmost faculties in vain to grasp an object, whose unparalleled magnitude mocks its feeble endeavours; and to this end it employs the grandest imagery that universal nature can suggest, and yet this imagery, however great, proves totally inadequate to the purpose:

“ O Jehovah, thy mercy extendeth to the heavens;”

“ Thy truth unto the clouds:”

“ Thy justice is as the mountains of strength;”

“ Thy judgment as the vast abyss!” *Psalms* 36. 6 and 7.

But nothing of this kind is nobler or more majestic, than when a description is carried on by a kind of continued negation; when a number of great and sublime ideas are collected, which, on a comparison with the object, are found infinitely inferior and inadequate. Thus the boundaries are gradually extended on every side, and at length totally removed; the mind is insensibly led on towards infinity, and is struck with inexpressible admiration, with a pleasing awe, when it first finds itself expatiating in that immense expanse. There are many such examples in the sacred poetry, one or two of which will probably enable you to recollect the rest.

“ Canst thou explore the deep counsels of God?”

“ Canst thou fathom the immensity of the Almighty?”

“ It

- “ It is higher than heaven, what canst thou do ?”
 “ It is deeper than the abyfs, what canst thou know ?”
 “ The meafure thereof is longer than the earth,”
 “ And broader than the expanfe of the fea.”

Job II. 7—9.

- “ Whither fhall I go from thy fpirit ?”
 “ And whither fhall I flee from thy prefence ?”
 “ If I afcend the heavens, thou art there ;”
 “ If I make my bed in the abyfs, behold thou art there !”
 “ If I take the wings of the morning,”
 “ And dwell in the extreme parts of the ocean ;”
 “ There alfo thy hand fhall lead me,”
 “ And thy right hand fhall hold me.” *Pfalms* 139. 7—10.

Here we find the idea of infinity perfectly expreffed, though it be perhaps the moft difficult of all ideas to impreff upon the mind : for when fimplly and abftraftedly mentioned, without the affiftance and illuftration of any circumftances whatever, it almoft wholly evades the powers of the human underftanding. The facred writers have, therefore, recourfe to defcription, amplification, and imagery, by which they give fubftance and folidity to what is in itfelf a fubtile and un-fubftantial phantom ; and render an ideal fhadow the object of our fenfes. They conduct us through all the dimenfions of fpace, length, breadth, and height, thefe they do not defcribe in general or indefinite terms ; they apply to them an actual line and meafure, and that the moft extenfive which all nature can fupply, or which the mind is indeed able to comprehend. When the intellect is carried beyond thefe limits, there is nothing fubftantial upon which it can reft ; it wanders through every part, and when it has compaffed the boundaries of creation, it imperceptibly glides into the void of infinity : whofe vaft and formlefs extent, when difplayed to the mind of man in the forcible manner fo happily attained by the Hebrew writers, impreffes it with the fublimeft and moft awful fenfations, and fills it with a mixture of admiration and terror.

That more vehement fpecies of negation or affirmation, which affumes the confident form of interrogation, is admirably calculated to impreff the mind with a very forcible idea of the Divine power. This alfo frequently occurs in the facred poetry :

“ This is the decree which is determined in the whole
 “ earth ;”

“ And

“ And this the hand, which is stretched out over all the nations :”

“ For Jehovah God of hosts hath decreed ; and who shall difannul it ?”

“ And it is his hand, that is stretched out ; and who shall turn it back ?”

Iſaiah 14. 26 and 27.

“ Hath he ſaid, and will he not do it ?”

“ Hath he ſpoken, and will he not eſtabliſh it ?”

Numbers 23. 19.

Nor is that ironical kind of conceſſion, which is ſometimes put into the mouth of the Supreme Being, leſs energetic ; the following paſſage of Job is an admirable inſtance :

“ Deck thyſelf now with majeſty and with pride ;”

“ And array thyſelf in glory and honour :”

“ Pour out on every ſide the furiousneſs of thy wrath ;”

“ With a glance humble every one that is proud :”

“ Look upon every proud thing, and ſubvert it ;”

“ And trample down the wicked in their place :”

“ Overwhelm them alſo in duſt ;”

“ Bind up their faces, and plunge them into darkneſs.”

“ Then will even I confeſs unto thee,”

“ That thine own right hand may ſave thee.”

Job 40. 10—14.

When the Divine Omnipotence is oppoſed to human infirmity, the one is proportionably magnified as the other is diminished by the conſtrast. The monſtrous abſurdity of a compariſon between things extremely unequal, the more forcibly ſerves to demonſtrate that inequality, and ſets them at an infinite diſtance from each other. Since, however, the ſacred poets were under the neceſſity of ſpeaking of God in a manner adapted to human conceptions, and of attributing to him the actions, the paſſions, the faculties of man ; how can they be ſuppoſed ever to have depicted the Divine Majeſty in terms at all becoming the greatneſs of the ſubject ? And are they not in this caſe more likely to diſgrace and degrade it ? May not that cenſure be applied to them, which Longinus ſo deſervedly applies to Homer, that he turned his gods into men, and even debaſed them beneath the ſtandard of humanity ?—The caſe is, however, materially different : Homer, and the other heathen poets, relate facts of their deities, which, though impious and abſurd, when literally underſtood, are ſcarcely, or at all intelligible in an allegorical

gorical sense, and can by no means be reduced to an interpretation strictly figurative. On the contrary, in the delineation of the Divine nature, the sacred poets do indeed, in conformity to the weakness of the human understanding, employ terrestrial imagery; but it is in such a manner, that the attributes which are borrowed from human nature and human action, can never in a literal sense be applied to the Divinity. The understanding is continually referred from the shadow to the reality; nor can it rest satisfied with the bare literal application, but is naturally directed to investigate that quality in the Divine nature, which appears to be analogous to the image. This, if I am not mistaken, will supply us with a reason not very obvious, of a very observable effect in the Hebrew writings, namely, why, among those sensible images that are applied to the Deity, those principally, which in a literal sense would seem most remote from the object, and most unworthy of the Divine Majesty, are nevertheless, when used metaphorically, or in the way of comparison, by far the most sublime. That imagery, for instance, which is taken from the parts and members of the human body, is found to be much nobler and more magnificent in its effect, than that which is taken from the passions of the mind; and that, which is taken from the animal creation, frequently exceeds in sublimity that which the nature of man has suggested. For such is our ignorance and blindness in contemplating the Divine nature, that we can by no means attain to a simple and pure idea of it: we necessarily mingle something of the human with the divine: the grosser animal properties, therefore, we easily distinguish and separate, but it is with the utmost difficulty that we can preserve the rational, and even some of the properties of the sensitive soul, perfectly distinct. Hence it is, that in those figurative expressions derived from the nobler and more excellent qualities of human nature, when applied to the Almighty, we frequently acquiesce, as if they were in strict literal propriety to be attributed to him: on the contrary, our understanding immediately rejects the literal sense of those which seem quite inconsistent with the Divine Being, and derived from an ignoble source: and, while it pursues the analogy, it constantly rises to a contemplation, which, though obscure, is yet grand and magnificent. Let us observe, whether this observation will apply to the following passages, in which the Psalmist ascribes to God the resentment commonly experienced by a human creature for an injury unexpectedly received: there appears in the image
nothing

nothing to excite our admiration, nothing particularly sublime:

“ The Lord heard, and he was enraged ;
 “ And Israel he utterly rejected.” *Pfalm 78. 59.*

But when, a little after, the same subject is depicted in figurative terms, derived from much grosser objects, and applied in a still more daring manner, nothing can be more sublime :

“ And the Lord awaked, as one out of sleep,
 “ Like a strong man shouting because of wine.”
Pfalm 78. 65.

On the same principle the sublimity of those passages is founded, in which the image is taken from the roaring of a lion, the clamour of rustic labourers, and the rage of wild beasts :

“ JEHOVAH from on high shall roar,
 “ And from his holy habitation shall he utter his voice ;”
 “ He shall roar aloud against his resting-place,
 “ A shout like that of the vintagers shall he give
 “ Against all the inhabitants of the earth.”
Jeremiah 25. 30.

“ And I will be unto them as a lion ;”
 “ As a leopard in the way will I watch them :”
 “ I will meet them as a bear bereaved of her whelps :”
 “ And I will rend the caul of their heart :”
 “ And there will I devour them as a lioness ;”
 “ A beast of the field shall tear them.” *Hosea 13. 7, 8.*

From ideas, which in themselves appear coarse, unsuitable, and totally unworthy of so great an object, the mind naturally recedes, and passes suddenly to the contemplation of the object itself, and of its inherent magnitude and importance.

Of the Sublime of Passion.

BY far the greater part of the sacred poetry is little else than a continued imitation of the different passions. What in reality forms the substance and subject of most of these poems but the passion of admiration, excited by the consideration of the divine power and majesty ; the passion of joy, from the sense of the divine favour, and the prosperous issue of
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events; the passion of resentment and indignation against the contemners of God; of grief, from the consciousness of sin; and terror, from the apprehension of the divine judgment? Of all these, and if there be any emotions of the mind beyond these, exquisite examples may be found in the book of Job, in the Psalms, in the Canticles, and in every part of the prophetic writings. On this account my principal difficulty will not be the selection of excellent and proper instances, but the explaining of those which spontaneously occur without a considerable diminution of their intrinsic sublimity.

Admiration, as it is ever the concomitant, so it is frequently the efficient cause of sublimity. It produces great and magnificent conceptions and sentiments, and expresses them in language bold and elevated, in sentences concise, abrupt and energetic:

“ Jehovah reigneth; let the people tremble:”
 “ He sitteth upon the Cherubim; let the earth be moved.”
Psalms 99. 1.

“ The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters:”
 “ The God of glory thunders:”
 “ Jehovah is upon the many waters.”
 “ The voice of Jehovah is full of power;”
 “ The voice of Jehovah is full of majesty.”
Psalms 29. 3, 4.

“ Who is like unto thee among the Gods, O Jehovah!”
 “ Who is like unto thee, adorable in holiness!”
 “ Fearful in praises, who workest wonders!”—
 “ Thou extendest thy right hand; the earth swalloweth
 “ them.”
Exodus 15. 11, 12.

Joy is more elevated, and exults in a bolder strain. It produces great sentiments and conceptions, seizes upon the most splendid imagery, and adorns it with the most animated language; nor does it hesitate to risk the most daring and unusual figures. In the song of Moses, in the thanksgiving of Deborah and Baruch, what sublimity do we find, in sentiment, in language, in the general turn of the expression! But nothing can excel in this respect that noble exultation of universal nature in the ninety-sixth and ninety-eighth Psalms, where the whole animated and inanimate creation unite in the praises of their Maker. Poetry here seems to assume the highest tone of triumph and exultation, and to revel,

revel, if I may so express myself, in all the extravagance of joy:

Tell in high, harmonious strains,
 Tell the world, Jehovah reigns!
 He, who fram'd this beauteous whole,
 He, who fix'd each planet's place;
 Who bade unnumber'd orbs to roll,
 In destin'd course, through endless space.
 Let the glorious heavens rejoice,
 The hills exult with grateful voice;
 Let ocean tell the echoing shore,
 And the hoarse waves with humble voice adore!
 Let the verdant plains be glad!
 The trees in blooming fragrance clad!
 Smile with joy, ye desert lands,
 And rushing torrents, clap your hands!
 Let the whole earth with triumph ring!
 Let all that live with loud applause
 Jehovah's matchless praises sing.
 He comes! He comes! heaven's righteous King!
 To judge the world by truth's eternal laws.

Nothing, however, can be greater or more magnificent than the representation of anger and indignation, particularly when the divine wrath is displayed. Of this the whole of the prophetic song of Moses affords an incomparable specimen:

“ For I will lift my hand unto the heavens,
 “ And I will say, I live for ever;”
 “ If I whet the brightness of my sword,
 “ And my hand lay hold on judgment;”
 “ I will return vengeance to my enemies,
 “ And I will recompense those that hate me:”
 “ I will drench my arrows in blood,
 “ And my sword shall devour flesh;”
 “ With the blood of the slain and the captives,
 “ From the bushy head of the enemy.”

Deuteronomy 32. 40—42.

Nor is Isaiah less daring on a similar subject:

“ For the day of vengeance was in my heart,
 “ And the year of my redeemed was come.”
 “ And I looked and there was no one to help;
 “ And I was astonished, that there was no one to uphold:”
 “ Therefore mine own arm wrought salvation for me,
 “ And mine indignation itself sustained me.”
 “ And I trod down the peoples in mine anger;”

“ And I crushed them in mine indignation ;”

“ And I spilled their life-blood on the ground.”

Isaiah 63. 4—6.

The display of the fury and threats of the enemy, by which Moses finely exaggerates the horror of their unexpected ruin, is also wonderfully sublime :

“ The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake ;”

“ I will divide the spoil, my soul shall be satiated ;”

“ I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them :”

“ Thou didst blow with thy breath ; they were covered
“ with the sea.”

Exodus 15. 9, 10.

Grief is generally abject and humble, less apt to assimilate with the sublime ; but when it becomes excessive, and predominates in the mind, it rises to a bolder tone, and becomes heated to fury and madness. We have a fine example of this from the hand of Jeremiah, when he exaggerates the miseries of Zion :

“ He hath bent his bow as an enemy, he hath fixed his
“ hand as an adversary ;”

“ He hath poured out his anger like fire on the tents of
“ the daughter of Zion.”

Lamentations 2. 4.

But nothing of this kind can equal the grief of Job, which is acute, vehement, fervid ; always in the deepest afflictions breathing an animated and lofty strain ;

— for in the conscious bosom flame

Virtue, and grief, and soul-depressing shame.

“ His fury rendeth me, he teareth me to pieces ;”

“ He gnasheth on me with his teeth,”

“ Mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.”

“ They run with open mouth upon me,”

“ They smite me reproachfully on the cheek,”

“ They are ready to burst with fury against me.”

“ God hath delivered me over bound to the wicked ;”

“ Yea, he hath tumbled me headlong in perdition at the
“ discretion of the impious.”

“ I was in tranquility and he rent me asunder ;”

“ Yea, he seized me by the neck, and dashed me in pieces ;”

“ He hath even set me up as a mark for him.”

“ His archers encompassed me round,”

“ He pierceth through my reins and spareth not ;”

“ He poureth out my gall on the ground.”

“ He

“ He breaketh me up breach after breach ;”

“ He rusheth upon me like a mighty man ”

Job 16. 9—14.

In the same author, with what magnificence and sublimity are sorrow and desperation expressed !

“ Were but my woes in equal balance weighed,

“ Did the vast mass of misery press the scale

“ Against the sands, that skirt the ocean round,

“ ’Twould far outweigh them : therefore boils my grief !”

“ The pointed arrows of th’ offended God

“ Fix’d in my heart rack every tender nerve ;

“ And the slow poison drinks my spirit up ;

“ While hosts of terrors close besiege my soul.”

“ O might thy suppliant urge one poor request !

“ Thy wrath, O God ! should loose at once thy arm,

“ (Thy vengeful arm which blasting lightnings wield)

“ Dash into pieces this imbecile frame,

“ And crush thy suffering creature into nothing.”

Job 6. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9.

The whole poem of Job is no less excellent in the expression and excitation of terror, as the example just now quoted sufficiently demonstrates. To this commendation, however, the prophetic writings seem to have the fairest claim ; it being indeed their peculiar province to denounce the divine judgments upon guilty nations. Almost the whole book of Ezekiel is occupied with this passion : Isaiah is also excellent in this respect, although he be in general the harbinger of joy and salvation. The following terrific denunciation, is directed by him against the enemies of Jerusalem :

“ Howl ye, for the day of Jehovah is at hand :”

“ As a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.”

“ Therefore shall all hands be slackened ;”

“ And the heart of every mortal shall melt ; and they shall be terrified :”

“ Torments and pangs shall seize them ;”

“ As a woman in travel, they shall be pained :”

“ They shall look upon one another with astonishment ;”

“ Their countenances shall be like flames of fire.”

“ Behold the day of Jehovah cometh inexorable ;”

“ Even indignation, and burning wrath :”

“ To make the land a desolation ;”

“ And her sinners shall he destroy from out of her.”

“ Yea, the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof,

- " Shall not fend forth their light :"
 " The sun is darkened at his going forth,
 " And the moon shall not cause her light to shine."
 " And I will visit the world for its evil,
 " And the wicked for their iniquity :"
 " And I will put an end to the arrogance of the proud :"
 " And I will bring down the haughtiness of the terrible."
 " I will make a mortal more precious than fine gold ;"
 " Yea, a man, than the rich ore of Ophir."
 " Wherefore I will make the heavens tremble ;"
 " And the earth shall be shaken out of her place."
 " In the indignation of Jehovah God of Hosts."

Isaiah 13. 6—13.

Jeremiah is scarcely inferior, though perhaps his talents are better suited in common to the exciting of the softer affections. As an example, I need only refer to that remarkable vision, in which the impending slaughter and destruction of Judea is exhibited with wonderful force and enthusiasm :

- " My bowels, my bowels are pained, the walls of my
 " heart ;"
 " My heart is troubled within me ; I cannot be silent ;"
 " Because I have heard the sound of the trumpet."
 " My soul, the alarm of war."
 " Destruction is come upon the heels of destruction ;"
 " Surely the whole land is spoiled :"
 " On a sudden have my tents been spoiled,
 " My curtains in an instant."
 " How long shall I see the standard ?"
 " Shall I hear the sound of the trumpet ?"
 " I beheld the earth, and lo ! disorder and confusion ;"
 " The heavens also, and there was no light."

Jeremiah 4. 19, &c.

It would be an infinite task to collect and specify all the passages that might be found illustrative of this subject.

Of Allegory.

WHEN the Hebrew poets undertake to express any sentiment in ornamented language, they not only illustrate it with an abundance and variety of imagery, but they seldom temper or regulate this imagery by any fixed principle or standard. Unsatisfied with a simple metaphor, they frequently

quently run into an allegory, or mingle with it a direct comparison. The allegory sometimes precedes and sometimes follows the simile; to this is added, a frequent change of imagery, and even of persons and tenses; through the whole, displaying a degree of boldness and freedom, unconfined by rule or method, altogether peculiar to the Hebrew poetry.

“Judah is a lion’s whelp:”

This metaphor is immediately drawn out into an allegory, with a change of person:

“From the prey, my son, thou art gone up;
(to the dens in the mountains understood:)

In the succeeding sentences the person is again changed, the image is gradually advanced, and the metaphor is joined with a comparison, which is repeated:

“He stoopeth down, he coucheth, as a lion;”
“And as a lioness; who shall rouse him?”

Of a similar nature is that remarkable prophecy, in which the exuberant increase of the gospel on its first dissemination is most explicitly foretold. In this passage, however, the mixture of the metaphor and comparison, as well as the ellipsis of the word to be repeated, creates a degree of obscurity:

“Beyond the womb of the morning is the dew of thy
“offspring to thee:”

That is, preferable to the dew which proceeds from the womb of the morning; more copious, more abundant. In the interpretation of this passage, what monstrous blunders has an ignorance of the Hebrew idiom produced!

THERE is an excellent example of the perfect and regular allegory to be seen in Solomon’s description of old age. The inconveniencies of increasing years, the debility of mind and body, the torpor of the senses, are expressed, most learnedly and elegantly indeed, but with some degree of obscurity, by different images derived from nature and common life: for by this enigmatical composition, Solomon, after the manner of the oriental sages, meant to put to trial the acuteness of his readers. It has on this account afforded much exercise to the ingenuity of the learned, many of whom have differently, it is true, but with much learning and sagacity, explained the passage.

THERE

THERE is in *Isaiah* an allegory, which, with no less elegance of imagery, is more simple and regular, more just and complete in the form and colouring. The prophet is explaining the design and manner of the divine judgments: he is inculcating the principle, that God adopts different modes of acting in the chastisement of the wicked, but that the most perfect wisdom is conspicuous in all; that "he will," as he had urged before, "exact judgment by the line, and righteousness by the plummet;" that he ponders with the most minute attention the distinctions of times, characters, and circumstances; all the motives to lenity or severity. All this is expressed in a continued allegory, the imagery of which is taken from agriculture and threshing: the use and suitability of which imagery is in a manner consecrated to this subject:

- "Listen ye and hear my voice;"
 "Attend and hearken unto my words."
 "Doth the husbandman plow every day that he may sow,"
 "Opening, and breaking the clods of his field?"
 "When he hath made even the surface thereof;"
 "Doth he not then scatter the dill, and cast abroad the
 "cummin;"
 "And sow the wheat in due measure;"
 "And the barley, and the rye, hath its appointed limit?"
 "For his God rightly instructeth him; he furnisheth him
 "with knowledge."
 "The dill is not beaten out with the corn-drag;"
 "Nor is the wheel of the wain made to turn upon the
 "cummin:"
 "But the dill is beaten out with the staff;"
 "And the cummin with the flail: but the bread-corn
 "with the threshing-wain."
 "But not forever will he continue thus to thresh it;"
 "Nor to vex it with the wheel of his wain;"
 "Nor to bruise it with the hoofs of his cattle."
 "This also proceedeth from Jehovah God of hosts:"
 "He sheweth himself wonderful in counsel, great in operation."
Isaiah 28. 23—29.

Of Personification.

WITH respect to fictitious characters, the Hebrews have this in common with other poets, that they frequently assign character and action to an abstract or general idea, and introduce

introduce it in a manner acting, and even speaking as upon the stage. In this, while they equal the most refined writers in elegance and grace, they greatly excel the most sublime in force and majesty. What, indeed, can be conceived after, more beautiful, or more sublime, than that personification of Wisdom, which Solomon so frequently introduces? exhibiting her not only as the director of human life and morals, as the inventor of arts, as the dispenser of wealth, of honour, and of real felicity; but as the immortal offspring of the omnipotent Creator, and as the eternal associate in the divine counsels:

- “ When he prepared the heavens, I was present ;”
 “ When he described a circle on the face of the deep :”
 “ When he disposed the atmosphere above ;”
 “ When he established the fountains of the deep :”
 “ When he published his decree to the sea,”
 “ That the waters should not pass their bound ;”
 “ When he planned the foundations of the earth :”
 “ Then was I by him as his offspring ;”
 “ And I was daily his delight ;”
 “ I rejoiced continually before him.”
 “ I rejoiced in the habitable part of his earth,”
 “ And my delights were with the sons of men.”

Proverbs 3. 27—31.

How admirable is that celebrated personification of the divine attributes by the Psalmist? How just, elegant, and splendid does it appear, if applied only according to the literal sense, to the restoration of the Jewish nation from the Babylonish captivity? but if interpreted as relating to that sublimer, more sacred and mystical sense, which is not obscurely shadowed under the ostensible image, it is certainly uncommonly noble and elevated, mysterious and sublime:

- “ Mercy and Truth are met together ;”
 “ Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.”

Psalms 85. 11.

There are many passages of a similar kind, exquisitely imagined, and, from the boldness of the fiction, extremely forcible. Such is that in Habakkuk, of the Pestilence marching before Jehovah when he comes to vengeance: that in Job, in which Destruction and Death affirm of Wisdom, that her fame only had come to their ears: in fine, that tremendous image in Isaiah, of Hades extending her throat, and opening her insatiable and immeasurable jaws.

There

There is also another most beautiful species of personification, which originates from a well-known Hebrew idiom, and on that account is very familiar to us; I allude to that form of expression, by which the subject, attribute, accident, or effect of any thing is denominated the Son. Hence in the Hebrew poetry, nations, regions, peoples, are brought upon the stage as it were in a female character:

“ Descend, and sit in the dust, O virgin, daughter of
“ Babylon;”

“ Sit on the bare ground without a throne, O daughter
“ of the Chaldeans:”

“ For thou shalt no longer be called the tender and the
“ delicate.”——

“ Lo! Sion’s daughter prostrate on the earth,”

“ All mournful, solitary, weeping, lies!”

“ In vain her suppliant hands to heaven extends;”

“ She sinks deserted, and no comfort finds.”

Unless we attend to this peculiar phraseology, such expressions as “ the Sons of the bow and of the quiver” for arrows, will seem extremely harsh and unnatural; as well as that remarkable personification of Job, denoting the most miserable death, “ The first-born of the progeny of Death.”

The parabolic style no less elegantly assigns a character and action to inanimate objects than to abstract ideas. The holy prophets, moved with just indignation against the ungrateful people of God, obtest the Heavens and the Earth, and command universal Nature to be silent. They plead their cause before the Mountains, and the Hills listen to their voice. All is animated and informed with life, soul, and passion:

“ Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;”

“ And let them proclaim through the nations, Jehovah
“ reigneth.”

“ Let the Sea roar, and all that it containeth;”

“ The world, and the inhabitants thereof:”

“ Let the floods clap their hands;”

“ Let the mountains break forth into harmony,

“ Before Jehovah, for he cometh,”

“ For he cometh to judge the earth.”——

“ The waters saw thee, O God!”

“ The waters saw thee, they were grievously troubled;”

“ The deep uttered his voice;”

“ And lifted up his hands on high.”

And Job admirably in the same style;

“ Canst

“ Canst thou fend forth the lightnings, and will they go?
 “ Shall they fay unto thee, Behold here we are?”

With equal success they introduce objects, which have no existence in the order and œconomy of nature; though it must be confessed, that it is attended with much greater hazard of propriety; for to those, which are within the province of nature, we readily attribute a degree of life and sentiment. Of this the following dialogue in Jeremiah is an admirable specimen:

“ Ho! Sword of Jehovah!”

“ How long wilt thou not be at rest?”

“ Return into the scabbard,”

“ Return, and be still.”

“ How can it be at rest,”

“ Since Jehovah hath given it a charge!”

“ Against Akkelon, and against the sea-coast,”

“ There hath he appointed it.” *Jeremiah 47. 6, 7.*

Another kind of Protopopœia is that by which a probable but fictitious speech is assigned to a real person. As the former is calculated to excite admiration and approbation by its novelty, boldness, and variety; so the latter, from its resemblance to real life, is possessed of great force, evidence and authority.

It would be an infinite task to specify every instance in the sacred poems, which on this occasion might be referred to as worthy of notice; or to remark the easy, the natural, the bold and sudden personifications; the dignity, importance, and impassioned severity of the characters. It would be difficult to describe the energy of that eloquence which is attributed to Jehovah himself, and which appears so suitable in all respects to the Divine Majesty; or to display the force and beauty of the language which is so admirably and peculiarly adapted to each character; the probability of the fiction; and the excellence of the imitation. One example, therefore, must suffice for the present; one more perfect it is not possible to produce. It is expressive of the eager expectation of the mother of Sifera, from the inimitable ode of the prophets Deborah.

The first sentences exhibit a striking picture of maternal solicitude, both in words and actions; and of a mind suspended and agitated between hope and fear:

“ Through the window she looked and cried out,”

“ The mother of Sifera, through the lattice:”

“ Wherefore

“ Wherefore is his chariot so long in coming ?”

“ Wherefore linger the wheels of his chariot ?”

Immediately, impatient of his delay, she anticipates the consolations of her friends, and her mind being somewhat elevated, she boasts with all the levity of a fond female ;

(Vast in her hopes and giddy with success)

“ Her wife ladies answer her ;”

“ Yea, she returns answer to herself :”

“ Have they not found?—Have they not divided the
“ spoil !”

Let us now observe, how well adapted every sentiment, every word is to the character of the speaker. She takes no account of the slaughter of the enemy, of the valour and conduct of the conqueror, of the multitude of the captives, but

Burns with a female thirst of prey and spoils.

Nothing is omitted, which is calculated to attract and engage the passions of the vain and trifling woman, slaves, gold, and rich apparel. Nor is she satisfied with the bare enumeration of them ; she repeats, she amplifies, she heightens every circumstance ; she seems to have the very plunder in her immediate possession ; she pauses and contemplates every particular :

“ Have they not found?—Have they not divided the
“ spoil !”

“ To every man a damsel, yea a damsel or two ?”

“ To Sifera a spoil of divers colours ?”

“ A spoil of needlework of divers colours,”

“ A spoil for the neck, of divers colours of needlework on
“ either side.”

To add to the beauty of this passage, there is also an uncommon neatness in the versification, great force, accuracy, and perspicuity in the diction, the utmost elegance in the repetitions, which, notwithstanding their apparent redundancy, are conducted with the most perfect brevity. In the end, the fatal disappointment of female hope and credulity, tacitly insinuated by the sudden and unexpected apostrophe,

“ So let all thine enemies perish, O Jehovah !”

is expressed more forcibly by this very silence of the person who was just speaking, than it could possibly have been by all the powers of language.

But

But whoever wishes to understand the full force and excellence of the *Prosopopœia*, as well as the elegant use of it in the Hebrew ode, must apply to Isaiah, whom I do not scruple to pronounce the sublimest of poets. He will there find, in one short poem, examples of almost every form of this figure, and indeed of all that constitutes the sublime in composition. I trust it will not be thought unseasonable to refer immediately to the passage itself, and to remark a few of the principal excellencies.

The prophet, after predicting the liberation of the Jews from their severe captivity in Babylon, and their restoration to their own country, introduces them as reciting a kind of triumphal song upon the fall of the Babylonish monarch, replete with imagery, and with the most elegant and animated personifications. A sudden exclamation, expressive of their joy and admiration on the unexpected revolution in their affairs, and the destruction of their tyrants, forms the exordium of the poem. The earth itself triumphs with the inhabitants thereof; the fir-trees, and the cedars of Lebanon (under which images the parabolic style frequently delineates the kings and princes of the Gentiles) exult with joy, and persecute with contemptuous reproaches the humbled power of a ferocious enemy.

“ The whole earth is at rest, is quiet, they burst forth
“ into a joyful shout.”

“ Even the fir-trees rejoice over thee, the cedars of Lebanon :”

“ Since thou art fallen, no feller hath come up against us.”

This is followed by a bold and animated personification of Hades, or the infernal regions. Hades excites his inhabitants, the ghosts of princes, and the departed spirits of kings: they rise immediately from their seats, and proceed to meet the monarch of Babylon; they insult and deride him, and comfort themselves with the view of his calamity:

“ Art thou, even thou too, become weak as we? Art
“ thou made like unto us?”

“ Is then thy pride brought down to the grave; the
“ found of thy sprightly instruments?”

“ Is the vermin become thy couch, and the earth-worm
“ thy covering?”

Again, the Jewish people are speakers, in an exclamation after the manner of a funeral lamentation, which indeed the whole

whole form of this composition exactly imitates. The remarkable fall of this powerful monarch is thus beautifully illustrated:

“ How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of
“ the morning!”

“ Art cut down from earth, thou that didst subdue the
“ nations!”

He himself is at length brought upon the stage, boasting in the most pompous terms of his own power, which furnishes the poet with an excellent opportunity of displaying the unparalleled misery of his downfall. Some persons are introduced, who find the dead carcass of the king of Babylon cast out and exposed; they attentively contemplate it, and at last scarcely know it to be his:

“ Is this the man, that made the earth to tremble; that
“ shook the kingdoms?”

“ That made the world like a desert; that destroyed the
“ cities?”

They reproach him with being denied the common rites of sepulture, on account of the cruelty and atrocity of his conduct; they execrate his name, his offspring, and their posterity. A solemn address, as of the deity himself, closes the scene, and he denounces against the king of Babylon, his posterity, and even against the city, which was the seat of their cruelty, perpetual destruction, and confirms the immutability of his own counsels by the solemnity of an oath.

How forcible is this imagery, how diversified, how sublime! how elevated the diction, the figures, the sentiments! The Jewish nation, the cedars of Lebanon, the ghosts of departed kings, the Babylonish monarch, the travellers who find his corpse, and last of all Jehovah himself, are the characters which support this beautiful lyric drama. One continued action is kept up, or rather a series of interesting actions are connected together in an incomparable whole: this, indeed, is the principal and distinguished excellence of the sublimer ode, and is displayed in its utmost perfection in this poem of Isaiah, which may be considered as one of the most ancient, and certainly the most finished specimen of that species of composition, which has been transmitted to us. The personifications here are frequent, yet not confused; bold, yet not improbable: a free, elevated, and truly divine spirit pervades the whole; nor is there any thing wanting in this ode to defeat its claim to the character of
perfect

perfect beauty and sublimity. If, indeed, I may be indulged in the free declaration of my own sentiments on this occasion, I do not know a single instance in the whole compass of Greek and Roman poetry, which, in every excellence of composition, can be said to equal, or even to approach it.

Of the Comparison.

COMPARISONS serve three distinct purposes, namely, illustration, amplification, and pleasure or variety. I might produce many examples from the sacred poetry, but I shall content myself with two or three, than which, both as to matter and expression, nothing can be meaner or more vulgar, nothing, however, can be conceived more forcible or expressive. Isaiah introduces the king of Assyria insolently boasting of his victories :

“ And my hand hath found, as a nest, the riches of the
“ peoples :”

“ And as one gathereth eggs deserted,

“ So have I made a general gathering of the earth :”

“ And there was no one that moved the wing ;”

“ That opened the beak, or that chirped.” *Isaiah* 10. 14.

And Nahum on a similar subject :

“ All thy strong-holds shall be like fig-trees with the first
“ ripe figs :”

“ If they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.”

Nahum 3. 12.

There is also another comparison of Isaiah taken from domestic life, very obvious and very common ; but which for the gracefulness of the imagery, the elegance of the arrangement, and the forcible expression of the tenderest affections, has never been exceeded :

“ But Sion saith : Jehovah hath forsaken me ;”

“ And my Lord hath forgotten me.”

“ Can a woman forget her sucking infant ;”

“ That she should have no tenderneſs for the son of her
“ womb ?”

“ Even these may forget”

“ But I will not forget thee.”

Isaiah 49. 14, 15.

There is another species of comparison, the principal intent of which is the amplification of the subject ; and this is evidently of a different nature from the former : for in the
first

first place it is necessary, that the image which is introduced for the purpose of amplifying or ennobling a subject be sublime, beautiful, magnificent, or splendid, and therefore not trite or common; nor is it by any means necessary that the resemblance be exact in every circumstance.

To express or delineate prosperity and opulence, a comparison is assumed from the cedar or the palm; if the form of majesty or external beauty is to be depicted, Lebanon or Carmel is presented to our view. Sometimes they are furnished with imagery from their religious rites, at once beautiful, dignified, and sacred. In both these modes, the Psalmist most elegantly extols the pleasures and advantages of fraternal concord:

“ Sweet as the od’rous balfam pour’d
 “ On Aaron’s facred head;
 “ Which o’er his beard, and down his breast
 “ A breathing fragrance shed.
 “ As morning dew on Sion’s mount
 “ Beams forth a filver ray;
 “ Or studs with gems the verdant pomp,
 “ That Hermon’s tops difplay.” *Pfalm 133. 2, 3.*

Let us, however, attend for a moment to Ifaiah, whom no writer has furpaffed in propriety, when his aim is to illuftrate; or in fublimity, when he means to amplify his fubject:

“ Woe to the multitude of the numerous peoples,
 “ Who make a found like the found of the fea:”
 “ And to the roaring of the nations,
 “ Who make a roaring like the roaring of mighty waters.”
 “ Like the roaring of mighty waters do the nations roar;”
 “ But he fhall rebuke them, and they fhall flee far away;”
 “ And they fhall be driven like the chaff of the hills before the wind,
 “ And like the goffamer before the whirlwind.”
Ifaiah 17. 12, 13.

The third fpecies of comparifon feems to hold a middle rank between the two preceding: and the fole intent of it is, by a mixture of new and varied imagery with the principal matter, to prevent fatiety or difguft, and to promote the entertainment of the reader. It neither defcends to the humility of the one, nor emulates the fublimity of the other. It purfues rather the agreeable, the ornamental, the elegant, and ranges through all the variety, all the exuberance of nature.

Examples

Examples innumerable in illustration of the present subject might be found in the sacred poetry: I shall, however, produce not more than two from Isaiah. The first from the historical narration of the confederacy between the Syrians and the Israelites against the kingdom of Judah, which when it was told unto the king, says the prophet, "his heart was moved, and the hearts of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind." The other is a poetical comparison, which is fuller and more diffuse than the custom of the Hebrews generally admits; the subject of correspondent application, however, is perfectly exact. The divine grace and its effects, are compared with showers that fertilize the earth: an image which is uniformly appropriated to that purpose:

" Verily like as the rain descendeth,
 " And the snow from the heavens;
 " And thither it doth not return:
 " But moisteneth the earth,
 " And maketh it generate, and put forth its increase;
 " That it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the
 " eater:
 " So shall be the word which goeth from my mouth;
 " It shall not return unto me fruitless;
 " But it shall effect, what I have willed;
 " And make the purpose succeed, for which I have sent it."

Isaiah 55. 10, 11.

Thus far of comparisons in general, and of their matter and intention: it remains to add a few words concerning the particular form and manner, in which the Hebrews usually exhibit them.

The Hebrews introduce comparisons more frequently perhaps than the poets of any other nation; but the brevity of them in general compensates for their abundance. The resemblance usually turns upon a single circumstance; that they explain in the most simple terms, rarely introducing any thing at all foreign to the purpose. The following example, therefore, is almost singular, since it is loaded with an extraordinary accession, or I might almost say a superfluity of adjuncts:

" Let them be as grafs upon the house-top,
 " Which, before it groweth up, is withered;
 " With which the mower filleth not his hand;
 " Nor he that gathereth the sheaves his bosom:

“ Nor do they that pass by say,
 “ The blessing of Jehovah be upon you ;
 “ We bless you in the name of Jehovah.”

Psalms 129. 6—8.

The usual practice of the Hebrews is, indeed, very different from this: sometimes a single word, and commonly a very short sentence comprehends the whole comparison. This peculiarity proceeds from the nature of the sententious style, which is always predominant in the Hebrew poetry, and consists in condensing and compressing every exuberance of expression, and rendering it close and pointed. Thus, in the very parts in which other poets are copious and diffuse, the Hebrews, on the contrary, are brief, energetic, and animated; not gliding along in a smooth and equal stream, but with the inequality and impetuosity of a torrent. Thus their comparisons assume a peculiar form and appearance; for it is not so much their custom to dilate and embellish each particular image with a variety of adjuncts, as to heap together a number of parallel and analogous comparisons, all of which are expressed in a style of the utmost brevity and simplicity. Moses compares the celestial influence of the divine song, which he utters by the command of God, with flowers which water the fields; and on an occasion when a Greek or Latin poet would have been contented with a single comparison, perhaps a little more diffused and diversified, he has introduced two pairs of similes exactly expressive of the same thing:

“ My doctrine shall drop as the rain ;”
 “ My language shall alight like the dew :”
 “ As the small rain upon the tender herb ;
 “ And like the thick drops upon the grass.”

Deuteronomy 32. 2.

The Psalmist makes use of the same form in the following:

“ O my God ! make them as the chaff whirled about ;”
 “ As the stubble before the wind :”
 “ As the fire burneth the forest,
 “ And as the flame kindleth the mountains ;”
 “ So do thou pursue them with thy tempests,
 “ And with thy whirlwind make them afraid.”

Psalms 83. 13—15.

This is, indeed, the most common, but by no means the only form which this figure assumes in the Hebrew poetry: there is another, in which the comparison is more diffusively displayed ;

displayed; in which case the equal distribution of the sentences is still strictly adhered to; the image itself, however, is not repeated, but its attributes, which explain one another in two parallel sentences; as Moses has done in a comparison immediately following that which I just now quoted, in which he compares the care and paternal affection of the Deity for his people, with the natural tenderness of the eagle for its young:

- “ As the eagle stirreth up her nest ;”
 “ Fluttereth over her young ;”
 “ Expandeth her plumes, taketh them ;”
 “ Beareth them upon her wings.” *Deuteronomy* 32. 11.

The same is observable also in that most elegant comparison of Job, which I shall quote entire, by way of conclusion :

- “ My brethren have dealt deceitfully like a torrent,”
 “ As the torrents of the vallies they are passed away ;”
 “ Which are congealed by means of the frost,”
 “ The snow hideth itself in their surface ;”
 “ As soon as they flow, they are dried up,”
 “ When it is hot, they are consumed from their place ;”
 “ The paths of their channels are diminished,”
 “ They ascend in vapour, and are lost.”
 “ Look for them, ye troops of Tema ;”
 “ Ye travellers of Sheba, expect them earnestly.”
 “ They made no haste ; because they depended on them ;”
 “ They came thither, then were they confounded.”
Job 6. 15—20.

Comparison between the Poetry and Prose of the Hebrews.

IN the book of Deuteronomy Moses appears in the character both of an orator and a poet. In the former character, he addresses a very solemn and interesting oration* to the people of Israel, exhorting them, by the most inviting promises, to the observance of the covenant, and dissuading them from the violation of it by threats of the most exemplary punishment: and for the purpose of impressing the same more forcibly on their minds, he afterwards, by the command of God, embellishes the subject with all the elegance of verse, in a poem‡, which bears every mark of divine inspiration. In these two passages is displayed every excellence of which the Hebrew language is capable in both spe-

* Deuteronomy 28, 29, 30, 31.

‡ Deuteronomy 32.

cies of composition; all that is grand, forcible, and majestic, both in prose and verse: from them too we may be enabled easily to comprehend the difference between the style of oratory among the Hebrews, and that of their poetry, not only in sentiment, but in the imagery, the arrangement, and the language. Whoever wishes, therefore, to satisfy himself concerning the true character and genius of the Hebrew poetry, I would advise carefully to compare the two passages, and I think he will soon discover that the former, though great, spirited, and abounding with ornament, is notwithstanding regular, copious, and diffuse; that, with all its vehemence and impetuosity, it still preserves a smoothness, evenness, and uniformity throughout; and that the latter, on the contrary, consists of sentences, pointed, energetic, concise, and splendid; that the sentiments are truly elevated and sublime, the language bright and animated, the expression and phraseology uncommon; while the mind of the poet never continues fixed to any single point, but glances continually from one object to another. These remarks are of such a nature, that the diligent reader will apprehend them better by experience and his own observation, than by means of any commentary or explanation whatever. There are, however, one or two points which have attracted my notice in the perusal of this remarkable poem; and as they are of general use and application, and may serve to elucidate many of the difficult passages of the Hebrew poetry, they appear to me not undeserving of a more particular examination.

Taking, therefore, this poem as an example, the first general observation, to which I would direct your attention, is the sudden and frequent change of the persons, and principally in the addresses or expostulations. In the exordium of it, Moses displays the truth and justice of Almighty God, most sacredly regarded in all his acts and counsels: whence he takes occasion to reprove the perfidy and wickedness of his ungrateful people; at first as if his censure were only pointed at the absent,

“ Their evil disposition hath corrupted his children,
“ which are indeed no longer his:”

He then suddenly directs his discourse to themselves;

“ Perverse and crooked generation!

“ Will ye thus requite JAHOVAH,

“ Foolish people and unwise?

“ Is he not thy father and thy redeemer;

“ Did he not make thee and form thee?”

After

After his indignation has somewhat subsided, adverting to a remoter period, he beautifully enlarges upon the indulgence, and more than paternal affection, continually manifested by Almighty God towards the Israelites, from the time when he first chose them for his peculiar people; and all this again without seeming directly to apply it to them. He afterwards admirably exaggerates the stupidity and barbarity of this ungrateful people, which exceeds that of the brutes themselves. Observe with what force the indignation of the Prophet again breaks forth.

“ But Jehshurun grew fat and resisted ;

“ Thou grewest fat, thou wast made thick, thou wast covered with fat !

“ And he deserted the God that made him,

“ And despised the rock of his salvation.”

The abrupt transition in one short sentence to the Israelites, and back again, is wonderfully forcible and pointed, and excellently expressive of disgust and indignation.

An example of the true style of Prophetic Poetry.

THE thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth chapters of Isaiah contain a remarkable prophecy. It is a simple, regular, and perfect poem, consisting of two parts according to the nature of the subject, which, as to its general properties, is explained with the utmost perspicuity. The first part of the prophecy contains a denunciation of extraordinary punishment, indeed nothing short of total destruction against the enemies of the church of God; and afterwards, in consequence of this event, a full and complete restoration is promised to the church itself. The prophet introduces the subject by a magnificent exordium, invoking universal nature to the observation of these events, in which the whole world should seem to be interested :

“ Draw near, O ye nations, and hearken ;

“ And attend unto me, O ye people !

“ Let the earth hear, and the fulness thereof ;

“ The world, and all that spring from it.”

He then publishes the decree of Jehovah concerning the extirpation of all those nations against whom his wrath is kindled: and he amplifies this act of vengeance and destruction by an admirable selection of splendid imagery, all of which is of the same kind with that which is

made use of by the prophets upon similar occasions; the nature of which is to exaggerate the force, the magnitude, atrocity and importance of the impending visitation; whilst nothing determinate is specified concerning the manner, the time, the place, or other minute circumstances. He first exhibits that truly martial picture of slaughter and destruction after a victory:

- “ And their slain shall be cast out ;”
 “ And from their carcases their stench shall ascend ;”
 “ And the mountains shall melt down with their blood.”

He then takes a bolder flight, and illustrates his description by imagery borrowed from the Mosaic chaos (which is a common source of figurative language on these occasions, and is appropriated to the expression of the downfall of nations); and, as if he were displaying the total subversion of the universe itself:

- “ And all the host of heaven shall waste away ;”
 “ And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll :”
 “ And all their host shall wither ;”
 “ As the withered leaf droppeth from the vine,
 “ And as the blighted fruit from the fig-tree.”

A different image is immediately introduced; a solemn sacrifice is celebrated, and an uncommon number of victims are displayed: Jehovah himself takes a part in this magnificent scene, and every circumstance is brought directly before our eyes:

- “ For my sword is made bare in the heavens ;”
 “ Behold, on Edom it shall descend ;”
 “ And on the people justly by me devoted to destruction.”
 “ The sword of Jehovah is satiated with blood ;”
 “ It is pampered with fat :”
 “ With the blood of lambs, and of goats ;”
 “ With the fat of the reins of rams ;”
 “ For Jehovah celebrated a sacrifice in Bozrah,”
 “ And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.”

The goats, the rams, the bulls, the flocks, and other animals, which are mentioned in this passage and those which follow, are commonly used by the prophets to denote the haughty, ferocious, and insolent tyrants and chiefs of those nations, which were inimical to God. On the same principle we may explain the allusion to Bozrah and Idumea, a city and nation in the highest degree obnoxious

to the people of God. These, however, the prophecy seems only slightly or cursorily to glance at: the phraseology is indeed of that kind which expresses generals by particulars; or consists of a figure taken from a determinate and definite object, and by analogy applied in a more extensive sense; in which respect the very words which are made use of have in this place a peculiar form and propriety. But the same circumstance is again described by a succession of new and splendid images borrowed from the overthrow of Sodom, which may be termed one of the common-places of the inspired poet:

“ For it is the day of vengeance to Jehovah;”

“ The year of recompence to the defender of the cause of
“ Sion.”

“ And her torrents shall be turned into pitch;”

“ And her dust into sulphur;”

“ And her whole land shall become burning pitch:”

“ By night or by day it shall not be extinguished;”

“ For ever shall her smoke ascend:”

“ From generation to generation she shall lie desert;”

“ To everlasting ages no one shall pass through her.”

Lastly, the same event is prefigured under the image of a vast and solitary desert, to which, according to the divine decree, that region is devoted. This description the prophet afterwards improves, diversifies, and enlarges, by the addition of several important circumstances, all which, however, have a certain analogy or connection with each other.

The other part of the poem is constructed upon similar principles, and exhibits a beautiful contrast to the preceding scene. The imagery possesses every possible advantage of ornament and variety; it is like the former, altogether of a general kind, and of extensive application; but the meaning is plain and perspicuous. Many of the preceding images are taken from the sacred history; the following are almost entirely from the objects of nature:

“ The desert and the waste shall be glad;”

“ And the wilderness shall rejoice and flourish:”

“ Like the rose shall it beautifully flourish:”

“ And the well-watered plain of Jordan shall also rejoice:”

“ And the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it,”

“ The beauty of Carmel and of Sharon;”

“ These shall behold the glory of Jehovah,”

“ The majesty of our God.”

The application of Lebanon and Carmel in a figurative sense is very extensive, and they are sometimes expressive even of the divine glory and majesty. The cultivation and watering of a barren and rocky soil is so frequently, I might say invariably, in the parabolic style employed to denote the divine grace and spiritual endowments, that there is no necessity for any further explanation of this symbol; nor is the succeeding imagery, which, according to a similar analogy, seems to illustrate the same event, less clear and perspicuous.

To him who attentively reads and considers the whole poem, the order and arrangement of the subject will be more fully apparent. The passages which I have noted will, however, I apprehend, be sufficient to demonstrate the species of imagery, the style, and colours most congenial to the prophetic muse; they will also, I flatter myself, be sufficient in some measure to explain the manner in which she contrives to display, in the strongest colours, the general nature, magnitude, and importance of events; and at the same time to leave the particular situations, the intermediate gradations, and all the minuter circumstances concealed under the bold and prominent features of the description, till the accomplishment of the prediction. There are indeed one or two passages in this prophecy which would serve to illustrate this position; in the rest, the circumstances and progress of the particular events are not yet unfolded; for this prophecy is evidently one of those which are not yet completely fulfilled, and of which the greater part at least is yet deposited in the secret counsels of the Most High.

Of Lyric Poetry.

THOSE compositions which were intended for music, whether vocal alone, or accompanied with instruments, obtained among the Hebrews the appellation of Shir, and among the Greeks that of Odè; and both these words have exactly the same power and signification.—The Hebrews cultivated this kind of poetry above every other, and therefore may well be supposed to have been peculiarly excellent in it. It was usual in every period of that nation to celebrate in songs of joy their gratitude to God, their Saviour, for every fortunate event, and particularly for success in war. Hence the triumphal odes of Moses, of Deborah, of David.—Of all the different forms of poetical composition, there is none

more

more agreeable, harmonious, elegant, diversified and sublime than the ode.—And I shall not hesitate to prefer the Hebrew writers to the lyric poets of every other nation. But lest we should dubiously wander in so extensive a field, it may be proper to distribute all the diversities of this species of composition into three general classes. Of the first class the general characteristic will be sweetness, of the last sublimity; and between these we may introduce one of a middle nature, as partaking of the properties of both. The qualities which may be accounted common to all the three classes, are variety and elegance.

Although the lyric poetry of the Hebrews is always occupied upon serious subjects, nor ever descends to that levity which is admitted into that of other nations, the character of sweetness is by no means inconsistent with it. The sweetness of the Hebrew ode consists in the gentle and tender passions which it excites; in the gay and florid imagery, and in the chaste and unostentatious diction which it employs. The passions which it generally affects are those of love, tenderness, hope, cheerfulness, and pensive sorrow. In the sixty-third psalm the royal prophet, supposed to be then an exile in the wilderness, expresses most elegantly the sentiments of tenderness and love. The voice of grief and complaint is tempered with the consolations of hope in the eighty-second psalm: and the ninety-second consists wholly of joy, which is not the less sincere, because it is not excessive. The sweetness of all these in composition, sentiment, diction, and arrangement, has never been equalled by the finest productions of all the Heathen Muses and Graces united. Though none of the above are deficient in imagery, I must confess I never met with any image so truly pleasing and delightful as the following description of the Deity in the character of a shepherd:

“ The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want:”

“ In tender grass he giveth me to lie down;”

“ He guideth me to streams that gently flow.”

How graceful and animated is that rich and flourishing picture of nature, which is exhibited in the sixty-fifth Psalm! When the prophet, with a fertility of expression correspondent to the subject, praises the beneficence of the Deity in watering the earth and making it fruitful. On a sublime subject also, but still one of the gay and agreeable kind, I mean the inauguration of Solomon, which is celebrated in the seventy-second Psalm, there is such variety and beauty

of

of imagery, such a splendour of diction, such elegance in the composition, that I believe it will be impossible in the whole compass of literature, sacred or profane, to find such an union of sublimity with sweetness and grace. These few select examples of the elegant and beautiful in Lyric composition, I have pointed out for your more attentive consideration; and I am of opinion, that in all the treasures of the Muses you will seek in vain for models more perfect. I will add one other specimen, which, if I am not mistaken, is expressive of the true Lyric form and character; and compresses in a small compass all the merits and elegance incidental to that species of composition. It is, if I may be allowed the expression of a very polite writer,

“ A drop from Helicon, a flower
“ Cull'd from the Muse's favourite bower.”

The Psalmist contemplating the harmony which pervaded the solemn assembly of the people, at the celebration of one of their festivals, expresses himself nearly as follows:

P S A L M 133.

“ O dulce jucundumque! Tribulum
“ lætu in frequenti mutua caritas!
“ O corda qui fraterna nodo
“ Jungit amor metuente solvi!
“ Non aura hardi suavior occupat
“ Sensus, quæ Aronis vertice de sacro
“ Per ora, per barbam, per ipsas,
“ Lenta fluens, it odora vestes:
“ Non rore largo lætior irrigat
“ Hermona florentem ætherius liquor;
“ Sanctæque fœcundat Sionis
“ Uberibus juga celsa guttis,
“ Præfens benigno numine quas fovet
“ Jehova sedes; alma ubi Faustitas
“ Testatur, æternumque magni
“ Dia Salus Domini favorem.”

THE subject of the ninety-first Psalm is the security, the success, and the rewards of piety. The exordium exhibits the pious man placing all his dependance upon Almighty God:

“ He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High;”
“ Who lodgeth under the shadow of the Omnipotent;”
“ Who

“ Who faith to Jehovah, Thou art my hope and my
“ fortrefs!”

“ My God, in whom I trust:”—

And immediately leaving the sentence unfinished, he apostrophizes to the same person, whom he had been describing:

“ He indeed shall deliver thee

“ From the snare of the fowler, from the destroying pesti-
“ lence.”

The imagery that follows is beautiful and diversified, and at the same time uncommonly solemn and sublime:

“ With his feathers will he cover thee,

“ And under his wings shalt thou find protection:”

“ His truth shall be thy shield and thy defence.”

“ Thou shalt not fear from the terror by night;”

“ From the arrow that flieth by day;”

“ From the pestilence that walketh in darkness;”

“ From the destruction that wasteth at noon.”

“ A thousand shall fall at thy side;”

“ And ten thousand at thy right-hand:”

“ To thee it shall not approach.”

How excellent also are the succeeding images, the guard of angels, the treading under foot the fiercest and most formidable animals: and afterwards, that sudden but easy and elegant change of the persons?

“ Because he hath loved me, therefore will I deliver him:”

“ I will exalt him, for he hath known my name.”

THE eighty-first Psalm will serve as another example, being pervaded by an exquisite union of sublimity and sweetness. It is an ode composed for the feast of Trumpets in the first new moon of the civil year. The exordium contains an exhortation to celebrate the praises of the Almighty with music and song, and is replete with animation and joy, even to exultation:

“ Sing unto God our strength;”

“ A song of triumph to the God of Jacob.”

The different instruments of music are named, as is common in the lyric compositions of all other nations:

“ Take

“ Take the psaltery, bring hither the timbrel,
 “ The pleasant harp, with the lute.”

The trumpet is particularly alluded to, because the solemn use of it on their great festivals was prescribed by the Mo-
 saic law. The commemoration of the giving of the law, associated with the sound of the trumpet, which was the signal of liberty, introduces, in a manner spontaneously, the miseries of the Egyptian bondage, the recovery of their freedom, and the communication with God upon mount Sinai (the awfulness of which is expressed in a very few words, “ the secret place of thunder”) and finally, the contention with their Creator at the waters of Meribah. The mention of Meribah introduces another idea, namely, the ingratitude and contumacy of the Hraelites, who appear to have been ever unmindful of the favours and indulgence of their heavenly Benefactor. The remainder of the ode, therefore, contains an affectionate expostulation of God with his people, a confirmation of his former promises, and a tender complaint, that his favourable intentions towards them have been so long prevented by their disobedience. Thus the object and end of this poem appears to be an exhortation to obedience from the consideration of the paternal love, the beneficence, and the promises of the Deity; and we have seen with how much art, elegance, variety, and ingenuity, this is accomplished. In order to complete the beauty of this composition, the conclusion is replete with all the graces of sentiment, imagery, and diction. The sudden and frequent change of persons is remarkable; but it is by no means harsh or obscure. To him, therefore, who wishes to form a correct idea of this kind of poem, I will venture to recommend this Psalm; not doubting, that if he can make himself master of its general character, genius, and arrangement, he will feel perfectly satisfied concerning the nature and form of a perfect ode.

THE seventy-seventh Psalm is composed in what I call the intermediate style, and is of that diversified and unequal kind which ascends from a cool and temperate exordium to a high degree of sublimity. The prophet, oppressed with a heavy weight of affliction, displays the extreme dejection and perturbation of his soul, and most elegantly and pathetically describes the conflicts and internal contests to which he is subjected, before he is enabled to rise from the depths of

woe to any degree of hope or confidence. In the character of a suppliant he first pours forth his earnest prayers to the God of his hope :

“ I lifted up my voice unto God and cried ;”

“ I lifted up my voice unto God, that he should hear me.”

But even prayers afford him no sufficient consolation. He next endeavours to mitigate his sorrow by the remembrance of former times ; but this, on the contrary, only seems to exaggerate his sufferings, by the comparison of his present adversity with his former happiness, and extorts from him the following pathetic expostulation :

“ Will the Lord reject me for ever ?”

“ And will he be reconciled no more ?”

“ Is his mercy eternally ceased ;”

“ Doth his promise fail from generation to generation ?”

“ Hath God forgotten to be merciful ?”

“ Or hath he in anger shut up his pity ?”

Again, recollecting the nature of the divine dispensations in chastising man, “ the change of the right-hand of the “ Most High ;” in other words, the different methods by which the Almighty seeks the salvation of his people, appearing frequently to frown upon and persecute those in whom he delighteth : re-considering also the vast series of mercies which he had bestowed upon his chosen people ; the miracles which he had wrought in their favour ; in a word, the goodness, the holiness, the power of the great Ruler of the universe ; with all the ardour of gratitude and affection, he bursts forth into a strain of praise and exultation. In this passage we are at a loss which to admire most, the ease and grace with which the digression is made, the choice of the incidents, the magnificence of the imagery, or the force and elegance of the diction :

“ Thy way, O God, is in holiness ;”

“ What God is great as our God ?”

“ Thou art the God that doest wonders ;”

“ Thou hast made known thy strength among the nations :”

“ With thy arm hast thou redeemed thy people,

“ The sons of Jacob and Joseph.”

“ The waters saw thee, O God !”

“ The waters saw thee, and trembled ;”

“ The depths also were troubled.”

“ The

- “ The clouds overflowed with water ;”
 “ The skies sent forth thunder ;”
 “ Thine arrows also went abroad :”
 “ The voice of thy thunder was in the atmosphere ;”
 “ Thy lightnings enlightened the world ,”
 “ The earth trembled, and was disturbed.”
-

The other example to which I shall refer is composed upon quite a different plan ; for it declines gradually from an exordium uncommonly splendid and sublime, to a gentler and more moderate strain, to the softest expressions of piety and devotion. The whole composition abounds with great variety of both sentiment and imagery. You will, from these circumstances, almost conjecture that I am alluding to the nineteenth psalm. The glory of God is demonstrated in his works both of nature and providence. By exhibiting it, however, in an entire state, though in modern verse, you will more readily perceive the order, method, and arrangement of this beautiful composition :

P S A L M 19.

- “ IMMENSI chorus ætheris,
 “ Orbes stelliferi, lucida sidera,
 “ Laudes concelebrant Dei,
 “ Auctorisque canunt artificem manum.
 “ Dulces excipiunt modos
 “ Noctem rite dies, noxque diem premens ;
 “ Alternoque volubiles
 “ Concentu variant perpetuum melos.
 “ Et quanquam levibus rotis
 “ Labuntur taciti per liquidum æthera ;
 “ Terrarum tamen ultimos
 “ Tractus, alta poli mœnia personat
 “ Æterni sacra vox chori,
 “ Concordi memorans eloquio Deum.
 “ Cælorum in penetralibus
 “ Soli qui posuit celsa palatia :
 “ Lætos undè ferens gradus
 “ Prodit, ceu thalamo Sponsus ab aureo ;
 “ Fidens viribus ut Gigas,
 “ Præscriptum stadii carpit ovans iter.
 “ Cæli limite ab ultimo
 “ Egressus, rediens limitem ad ultimum,
 “ Emenfam relegit viam,
 “ Fœcundisque

- “ Fœcundisque fovet cuncta caloribus.
 “ Non & lex sancta Dei minus
 “ Languentes animas vi reficit sacra :
 “ Puro lumine Lex Dei
 “ Illustrans oculos, et tenebras fugans ;
 “ Informans animos rudes,
 “ Cœlestique replens corda scientia ;
 “ Mentis lætificans pias ;
 “ Confirmans stabili pectora gaudio.
 “ Illam Justitia et Fides
 “ Fixit perpetuam, æternaque Veritas
 “ Non illam æquiparat pretio
 “ Aurum, jam rutilus purius e focus ;
 “ Non dulcedine, quæ recens
 “ Stillant pressa favis mella liquentibus.
 “ Fida adstat. monitrix fuis,
 “ Et merces eadem magna, clientibus.
 “ Quis lapsus tamen ah ! suos,
 “ Quis secreta sinu crimina perspicit ?
 “ Adfis, O Deus ! O Pater !
 “ Da cæcis veniam, da miseris opem !
 “ Errantes cohibe gradus,
 “ Efrænemque animi frange superbiam !
 “ Solum munere sic tuo
 “ Mox infons sceleris, purus ero mali :
 “ Sic O ! sic placeant tibi
 “ Quæ supplex meditor, quæ loquor, O Deus !”

We have an example of the sublime ode in the fiftieth Psalm; the subject of which is of the didactic kind, and belongs to the moral part of theology. It is at first serious and practical, with very little of sublimity or splendour: it sets forth, that the divine favour is not to be conciliated by sacrifices, or by any of the external rites and services of religion, but rather by sincere piety, and by the devout effusions of a grateful heart: and yet, that even these will not be accepted without the strictest attention to justice, and every practical virtue. It consists therefore of two parts: in the first, the devout, but ignorant and superstitious worshipper is reproved; and in the second the hypocritical pretender to virtue and religion. Each part of the subject, if we regard the imagery and the diction only, is treated rather with variety and elegance, than with sublimity; but if the general effect, if the plot and machinery of the whole be considered, scarcely any thing can appear more truly magnificent.

ficient. The great Author of nature, by a solemn decree, convokes the whole human race, to be witnesses of the judgment which he is about to execute upon his people; the august tribunal is established in Sion:

“ Jehovah, God of gods,
 “ Hath spoken, and hath summoned the earth,
 “ From the rising to the setting of the sun:
 “ From Sion, from the perfection of beauty, God hath
 “ shined.”

The majesty of God is depicted by imagery assumed from the descent upon mount Sinai, which is one of the common places that supply ornaments of this kind:

“ Our God shall come, and shall not be silent;
 “ A fire shall devour before him,
 “ And a mighty whirlwind shall surround him.”

The heavens and the earth are invoked as witnesses, which is a pompous form of expression common with the Hebrew writers:

“ He shall call the heavens from on high;
 “ And the earth to the judgment of his people.”

At length the Almighty is personally introduced pronouncing his sentence, which constitutes the remainder of the ode; and the admirable sublimity and splendour of the exordium is continued through the whole.

OTHER instances of the sublime ode might be here enlarged upon. The twenty-fourth, the twenty-ninth, and the sixty-eighth Psalms, are fine specimens. The first instance I shall more particularly mention is that prophetic ode of Moses, in the thirty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, which contains a justification on the part of God against the Israelites, and an explanation of the nature and design of the divine judgments. The exordium is singularly magnificent; the plan and conduct of the poem is just, natural, and well accommodated to the subject, for it is almost in the order of an historical narration. It embraces a variety of the sublimest subjects and sentiments, it displays the truth and justice of God, his paternal love, and his unfailling tenderness to his chosen people; and on the other hand, their ungrateful and contumacious spirit. The ardour of the divine indignation, and the heavy denunciations of vengeance, are afterwards expressed

expressed in a remarkable personification, which is scarcely to be paralleled in all the choicest treasures of the Muses. The fervour of wrath is however tempered with the milder beams of lenity and mercy, and ends at last in promises and consolation. The subject and style of it bear so exact a resemblance to the prophetic as well as the lyric compositions of the Hebrews, that it unites all the force, energy, and boldness of the latter, with the exquisite variety and grandeur of imagery so peculiar to the former.

Another specimen of the perfectly sublime ode will be found in the triumphal song of Deborah. This poem consists of three parts: first, the exordium; next, a recital of the circumstances which preceded, and of those which accompanied the victory; lastly, a fuller description of the concluding event, the death of Sisera, and the disappointed hopes of his mother, which is embellished with all the choicest flowers of poetry.

The prayer of Habakkuk is another remarkable instance of that sublimity peculiar to the ode, and which is often the result of a bold but natural digression. But there is one remarkable example more of the perfectly sublime ode, which indeed it would be utterly unpardonable to overlook; I mean, the triumphal song of the Israelites on the destruction of Babylon. It is almost unnecessary to add, that it is in no respect unworthy of Isaiah, whom I cannot help esteeming the first of poets, as well for elegance as sublimity.

Of the Idyllium or Hymn.

AMONGST those poems which by the Hebrews were adapted to music, there are some which differ in their nature from lyric poetry, strictly so called. It will therefore be more regular to class them with those compositions anciently termed Idylliums. The first of these which attracted our notice are the historical Psalms, in celebration of the power and the other attributes of the Deity, as instanced in the miracles which he performed in favour of his people. One of the principal of these is the seventy-eighth Psalm. It bears the name of Asaph, and pursues the history of the Israelites from the time of their departure from Egypt to the reign of David, particularizing and illustrating all the leading events. The style is simple and uniform, but the structure is poetical, and the sentiments occasionally splendid. The historical, or rather chronological order, cannot be said to be ex-

actly preserved throughout; for the minute detail of so protracted a series of events could scarcely fail to tire in a work of imagination. The Egyptian miracles are introduced in a very happy and elegant digression, and may be considered as forming a kind of episode. The same subject affords materials for two other Psalms, the hundred and fifth, and the hundred and sixth: the one including the history of Israel, from the call of Abraham to the Exodus; the other, from that period to the later ages of the commonwealth: both of them bear a strong resemblance to the seventy-eighth, as well in the subject as in the style (except perhaps that the diction is rather of a more simple cast); the mixture of ease and grace, displayed in the exordium, is the same in all.

There is yet another Psalm, which may be enumerated among those of the historical kind, namely the hundred and thirty-sixth. It celebrates the praises of the Almighty, and proclaims his infinite power and goodness, beginning with the work of creation, and proceeding to the miracles of the Exodus, the principal of which are related almost in the historical order. The exordium commences with this well-known distich:

“Glorify Jehovah, for he is good;
“For his mercy endureth for ever:”

which, according to Ezra, was commonly sung by alternate choirs. There is however one circumstance remarkable attending it, which is, that the latter line of the distich, being added by the second choir, and also subjoined to every verse (which is a singular case) forms a perpetual Epode. Hence the whole nature and form of the intercalary verse, or burden of the song, may be collected: it expresses in a clear, concise, and simple manner, some particular sentiment, which seems to include virtually the general subject or design of the poem; and it is thrown in at proper intervals, according to the nature and arrangement of it, for the sake of impressing the subject more firmly upon the mind. That the intercalary verse is perfectly congenial to the Idyllium, is evident from the authority of Theocritus, Bion, Moschus, and even of Virgil. I shall add one or two examples from the sacred poetry, which will not lose in a comparison with the most perfect specimens in this department of poetry, which those excellent writers have bequeathed to posterity: and in order to illustrate as well the elegance of the poem in general, as the peculiar force and beauty of the intercalary

intercalary verse, the order and conduct of the subject must be particularly explained.

The hundred and seventh Psalm may undoubtedly be enumerated among the most elegant monuments of antiquity; and it is chiefly indebted for its elegance to the general plan and conduct of the poem. It celebrates the goodness and mercy of God towards mankind, as demonstrated in the immediate assistance and comfort which he affords, in the greatest calamities, to those who devoutly implore his aid. In the first place, to those who wander in the desert, and who encounter the horrors of famine; next, to those who are afflicted with disease; and finally, to those who are tossed about upon the ocean. The prolixity of the argument is occasionally relieved by narration; and examples are superadded of the divine severity in punishing the wicked, as well as of his benignity to the devout and virtuous; and both the narrative and preceptive parts are recommended to the earnest contemplation of considerate minds. Thus the whole poem actually divides into five parts nearly equal; the four first of which conclude with an intercalary verse, expressive of the subject or design of the hymn:

“Glorify Jehovah for his mercy,
“And for his wonders to the children of men.”

This distich also is occasionally diversified, and another sometimes annexed illustrative of the sentiment;

“For he satisfieth the famished soul,
“And filleth the hungry with good.”
“For he hath broken the brazen gates,
“And the bolts of iron he hath cut in sunder.”

The sentiment of the Epode itself is sometimes repeated, only varied by different imagery:

“Glorify Jehovah for his mercy,
“And for his wonders to the children of men :”
“Let them also offer sacrifices of praise,
“And let them declare his works with melody.”
“Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people,
“And in the council of the elders let them celebrate him.”

In all these passages, the transition from the contemplation of their calamities, to that of their deliverance, which is made by the perpetual repetition of the same distich, is truly elegant:

“ Let them also cry unto Jehovah in their troubles ;
 “ And from their afflictions he will deliver them.”

This however does not appear in the least to partake of the intercalary verse. The latter part of the Psalm, which comprehends a vast variety of matter, concludes with two distichs expressive of a sentiment, grave, solemn, and practical, and in no respect unworthy the rest of the poem.

There are many other examples to be found in the Psalms ; but it must be confessed, few of them are equal, and none of them superior to this. I shall select another specimen from Isaiah ; and the more willingly, because, in it, as in other passages of the same author, the common division into chapters has greatly obscured that most elegant writer, by absurdly breaking the unity of a very interesting poem, and connecting each part with matter which is totally foreign to the subject. If we unite the conclusion of the ninth chapter with the beginning of the tenth, we shall find a complete and connected prophecy against the kingdom of Israel or Samaria. It is replete with terror and solemnity, and possesses a degree of force and sublimity to which the Idyllium seldom rises ; though it preserves the form of the Idyllium so perfect and express, that it cannot with propriety be referred to any other class. The poem consists of four parts, each of which contains a denunciation of vengeance against the crimes of this rebellious people, vehemently accusing them of some atrocious offence, and distinctly marking out the particular punishment. In the first, the pride and ostentation of the Israelites is reprov'd ; in the second, the obduracy of their spirit, and the general depravation of their morals ; in the third, their audacious impiety, which rages like a flame, destroying and laying waste the nation ; and lastly, their iniquity is set forth as demonstrated in their partial administration of justice, and their oppression of the poor. To each of these a specific punishment is annexed ; and a clause, declaratory of a further reserve of the divine vengeance is added, which forms the Epode, and is admirably calculated to exaggerate the horror of the prediction :

“ For all this his anger is not turned away ;
 “ But his hand is still stretched out.”

The examples which I have hitherto produced will, at first view, explain their own nature and kind ; there are, however, others, and probably not a few, (in the book of Psalms particularly) which may equally be accounted of the
 Idyllium

Idyllium species. I have principally in contemplation those, in which some particular subject is treated in a more copious and regular manner, than is usual in compositions strictly lyric. Such is the hundred and fourth Psalm, which demonstrates the glory of the infinite Creator, from the wisdom, beauty, and variety of his works. The poet embellishes this noble subject with the clearest and most splendid colouring of language; and with imagery the most magnificent, lively, diversified, and pleasing, at the same time select, and happily adapted to the subject. There is nothing of the kind extant, indeed nothing can be conceived, more perfect than this Hymn, whether it be considered with respect to its intrinsic beauties, or as a model of that species of composition. Miraculous exertions of the divine power have something in them which at first strikes the inattentive mind with a strange sentiment of sublimity and awe: but the true subject of praise, the most worthy of God, and the best adapted to impress upon the heart of man a fervent and permanent sense of piety, is drawn from the contemplation of his power in the creation of this infinite All, his wisdom in arranging and adorning it, his providence in sustaining, and his mercy in the regulation of its minutest parts, and in ordering and directing the affairs of men. The Greek Hymns consisted chiefly of fables, and these fables regarded persons and events, which were neither laudable in themselves, nor greatly to be admired; indeed I do not recollect any that are extant of this sublime nature, except that of the famous stoic Cleanthes, which is inscribed to Jove, that is, to God the creator, or as he expresses himself, to the Eternal Mind, the Creator and Governor of nature. It is doubtless a most noble monument of antient wisdom, and replete with truths not less solid than magnificent. For the sentiments of the philosopher concerning the divine power, concerning the harmony of nature, and the supreme laws, concerning the folly and unhappiness of wicked men, who are unceasingly subject to the pain and perturbation of a troubled spirit; and above all, the ardent supplication for the divine assistance, in order to enable him to celebrate the praises of the omnipotent Deity in a suitable manner, and in a perpetual strain of praise and adoration; all of these breathe so true and unaffected a spirit of piety, that they seem in some measure to approach the excellence of the sacred poetry.

The hymn of David, which I have just mentioned, deservedly occupies the first place in this class of poems; that which comes nearest to it, as well in the conduct of the

poem as in the beauty of the style, is another of the same author. It celebrates the omniscience of the Deity, and the incomparable art and design displayed in the formation of the human body; if it be excelled (as perhaps it is) by the former in the plan, disposition, and arrangement of the matter, it is however not in the least inferior in the dignity and elegance of the figures and imagery.

Miscellaneous Observations.

THE twenty-fourth Psalm is evidently of the Dramatic kind, relating to the transferring of the ark to Mount Sion; and the whole of the transaction is exhibited in a theatrical manner, though the dialogue is not fully obvious till towards the conclusion of the poem. That remarkable passage of Isaiah also, deserves notice on this occasion, in which the Messiah, coming to vengeance, is introduced conversing with a chorus as on a theatre:

- Cho.* “ Who is this, that cometh from Edom?
 “ With garments deeply dyed from Bozrah?
 “ This, that is magnificent in his apparel;
 “ Marching on in the greatness of his strength?”
- Mef.* “ I, who publish righteousness, and am mighty to
 “ save.”
- Cho.* “ Wherefore is thine apparel red?
 “ And thy garments, as of one that treadeth the
 “ wine-vat:”
- Mef.* “ I have trodden the vat alone;
 “ And of the peoples there was not a man with me.
 “ And I trod them in mine anger;
 “ And I trampled them in mine indignation:
 “ And their life-blood was sprinkled upon my gar-
 “ ments;
 “ And I have stained all mine apparel.
 “ For the day of vengeance was in my heart;
 “ And the year of my redeemed was come.
 “ And I looked, and there was no one to help;
 “ And I was astonished, that there was no one to
 “ uphold:
 “ Therefore mine own arm wrought salvation for
 “ me,
 “ And mine indignation itself sustained me.
 “ And I trod down the peoples in mine anger;
 “ And I crushed them in mine indignation;
 “ And I spilled their life-blood on the ground.

Isaiah 63. 1—6.

The

The hundred and twenty-first Psalm is of the same kind ; and as it is both concise and elegant, I shall quote it at large. The king, apparently going forth to battle, first approaches the ark of God upon Mount Sion, and humbly implores the Divine assistance, on which alone he professes to rest his confidence :

- “ I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains :
- “ Whence cometh my succour.
- “ My succour is from JEHOVAH,
- “ Who made the heavens and the earth.”

The high-priest answers him from the tabernacle :

- “ He will not suffer thy foot to stumble ;
- “ He that preserveth thee will not slumber ;
- “ Behold, he will neither slumber nor sleep ;
- “ He who preserveth Israel.
- “ JEHOVAH will preserve thee ;
- “ JEHOVAH will shade thee with his right-hand.
- “ The sun shall not injure thee by day,
- “ Nor the moon by night.
- “ JEHOVAH will preserve thee from all evil ;
- “ He will preserve thy soul.
- “ JEHOVAH will preserve thy going out and thy coming in,
- “ From this time forth for ever and ever.”

THE subject of the second psalm is the establishment of David upon the throne, agreeably to the almighty decree, notwithstanding the fruitless opposition of his enemies. The character which David sustains in his poem is twofold, literal and allegorical. If on the first reading of the psalm we consider the character of David in the literal sense, the composition appears sufficiently perspicuous, and abundantly illustrated by facts from the sacred history. Through the whole, indeed, there is an unusual fervour of language, a brilliancy of metaphor ; and sometimes the diction is uncommonly elevated, as if to intimate, that something of a more sublime and important nature lay concealed within ; and as if the poet had some intention of admitting us to the secret recesses of his subject. If, in consequence of this indication, we turn our minds to contemplate the internal sense, and apply the same passages to the allegorical David, a nobler series of events is presented to us, and a meaning not only more sublime, but even more perspicuous, rises to the view. Should any thing at first appear bolder and more elevated than

than the obvious sense would bear, it will now at once appear clear, expressive, and admirably adapted to the dignity of the principal subject. If, after having considered attentively the subjects apart, we examine them at length in a united view, the beauty and sublimity of this most elegant poem will be improved. We may then perceive the vast disparity of the two images, and yet the continual harmony and agreement that subsists between them, the amazing resemblance, as between near relations, in every feature and lineament, and the accurate analogy which is preserved, so that either may pass for the original, whence the other was copied. New light is reflected upon the diction, and a degree of dignity and importance is added to the sentiments, whilst they gradually rise from humble to more elevated objects, from human to divine, till at length the great subject of the poem is placed in the most conspicuous light, and the composition attains the highest point of sublimity.

WHAT has been remarked concerning the second psalm, may be applied with propriety to the seventy-second, which exactly resembles it both in matter and form. It might not improperly be entitled the Inauguration of Solomon. The nature of the allegory is the same with the former; the style is something different, on account of the disparity of the subject. In the one the pomp and splendor of victory is displayed; in the other the placid image of peace and felicity. The style of the latter is, therefore, more calm and temperate, more ornamented, more figurative; not abounding in the same boldness of personification as the former, but rather touched with the gay and cheerful colouring of nature, in its most flourishing and delightful state.

THE exordium of the hundred and fourth Psalm is most sublime, and consists of a delineation of the divine Majesty and power, as exemplified in the admirable constitution of nature. On this subject, since it is absolutely necessary to employ figurative language, the poet has introduced such metaphors as were accounted by the Hebrews the most magnificent and most worthy; for all of them are, in my opinion, borrowed from the Tabernacle: but I find it will be necessary to quote the passage itself, and I shall endeavour to explain it as briefly as possible.

The

The poet first expresses his sense of the greatness and power of the Deity in plain and familiar language; and then breaks out in metaphor:

“Thou art invested with majesty and glory:”

Where observe the word *labash* (to invest) is the word always used to express the ceremony of putting on the sacerdotal ornaments.

“Covering thyself with light as with a garment:”

The Light in the Holy of Holies, the manifest symbol of the Divine Presence, is figured under this idea; and this singular example is made use of figuratively to express the universal and ineffable glory of God.

“Stretching out the heavens as a curtain.”

Jeringnah is the word made use of, and is the very name of those curtains, with which the Tabernacle was covered at the top and round about. The Seventy seem to have had this in view, when they render it *ὡσει δερμιν* (as a skin): whence the Vulgate *sicut pellem* (which is a literal translation of the Septuagint); and another of the old translators *δερμα* (a hide or skin).

“Laying the beams of his chambers in the waters:”

In these words the poet admirably expresses the nature of the air, which, from various and floating elements, is formed into one regular and uniform mass, by a metaphor drawn from the singular construction of the Tabernacle: for it consisted of many different parts, which might be easily separated, but which were united by a curious and artful junction and adaptation to each other.

He proceeds:

“Making the clouds his chariot;

“Walking upon the wings of the wind:”

He had before exhibited the divine Majesty under the appearance which it assumed in the Holy of Holies, that of a bright and dazzling light: he now describes it according to that which it assumed, when God accompanied the ark in the pillar of a cloud, which was carried along through the atmosphere. That vehicle of the divine Presence is, indeed, distinguished in the sacred history by the particular appellation of a chariot.

“Making

“ Making the winds his messengers,
 “ And his ministers a flaming fire :”

The elements are described as prompt and ready in executing the commands of JEHOVAH, as angels, messengers, or ministers serving at the Tabernacle, the Hebrew word being exactly expressive of the latter sense.

“ Who founded the earth upon its basis :”

The following phrase also is directly taken from the same :

“ That it should not be displaced for more than ages :”

that is, for a certain period known only to the infinite wisdom of God. As the situation of both was in this respect nearly the same, so, on the other hand, the permanence of the sanctuary is in other places compared, and in almost the same words, with the stability of the earth.

IN that most perfect ode, which celebrates the immensity of the Omnipresent Deity, and the wisdom of the divine Artificer in forming the human body, the author uses a metaphor derived from the most subtle art of the Phrygian workman :

“ When I was formed in the secret place,
 “ When I was wrought with a needle in the depths of the
 “ earth.”

Whoever observes this, and at the same time reflects upon the wonderful mechanism of the human body, the various implications of the veins, arteries, fibres, and membranes ; the undefinable texture of the whole fabric ; may, indeed, feel the beauty and gracefulness of this well-adapted metaphor, but will miss much of its force and sublimity, unless he be apprized, that the art of designing in needle-work was wholly dedicated to the use of the sanctuary, and, by a direct precept of the divine law, chiefly employed in furnishing a part of the sacerdotal habit, and the veils for the entrance of the tabernacle. Thus, the poet compares the wisdom of the divine Artificer with the most estimable of human arts, that art which was dignified by being consecrated altogether to the use of religion ; and the workmanship of which was so exquisite, that even the Sacred Writings seem to attribute it to a supernatural guidance.

TO have made use of the boldest imagery with the most perfect perspicuity, and the most common and familiar with the greatest dignity, is a commendation almost peculiar to the sacred poets. I shall not hesitate to produce an example of this kind, in which the meanness of the image is fully equalled by the plainness and inelegance of the expression; and yet such is its consistency, such the propriety of its application, that I do not scruple to pronounce it sublime. The Almighty threatens the ultimate destruction of Jerusalem in these terms:

“ And I will wipe Jerusalem,

“ As a man wipeth a dish:”

“ He wipeth it, and turneth it upside down.”

2 Kings 21. 13.

IT would be a tedious task to instance particularly with what embellishments of diction, derived from one low and trivial object, as it may appear to some, the barn, or the threshing-floor, the sacred writers have contrived to add a lustre to the most sublime, and a force to the most important subjects: Thus Jehovah threshes out the Heathen as corn, tramples them under his feet, and disperses them. He delivers the nations to Israel to be beaten in pieces by an indented flail, or to be crushed by their brazen hoofs. He scatters his enemies like chaff upon the mountains, and disperses them with the whirlwind of his indignation.

“ Behold I have made thee a threshing wain;

“ A new corn-drag armed with pointed teeth:

“ Thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small,

“ And reduce the hills to chaff.

“ Thou shalt winnow them, and the wind shall bear them

“ away;

“ And the tempest shall scatter them abroad.”

Isaiah 41. 15, 16.

ANOTHER example, which I shall point out, appears no less to bear the genuine marks of poetry than the former, and that is the execration of Noah upon Ham; with the magnificent predictions of prosperity to his two brothers, to Shem in particular, and the ardent breathings of his soul for their future happiness: these are expressed in three equal divisions of verses, concluding with an indignant repetition of one of the preceding lines: “ Cursed

- “Curfed be Canaan!
 “A fervant of fervants to his brothers let him be!
 “Blessed be Jehovah the God of Shem!
 “And let Canaan be their fervant!
 “May God extend Japheth,
 “And may he dwell in the tents of Shem!
 “And let Canaan be their fervant!” *Genefis* 9. 25—27.

The inspired benedictions of the patriarchs Ifaac and Jacob are altogether of the fame kind: and the great importance of thefe prophecies, not only to the destiny of the people of Ifrael, but that of the whole human race, renders it highly probable, that they were extant in this form before the time of Mofes; and, that they were afterwards committed to writing by the inspired historian, exactly as he had received them from his ancestors, without prefuming to beflow on thefe facred oracles any adventitious ornaments or poetical colouring.

THE first instance of poetic language occurs in one of the moft remote periods of the Mosaic history, I mean the address of Lamech to his wives, which is indeed but ill understood in general, becaufe the occasion of it is very obfcurely intimated: nevertheless, if we confider the apt construction of the words, the exact distribution of the period into three distichs, and the two parallel, and as it were corresponding, sentiments in each distich; I apprehend it will be easily acknowledged an indubitable specimen of the poetry of the first ages:

- “Hadah and Sillah hear my voice:
 “Ye wives of Lamech hearken to my speech;
 “For I have slain a man, becaufe of my wounding;
 “A young man, becaufe of my hurt.
 “If Cain shall be avenged feven times,
 “Certainly Lamech feventy and feven.”

Genefis 4. 23, 24.

AMONG the prophecies of Balaam I will venture to class that most elegant poem, which is rescued from oblivion by the prophet Micah, and which in matter and diction, in the structure, form and character of the composition, so admirably agrees with the other monuments of his fame, that it evidently appears to be a citation from the answer of Balaam to the king of the Moabites: “Wherewith

- “ Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah?
 “ Wherewith shall I bow myself unto the High God?
 “ Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings;
 “ With calves of a year old?
 “ Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams?
 “ With ten thousands of rivers of oil?
 “ Shall I give my first-born for my transgression?
 “ The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
 “ He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good:
 “ And what doth Jehovah require of thee,
 “ But to do justice, and to love mercy,
 “ And to be humble in walking with thy God?”

Micah 6. 6—8.

Of the Poem of Job.

THE principal object held forth to our contemplation in the book of Job is the example of a good man, eminent for his piety, and of approved integrity, suddenly precipitated from the very summit of prosperity into the lowest depths of misery and ruin: who having been first bereaved of his wealth, his possessions, and his children, is afterwards afflicted with the most excruciating anguish of a loathsome disease which entirely covers his body. He sustains all however with the mildest submission, and the most complete resignation to the will of Providence: “ In all this,” says the historian, “ Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.” And after the second trial, “ In this did not Job sin with his lips.” The author of the history remarks upon this circumstance a second time, in order to excite the observation of the reader, and to render him more attentive to what follows, which properly constitutes the true subject of the poem: namely, the conduct of Job with respect to his reverence for the Almighty, and the changes which accumulating misery might produce in his temper and behaviour. Accordingly we find that another still more exquisite trial of his patience yet awaits him, and which indeed, as the writer seems to intimate, he scarcely appears to have sustained with equal firmness, namely, the unjust suspicions, the bitter reproaches, and the violent altercations of his friends, who had visited him on the pretence of affording consolation. Here commences the plot or action of the poem: for when, after a long silence of all parties, the grief of Job breaks forth into passionate exclamations, and a vehement execration

execration on the day of his birth ; the minds of his friends are suddenly exasperated, their intentions are changed, and their consolation, if indeed they originally intended any, is converted into contumely and reproaches. The first of these three singular comforters reproves his impatience ; calls in question his integrity, by indirectly insinuating that God does not inflict such punishments upon the righteous ; and finally, admonishes him, that the chastisement of God is not to be despised. The next of them, not less intemperate in his reproofs takes it for granted, that the children of Job had only received the reward due to their offences ; and with regard to himself, intimates, that if he be innocent, and will apply with proper humility to the divine mercy, he may be restored. The third upbraids him with arrogance, with vanity, and even with falsehood, because he has presumed to defend himself against the unjust accusations of his companions ; and exhorts him to a sounder mode of reasoning and a more holy life. They all, with a manifest, tho' indirect allusion to Job, discourse very copiously concerning the divine judgments which are always openly displayed against the wicked, and of the certain destruction of hypocritical pretenders to virtue and religion. In reply to this, Job enumerates his sufferings, and complains bitterly of the inhumanity of his friends, and of the severity which he has experienced from the hand of God ; he calls to witness both God and man, that he is unjustly oppressed ; he intimates, that he is weak in comparison with God, that the contention is consequently unequal, and that be his cause ever so righteous he cannot hope to prevail. He expostulates with God himself still more vehemently, and with greater freedom, affirming, that he does not discriminate characters, but equally afflicts the just and the unjust. The expostulations of Job serve only to irritate still more the resentment of his pretended friends ; they reproach him in severe terms with pride, impiety, passion, and madness : they repeat the same arguments respecting the justice of God, the punishment of the wicked, and their certain destruction after a short period of apparent prosperity. This sentiment they confidently pronounce to be confirmed both by their experience and by that of their fathers ; and they maliciously exaggerate the ungrateful topic by the most splendid imagery and the most forcible language. On the part of Job, the general scope of the argument is much the same as before, but the expression is considerably heightened ; it consists of appeals to the Almighty, asseverations of his

own innocence, earnest expostulations of the cruelty of his friends, melancholy reflections on the vanity of human life, and upon his own severe misfortunes, ending in grief and desperation: he affirms, however, that he places his ultimate hope and confidence in God; and the more vehemently his adversaries urge, that the wicked only are objects of the divine wrath, and obnoxious to punishment, so much the more resolutely does Job assert their perpetual impunity, prosperity, and happiness even to the end of their existence. The first of his opponents, Eliphaz, incensed by this assertion, descends directly to open crimination and contumely; he accuses the most upright of men of the most atrocious crimes, of injustice, rapine, and oppression; inveighs against him as an impious pretender to virtue and religion, and with a kind of sarcastic benevolence exhorts him to penitence. Vehemently affected with this reproof, Job, in a still more animated and confident strain, appeals to the tribunal of All-seeing Justice, and wishes it were only permitted him to plead his cause in the presence of God himself. He complains still more intemperately of the unequal treatment of Providence; exults in his own integrity, and then more tenaciously maintains his former opinion concerning the impunity of the wicked. To this another of the triumvirate, Bildad, replies, by a masterly, though concise dissertation on the majesty and sanctity of the Divine Being, indirectly rebuking the presumption of Job, who has dared to question his decrees. In reply to Bildad, Job demonstrates himself no less expert at wielding the weapons of satire and ridicule, than those of reason and argument; and reverting to a more serious tone, he displays the infinite power and wisdom of God more copiously, and more poetically than the former speaker. The third of the friends making no return, and the others remaining silent, Job at length opens the true sentiments of his heart concerning the fate of the wicked; he allows that their prosperity is unstable, and that they and their descendants shall at last experience on a sudden, that God is the avenger of iniquity. In all this, however, he contends that the divine counsels do not admit of human investigation; but that the chief wisdom of man consists in the fear of God. He beautifully descants upon his former prosperity; and exhibits a striking contrast between it and his present affliction and debasement. Lastly, in answer to the crimination of Eliphaz, and the implications of the others, he relates the principal transactions of his past life; he asserts his integrity as displayed in all the duties of
life,

life, and in the sight of God and man; and again appeals to the justice and omniscience of God in attestation of his veracity.

If these circumstances be fairly collected from the general tenour and series of the work, as far as we are able to trace them through the plainer and more conspicuous passages, it will be no very difficult task to explain and define the subject of this part of the poem, which contains the dispute between Job and his friends. The argument seems chiefly to relate to the piety and integrity of Job, and turns upon this point, whether he, who by the Divine Providence and visitation is so severely punished and afflicted, ought to be accounted pious and innocent. This leads into a more extensive field of controversy, into a dispute indeed, which less admits of any definition or limit, concerning the nature of the divine counsels, in the dispensations of happiness and misery in this life. The antagonists of Job in this dispute observing him exposed to such severe visitations, conceiving that this affliction has not fallen upon him unmeritedly, accuse him of hypocrisy, and falsely ascribe to him the guilt of some atrocious but concealed offence. Job, on the contrary, conscious of no crime, and wounded by their unjust suspicions, defends his own innocence before God with rather more confidence and ardour than is commendable; and so strenuously contends for his own integrity, that he seems virtually to charge God himself with some degree of injustice.

This state of the controversy is clearly explained by what follows: for when the three friends have ceased to dispute with Job, because he seemeth just in his own eyes, that is because he has uniformly contended, that there was no wickedness in himself which could call down the heavy vengeance of God; Elihu comes forward justly offended with both parties; with Job, because he justified himself in preference to God, that is, because he defended so vehemently the justice of his own cause. that he seemed in some measure to arraign the justice of God; against the three friends, because, though they were unable to answer Job, they ceased not to condemn him: that is, they concluded in their own minds, that Job was impious and wicked, while, nevertheless, they had nothing specific to object against his assertions of his own innocence, or upon which they might safely ground their accusation.

The conduct of Elihu evidently corresponds with this state of the controversy: he professes, after a slight prefatory mention

tion of himself, to reason with Job, unbiassed equally by favour or repentment. He therefore reproves Job from his own mouth, because he had attributed too much to himself; because he had affirmed himself to be altogether free from guilt and depravity; because he had presumed to contend with God, and had not scrupled to insinuate, that the Deity was hostile to him. He asserts, that it is not necessary for God to explain and develope his counsels to men; that he nevertheless takes many occasions of admonishing them, not only by visions and revelations, but even by the visitations of his providence, by sending calamities and diseases upon them, to repress their arrogance and reform their obduracy. He next rebukes Job, because he had pronounced himself upright, and affirmed that God had acted inimically, if not unjustly towards him, which he proves to be no less improper than indecent. In the third place, he objects to Job, that from the miseries of the good, and the prosperity of the wicked, he has falsely and perversely concluded, that there was no advantage to be derived from the practice of virtue. On the contrary he affirms, that when the afflictions of the just continue, it is because they do not place a proper confidence in God, ask relief at his hands, patiently expect it, nor demean themselves before him with becoming humility and submission. This observation alone, he adds very properly, is at once a sufficient reproof of the contumacy of Job, and a full refutation of the unjust suspicions of his friends. Lastly, he explains the purposes of the Deity in chastening men, which are in general to prove and to amend them, to repress their arrogance, to afford him an opportunity of exemplifying his justice upon the obstinate and rebellious, and of shewing favour to the humble and obedient. He supposes God to have acted in this manner towards Job; on that account he exhorts him to humble himself before his righteous Judge, to beware of appearing obstinate or contumacious in his sight, and of relapsing into a repetition of his sin. He intreats him, from the contemplation of the divine power and majesty, to endeavour to retain a proper reverence for the Almighty. To these frequently intermitted and often repeated admonitions of Elihu, Job makes no return.—

The oration of God himself follows that of Elihu, in which disdaining to descend to any particular explication of his divine counsels, but instancing some of the stupendous effects of his infinite power, he insists upon the same topics which Elihu had before touched upon. In the first place,

having reprov'd the temerity of Job, he convicts him of ignorance, in being unable to comprehend the works of his creation, which were obvious to every eye; the nature and structure of the earth, the sea, the light, and the animal kingdom. He then demonstrates his weakness, by challenging him to prove his own power by emulating any single exertion of the divine energy, and then referring him to one or two of the brute creation, with which he is unable to contend—how much less therefore with the omnipotent Creator and Lord of all things, who is or can be accountable to no being whatever? On this Job humbly submits to the will of Providence, acknowledges his own ignorance and imbecility, and repents in dust and ashes.

On a due consideration of all these circumstances, the principal object of the poem seems to be this third and last trial of Job, from the injustice and unkindness of his accusing friends. The consequence of which is, in the first place, the anger, indignation, and contumacy of Job, and afterwards his composure, submission, and penitence. The design of the poem is, therefore, to teach men, that having a due respect to the corruption, infirmity, and ignorance of human nature, as well as to the infinite wisdom and majesty of God, they are to reject all confidence in their own strength, in their own righteousness, and to preserve on all occasions an unwavering and unfullied faith, and to submit with becoming reverence to his decrees.

Of the manners, sentiments, and style of the Poem of Job.

OBSERVE, in the first place, how admirably the confidence and perseverance of Job is displayed in replying to the slander of his false friends:

- “ As God liveth, who hath removed my judgment;
 “ Nay, as the Almighty liveth, who hath embittered my
 “ soul;
 “ Verily as long as I have life in me,
 “ And the breath of God is in my nostrils;
 “ My lips shall not speak perversity,
 “ Neither shall my tongue whisper prevarication.
 “ God forbid that I should declare you righteous!
 “ Till I expire I will not remove my integrity from me.
 “ I have fortified myself in my righteousness,
 “ And I will not give up my station;
 “ My heart shall not upbraid me as long as I live.
 “ May

“ May mine enemy be as the impious man,
 “ And he that riseth up against me as the wicked.”

Chapter 27. 2—7.

But how magnificent, how noble, how inviting and beautiful is that image of virtue, in which he delineates his past life! What dignity and authority does he seem to possess!

“ If I came out to the gate, nigh the place of public
 “ resort,

“ If I took up my seat in the street;

“ The young men saw me, and they hid themselves;

“ Nay, the very old men rose up and stood.

“ The princes refrained talking,

“ Nay, they laid their hands on their mouths.

“ The nobles held their peace,

“ And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.”

Chapter 29. 7—10.

What liberality! what a promptitude in beneficence!

“ Because the ear heard, therefore it blessed me;

“ The eye also saw, therefore it bare testimony for me.

“ That I delivered the poor who cried,

“ The orphan also, and him who had no helper.

“ The blessing of him who was ready to perill came upon
 “ me,

“ And I caused the heart of the widow to sing for joy.”

Chapter 29. 11—13.

What sanctity, what integrity in a judicial capacity!

“ I put on righteousness, and it clothed me like a robe;

“ My justice also was a diadem.

“ I was a father to the poor,

“ And the controversy which I knew not, I searched it
 “ out.

“ Then brake I the grinders of the oppressor,

“ And I plucked the prey out of his teeth.”

Chapter 29. 14, 16, 17.

But what can be more engaging than the purity of his devotion, and his reverence for the Supreme Being, founded upon the best and most philosophical principles? Besides, that through the whole there runs a strain of the most amiable tenderness and humanity:

“ For what is the portion which God distributeth from
 “ above,

“ And the inheritance of the Almighty from on high?
 “ Is it not destruction to the wicked,
 “ And banishment from their country to the doers of
 “ iniquity?
 “ Doth he not see my ways?
 “ And numbereth he not all my steps?
 “ If I should despise the cause of my servant,
 “ Or my maid, when they had a controversy with me,
 “ What then should I do when God ariseth,
 “ And when he visiteth, what answer could I make him?
 “ Did not he who formed me in the belly form him,
 “ And did not One fashion us in the womb?”

Chapter 31. 2—4, 13—15.

The three friends are exactly such characters as the nature of the poem required. They are severe, irritable, malignant censors, readily and with apparent satisfaction deviating from the purpose of consolation into reproof and contumely. Even from the very first they manifest this evil propensity, and indicate what is to be expected from them. The first of them, indeed, in the opening of his harangue, assumes an air of candour:

“ Wouldst thou take it unkindly that one should essay to
 “ speak to thee?”

Indignation is, however, instantly predominant:

“ But a few words who can forbear?”

The second flames forth at once:

“ How long wilt thou trifle in this manner?
 “ How long shall the words of thy mouth be as a mighty
 “ wind?”

But remark the third:

“ Shall not the master of words be answered?
 “ Or shall a man be acquitted for his fine speeches?
 “ Shall thy prevarications make men silent;
 “ Shalt thou even scoff, and there be no one to make
 “ thee ashamed?”

They are represented as illiberal, contentious; inclined to torture every thing to the worst of purposes:

“ Doth God pervert judgment?
 “ Doth the Almighty pervert justice?”

Where

Where observe, Job has not as yet uttered an intemperate expression in disparagement of the divine justice.

“ Nay, thou castest off fear,
“ And thou restrainest prayer before God.”

Such is the invective of the other of them. They are also proud, contemptuous, and arrogate too much to their own wisdom:

“ Why are we accounted as beasts ;
“ Why are we vile in your eyes ?
“ Let him tear himself in his fury ;
“ What, shall the earth be forsaken for thee ?
“ Or shall the rock be out-rooted from its place ?
“ Rather let the light of the wicked be extinguished.”

Nor is Zophar, who takes up the subject after Bildad, more modest :

“ Verily the impulse of my thoughts incite me to reply,
“ Even because there is some resentment within me :
“ I hear the ignominious reproof that is aimed at me,
“ And the spirit within me compels me to answer.”

The conduct of all these malicious censurers is much the same through the whole piece.

Eliphaz indeed, who begins in the mildest terms, descends afterwards to the severest reproaches ; and he directly charges Job with the most atrocious offences : from which intemperance of language, it must be confessed, the others refrain. Bildad, not to be silent, repeats in a brief and florid manner the subject, which had already been twice treated of by the others, namely, the majesty and holiness of God ; and Zophar, withdrawing from the contest, deserts entirely the cause of his companion, and leaves the field to Job. The business of defamation indeed seems, with great propriety, committed to three persons. It would have been too confined and trivial in the hands of one ; and, amongst a crowd of accusers, too confused and clamorous. There appears, however, but little difference in the manners of the three friends ; for in them the poet has rather studied to display the progress of the passions, than any diversity of character. But though the nice and fastidious criticism of the moderns demand variety in this respect, the simplicity of infant poetry will be excused by every person of real judgment ; and I think this deficiency (if such it may be called) is amply com-

penfated by the gravity and importance of the fubject and fentiments.

The lenity and moderation of Elihu ferves as a beautiful contraft to the intemperance and afperity of the other three. He is pious, mild, and equitable; equally free from adulation and feverity; and endued with fingular wifdom, which he attributes entirely to the infpiration of God: and his modefty, moderation, and wifdom, are the more entitled to commendation when we confider his unripe youth. As the characters of his detractors were in all refpects calculated to inflame the mind of Job; that of this arbitrator is admirably adapted to footh and compofe it: to this point the whole drift of the argument tends, and on this the very purport of it feems to depend.

The interpolation of the Deity, and its connexion with the general defign of the poem, although fome critics have really thought inconfiftent, and foreign to the fubject, no man has ever accounted it in any refpect unworthy of that fupreme Majefty to which it is afcribed.

The poem of Job abounds chiefly in the more vehement paffions, grief and anger, indignation and violent contention. It is adapted in every refpect to the incitement of terror; and as the fpecimens already quoted will fufficiently prove, is univerfally animated with the true fpirit of fublimity. It is however not wanting in the gentler affections; the following complaints, for inftance, are replete with an affecting fpirit of melancholy:

- “ Man, the offspring of a woman,
 “ Is of few days, and full of inquietude;
 “ He fpringeth up, and is cut off like a flower;
 “ He fleeteth like a fhadow, and doth not abide:
 “ Upon fuch a creature doft thou open thine eyes?
 “ And wilt thou bring even me in to judgment with thee?
 “ Turn thy look from him, that he may have fome re-
 “ fpite,
 “ Till he fhall, like a hireling, have completed his day.”

Chapter 14. 1, 2, 3, 6.

The whole paffage abounds with the moft beautiful imagery, and is a moft perfect fpecimen of the Elegiac. His grief afterwards becomes more fervent; but is, at the fame time foft and querimonious.

- “ How long will ye vex my foul,
 “ And tire me with vain harangues?

“ Thefe

- “ These ten times have ye loaded me with reproaches,
 “ Are ye not ashamed that ye are so obstinate against me?
 “ Pity me, O pity me, ye are my friends,
 “ For the hand of God hath smitten me.
 “ Why will you be my persecutors as well as God,
 “ And therefore will ye not be satisfied with my flesh?”

Chapter 19. 2, 3, 21, 22.

That self-indulgence which is so natural to the passion of hope; its ingenuity in drawing pictures of future felicity; its credulity in cherishing these ideas and the gaiety and elevation of mind with which it describes them, are finely expressed by Job in the passage following the relation of his past life:

- “ Therefore I said I shall die in my nest;
 “ I shall multiply my days like the sand;
 “ My root was spread abroad nigh the waters,
 “ And the dew lay all night on my branches:
 “ My glory was fresh within me,
 “ And my bow gained strength in my hand.
 “ They hearkened to me, nay they waited for me;
 “ They were silent also, they approved my counsel.
 “ After I had spoken they replied not;
 “ For my words dropped upon them:
 “ They waited also for me as the rain;
 “ And their mouths were open as for the latter rain.”

Chapter 29. 11—23.

To this part of the subject, which relates to the delineation of the passions, may be referred those delicate touches which animate almost every description, and which are drawn from the most intimate knowledge of the genuine emotions of the human soul. I shall content myself with one example out of the many which the compass of the work affords. It is exactly copied from nature; for when events take place according to our ardent wishes, but quite contrary to our expectations, we have the utmost difficulty to believe them real. Job thus expresses himself respecting God:

- “ If I called upon him and he should answer me,
 “ Yet could I scarcely believe that he had heard my voice.”

This is admirably expressive both of the majesty of God, and of the severity which he exercised towards Job; it is also no less descriptive of the humiliation and despair of the sufferer.

“ If

“ If I were merry with them they would not believe it :”
 fays Job of his dependants ; in which is expreffed his own
 dignity and gravity united with urbanity, and at the fame
 time their unviolated attachment to him. Thus too, by the
 fame circumftance is depicted both the ardour and alacrity of
 the war-horfe, and his eagernels for the battle :

- “ For eagernels and fury he devoureth the very ground,
 “ He believeth it not when he heareth the trumpet.
 “ When the trumpet foundeth, he faith, ahah !
 “ Yea he fcenteth the battle from afar,
 “ The thunder of the chieftains and their fhouts.”

Chapter 39. 24, 25.

This paffage, which has indeed always attracted general
 admiration, will alfo ferve to exemplify the excellence of
 the defcriptive parts of this poem : and from the fame cir-
 cumftance we may fairly conjecture, that the pictures, which
 are exhibited in other parts of the work, would appear no lefs
 ftriking refemblances of the realities, were we equally well
 acquainted with the originals. To judge rightly of a descrip-
 tion, we ought to have as clear and diftinct ideas of the thing
 itfelf as the author. The idea of thunder is familiar to all
 mankind : obferve, therefore, how it is depicted by Elihu :

- “ At this my heart trembleth,
 “ And is ready to bound from its place.
 “ Hearken attentively, and tremble at his voice ;
 “ Even at the found that goeth out of his mouth.
 “ Its flafh is beneath the whole heavens,
 “ And its blaze to the ends of the earth.
 “ After it a voice roareth ;
 “ He thundereth with the voice of his majefly :
 “ He deceiveth them not when his voice is heard.”

Chapter 37. 1—4.

It would be fuperfluous to infift any longer on a minute
 detail, fince the moft fplendid examples of every beauty and
 elegance of fentiment, of imagery, and of diction, meet the
 eye of the attentive reader in every part of the poem. Let
 it fuffice to fay, that the dignity of the ftyle is anfwerable to
 that of the fubject ; its force and energy to the greatnefs of
 thofe paffions which it defcribes : and as this production ex-
 cels all the other remains of the Hebrew poetry in œconomy
 and arrangement, fo it yields to none in fublimity of ftyle,
 and in every grace and excellence of compofition. Among
 the

the principal of these may be accounted the accurate and perfectly poetical conformation of the sentences, which is indeed generally most observable in the most ancient of the poetical compositions of the Hebrews. Here, however, as is natural and proper in a poem of so great length and sublimity, the writer's skill is displayed in the proper adjustment of the period, and in the accurate distribution of the members, rather than in the antithesis of words, or in any laboured adaptation of the parallelisms.

Of the Book of Psalms.

THE book of Psalms, which is a collection, under the general title of hymns to the praise of God, contains poems of different kinds, and elegies among the rest. If indeed the contents of the book were methodically arranged in their proper classes, not less than a sixth or seventh part would appear to be elegiac. Since, however, this is a matter dependent in a great measure upon opinion, and not to be clearly demonstrated upon determinate principles; since the nature of the subject, the complexion of the style, or the general form and disposition of each poem, must decide the question; and since different persons will judge differently upon these points; it will hardly be expected that I should on this occasion proceed to the regular classification of them. It will indeed be more to your advantage, and more to our present purpose, to select an example which may be clearly demonstrated to belong to the elegiac class.

Under this appellation then I shall not hesitate to recommend to your notice the forty-second Psalm, since I cannot help esteeming it one of the most beautiful specimens of the Hebrew elegy. The author of this elegant complaint, exiled from the temple, and from the public exercise of his religion, to the extreme parts of Judea, persecuted by his numerous enemies, and agitated by their reproaches, pours forth his soul to God in this tender and pathetic composition. The ardent feelings of a devout heart are admirably expressed, while the memory of former felicity seems to aggravate his present anguish. The extreme anxiety of a mind, depressed by the burthen of sorrow, and yet at the same time impatient under it; overcome by an accumulation of evils, yet in some degree endeavouring to resist them, and admitting, through the dark cloud of affliction, a glimmering ray of hope and consolation, is finely depicted. In frequent and almost instantaneous transitions he glows with love, and droops with
lamentation;

lamentation; he complains, he expostulates; he despairs, and yet hopes; he is afflicted, and again consoled. It is not to be expected that any poetical version should express these sentiments, with the force, the energy, and more particularly with the conciseness of the Hebrew, which is indeed not to be imitated in any other language: though it must be confessed, that this poem is more diffuse than the Hebrew poetry in general. The following paraphrase however, though infinitely short of the original in sublimity, will perhaps serve to evince the correspondence of the subject and sentiments of this poem, with the elegiac productions of modern times:

- “ Cervus ut, in medio celsis de montibus æstu
 “ Actus, in argentes fertur anhelus aquas;
 “ Sic mea vitali satiari Numinis unda
 “ Mens avet, et Domini languet amore fui:
 “ Gaudet, et optat amans, vitæ se adjungere fonti:
 “ His mihi deliciis quæ dabit hora frui:
 “ Dum sine fine petunt, ubi sis, cui servio, Numen,
 “ Sunt misero lachrymæ nocte dieque dapes.
 “ Scandere me quoties memini penetralia sacra,
 “ Et longo populos ordine pone sequi;
 “ Aurea dum recolo missas ad fidera voces,
 “ Et plausum festis quem decet esse choris;
 “ In lachrymas totus miser et suspiria solvor,
 “ Inter et ærumnas est mihi dulce queri.
 “ Cur ita turbaris? cur te, Mens, dejicis exspes?
 “ Cur ita me torques anxia? fide Deo:
 “ Scilicet hic placido recreat mihi lumine pectus;
 “ Et mihi materies unica laudis erit.
 “ Dum queror, in mentem, liquidis Jordanis ab undis,
 “ Sepositisque jugis, tu mihi sæpe redis.
 “ Gurgitis est gurges, rauci comes æquoris æquor:
 “ Fluëtibus infelix obruor usque novis.
 “ Luce, sed in media bonitas tua fulcit abyssò:
 “ Noctè, Parens vitæ, tu mihi carmen eris.
 “ Tunc ego, cur, dicam, capiunt te oblivia nostri?
 “ Rerum Opifex, animæ portus et aura meæ!
 “ Cur prope confectum curis, lachrymitque sepultum,
 “ Me smis immani durus ab hoste premi?
 “ Hic petit insultans, ubi sis: ego vulneror inde,
 “ Ensis et in morem permeat ossa dolor.
 “ Cur ita turbaris? cur te, Mens, dejicis exspes?
 “ Cur ita me torques anxia? fide Deo:
 “ Scilicet

“ Scilicet hic placido recreat mihi lumine pectus,
 “ Et mihi materies unica laudis erit.—

Another point, to which I would wish every person who reads this Psalm in the original to advert, is the division of the periods, and the resolution of them into their constituent parts or members; he will find, I believe, that the periods spontaneously divide into verses of nearly equal length and measure, exactly similar to those of the four first chapters of the Lamentations of Jeremiah; such as I before remarked, appeared to constitute the established metre of the Hebrew elegy. The whole of the nineteenth Psalm consists also of the same kind of verse, except the epode, which contains two long verses of the same kind, and one shorter, which last is once repeated. The forty-third Psalm too seems to be constructed upon similar principles, containing eight of the same kind of verses, with the same epode. And since it is written in the same train of sentiment, the same style, and even apparently in the same metre, it ought not perhaps to be separated from the preceding Psalm, but rather to be considered as a part or continuation of the same composition: if this be true, the whole poem consists of three parts almost equal and alike, each of which is concluded by the same intercalary period or stanza.

Of Solomon's Proverbs.

IN those periods of remote antiquity, which may with the utmost propriety be styled the infancy of societies and nations, the usual, if not the only, mode of institution was by detached aphorisms or proverbs. Human wisdom was then indeed in a rude and unfinished state; it was not digested, methodized, or reduced to order and connexion. Those, who, by genius and reflection, exercised in the school of experience, had accumulated a stock of knowledge, were desirous of reducing it into the most compendious form, and comprized in a few maxims those observations which they apprehended most essential to human happiness. This mode of instruction was, in truth, more likely than any other to prove efficacious with men in a rude stage of society; for it professed not to dispute, but to command; not to persuade, but to compel; it conducted them not by a circuit of argument, but led immediately to the approbation and practice of integrity and virtue. That it might not, however, be altogether destitute of allurements, and lest it should disgust
 by

by an appearance of roughness and severity, some degree of ornament became necessary; and the instructors of mankind added to their precepts the graces of harmony, and illuminated them with metaphors, comparisons, allusions, and the other embellishments of style. This manner, which with other nations prevailed only during the first periods of civilization, with the Hebrews, continued to be a favourite style to the latest ages of their literature. It obtained among them the appellation of *Mashalim* (or Parables) as well because it consisted in a great measure of Parables strictly so; as because it possessed uncommon force and authority over the minds of the auditors.

Of this Didactic poetry there are still extant many specimens in the writings of the Hebrews; and among these the first rank must be assigned to the Proverbs of Solomon. This work consists 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; inasmuch, that it scarcely yields in elegance and splendor 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.

Of Ecclesiastes.

THERE is another Didactic work of Solomon, entitled *Kohelet* (*Ecclesiastes*) or the Preacher; or rather perhaps Wisdom the Preacher, the general tenour 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 subject, 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 the connexion of the arguments are involved in so much obscurity, that scarcely any

two

two commentators have agreed concerning the plan of the work, and the accurate division of it into parts or sections. The truth is, the laws of 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, I might almost call it mean or vulgar; 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.

The Song of Solomon,

IS an Epithalamium, or Nuptial Dialogue: or rather, if we may be allowed to give it a title more agreeable to the genius of the Hebrew, a Song of Loves. It is expressive of the utmost fervour as well as the utmost delicacy of passion, it is instinct with all the spirit and all the sweetness of affection. The principal characters are Solomon himself and his bride, who are represented speaking both in dialogue, and in soliloquy when accidentally separated. Virgins also, the companions of the bride, are introduced, who seem to be constantly upon the stage, and bear a part in the dialogue: mention too is made of young men, friends of the bridegroom, but they are mute persons. This is exactly conformable to the manners of the Hebrews, who had always a number of companions to the bridegroom, thirty of whom were present in honour of Sampson, at his nuptial feast. In the New Testament, according to the Hebrew idiom, they are called, children (or sons) of the bride-chamber, and friends of the bridegroom; there too we find mention of ten virgins, who went forth to meet the bridegroom, and conduct him home: which circumstances, I think, indicate that this poem is founded upon the nuptial rites of the Hebrews, and is expressive of the forms or ceremonial of their marriages.

It is agreed on all parts, that the nuptial feast, as well as every other solemn rite among the Hebrews, was hebdomadal. Of this circumstance M. Bossuet has availed himself in the analysis of the poem, and he accordingly divides the whole into seven parts, corresponding to the seven days of its supposed duration. The vicissitudes of day and night are marked with some degree of distinctness; he therefore makes use of these as indexes, to point to the true division of the parts. The nuptial banquet being concluded, the bride is led in the evening to her future husband; and here commences the nuptial week; for the Hebrews, in their account of time, begin always at the evening. The bridegroom, who is represented in the character of a shepherd, goes forth early in the morning to the accustomed occupations of a rural and pastoral life; the bride presently awaking, and impatient of his absence, breaks out into a soliloquy full of tenderness and anxiety, and this incident forms the exordium of the poem. The early departure of the bridegroom seems to be according to custom; hence that precaution so frequently and so anxiously repeated not to disturb his beloved.

“ I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
 “ By the roes and the hinds of the field,
 “ That ye disturb not, neither awake
 “ The beloved, ’till herself be inclined.”

Nor less frequent is the following exclamation of the virgins:

“ Who is she, rising up out of the desert!
 “ Who is she, that is seen like the morning!”

In these terms they seem to greet the bride when she first comes out of her chamber: and these several expressions have some allusion to the early time of the morning. The night is also sometimes mentioned in direct terms, and sometimes it is indirectly denoted by circumstances. If therefore any reader, admitting these indications of time, will carefully attend to them, he cannot, I think, but perceive, that the whole of the work consists of seven parts or divisions, each of which occupies the space of a day, The same critic adds, that he can discover the last day to be clearly distinguished as the sabbath; for the bridegroom does not then, as usual, go forth to his rural employments, but proceeds from the marriage-chamber into public with his bride. Such are the sentiments of this learned person; to which I

am inclined to accede, not as absolute demonstration, but as a very ingenious and probable conjecture upon an extremely obscure subject: I follow them therefore as a glimmering of light, which beams forth in the midst of darkness, where it would be almost unreasonable to hope for any clearer illumination.

IT remains to offer a few remarks upon the style of this poem, which is of the pastoral kind; since the two principal personages are represented in the character of shepherds. This circumstance is by no means incongruous to the manners of the Hebrews, whose principal occupation consisted in the care of cattle; nor did they consider this employment as beneath the dignity of the highest characters. Least of all, could it be supposed inconsistent with the character of Solomon, whose father was raised from the sheep-fold to the throne of Israel. The pastoral life is not only most delightful in itself, but, from the particular circumstances and manners of the Hebrews, is possessed of a kind of dignity. In this poem it is adorned with all the choicest colouring of language, with all the elegance and variety of the most select imagery. Every part of the Canticles, says a modern writer, abounds in poetical beauties; the objects, which present themselves on every side, are the choicest plants, the most beautiful flowers, the most delicious fruits, the bloom and vigour of spring, the sweet verdure of the fields, flourishing and well-watered gardens, pleasant streams, and perennial fountains. The other senses are represented as regaled with the most precious odours, natural and artificial; with the sweet singing of birds, and the soft voice of the turtle; with milk and honey, and the choicest of wine. To these enchantments are added all that is beautiful and graceful in the human form, the endearments, the caresses, the delicacy of love; if any object be introduced which seems not to harmonize with this delightful scene, such as the awful prospect of tremendous precipices, the wildness of the mountains, or the haunts of the lions; its effect is only to heighten by the contrast the beauty of the other objects, and to add the charms of variety to those of grace and elegance. In the following passage the force and splendor of description is united with all the softness and tenderness of passion:

“ Get thee up my companion,

“ My lovely one, come away:

“ For

“ For lo! the winter is past,
 “ The rain is over, is gone,
 “ The flowers are seen on the earth;
 “ The season of the song is come,
 “ And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land:
 “ The fig-tree puts forth its green figs,
 “ And the vine's tender grapes yield a fragrance:
 “ Arise, my companion, my fair one, and come.”

Chapter 2. 10—13.

The following comparisons abound in sweetness and delicacy:

“ How sweet is thy love, O my sister, O spouse,
 “ How much better than wine is thy love,
 “ And the odour of thy perfumes than all spices!
 “ Thy lips, O spouse, distil honey from the comb,
 “ Honey and milk are under thy tongue,
 “ And the scent of thy garments is like the fragrance of
 “ Lebanon.”

Chapter 4. 10, 11.

There are some others which demand a more accurate investigation.

“ Thy hair is like a flock of goats,
 “ That browse upon Mount Gilead.”

The hair of the goats was soft, smooth, of a yellow cast, like that of the bride; her beautiful tresses are compared with the numerous flocks of goats which covered this flourishing mountain from the top to the bottom.

“ Thy teeth are like the thorn flock,
 “ Which have come up from the washing place,
 “ All of which have twins,
 “ And none among them is bereaved.”

The evenness, whiteness, and unbroken order of the teeth, is admirably expressed.

“ Like the twice-dyed thread of crimson are thy lips,
 “ And thy language is sweet.”

That is, thin and ruby-coloured, such as add peculiar graces to the sweetness of the voice.

“ Like the flice of a pomegranate
 “ Are thy cheeks amidst thy tresses.”

Partly obscured, as it were, by her hair, and exhibiting a gentle blush of red from beneath the delicate shade, as the
 feeds

feeds of the pomegranate (the colour of which is white tinged with red) surrounded by the rind.

“ Thy neck is like the tower of David
 “ Built for an armoury ;
 “ A thousand shields are hung up against it,
 “ All bucklers for the mighty.”

The neck is described as long, erect, slender, according to the nicest proportion; decorated with gold, gems, and large pearls. It is compared with some turret of the citadel of Sion, more lofty than the rest, remarkable for its elegance, and not less illustrious for its architecture than for the trophies with which it was adorned, being hung round with shields and other implements of war.

“ Thy two breasts are like two young kids,
 “ Twins of the gazal, that browse among the lilies.”

Delicate and smooth, standing equally prominent from the ivory bosom. The animal with which they are compared is an animal of exquisite beauty, and from that circumstance it derives its name in the Hebrew. Nothing can, I think, be imagined more truly elegant and poetical than all these passages, nothing more apt or expressive, than these comparisons. The discovery of these excellencies, however, only serves to increase our regret for the many beauties which we have lost, the perhaps superior graces, which extreme antiquity seems to have overcast with an impenetrable shade.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah

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 and methodical arrangement of the general subject, a regular disposition of the parts, a perfect connection 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;

try; 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 corresponding sentiments, than an accurate and connected series of different ideas, arranged in the form of a regular treatise. I would not be understood to insinuate, that the author has paid no regard whatever to order or arrangement; or that transitions truly elegant from one subject, image, or character, to another, are not sometimes to be found; this only I wished to remark, that the nature and design of this poem (being in reality a collection of different sentiments or subjects, each of which assumes the form of a funeral dirge) neither require, nor even admit of a methodical arrangement. The whole poem, however, may be divided into five parts; in the first, second, and fourth, the prophet addresses the people in his own person, or else personifies Jerusalem, and introduces that city as a character; the third part is supposed to be uttered by the chorus of Jews, represented by their leader, after the manner of the Greek tragedies: and in the fifth, the whole nation of the Jews, on being led into captivity, pour forth their united complaints to Almighty God. This last as well as the others, is divided into twenty-two periods, according to the number of the letters of the alphabet, with this difference, that in the four other parts the initial letters of each period exactly correspond with the alphabetical order. And from this circumstance we have been enabled to form some little judgment concerning the Hebrew metres.

In my opinion, there is not extant any poem, which displays such a happy and splendid selection of imagery in so concentrated a state. What can be more elegant and poetical, than the description of that once flourishing city, lately chief among the nations, sitting in the character of a female, solitary, afflicted, in a state of widowhood, deserted by her friends, betrayed by her dearest connections, imploring relief, and seeking consolation in vain? What a beautiful personification is that of the ways of Zion mourning because none are come to her solemn feasts? How tender and pathetic are the following complaints?

“ Is

“ Is this nothing to all you who pass along the way? be-
 hold and see,
 “ If there be any sorrow, like unto my sorrow, which is
 “ inflicted on me;
 “ Which Jehovah inflicted on me in the day of the vio-
 “ lence of his wrath.
 “ For these things I weep, my eyes stream with water;
 “ Because the comforter is far away, that should tranqui-
 “ lize my soul:
 “ My children are desolate, because the enemy was
 “ strong.”

But to detail its beauties would be to transcribe the entire poem. I shall make but one remark relative to certain passages, and to the former part of the second alphabet in particular. If, in this passage, the prophet should be thought by some to affect a style too bold and energetic for the expression of sorrow, let them only advert to the greatness of the subject, its importance, sanctity, and solemnity; and let them consider that the nature of the performance absolutely required these to be set forth in a style suitable, in some degree at least, to their inherent dignity; let them attentively consider these things, and I have not a doubt, but they will readily excuse the sublimity of the prophet.

The peculiar Character of each of the Prophets.

THE Prophets have each their peculiar character, says Jerome, speaking of the twelve Minor Prophets. The same however might more properly be affirmed with respect to the three Greater: for Isaiah is extremely different from Jeremiah; nor is it easy to conceive any composition of the same denomination more dissimilar to both of them than the book of Ezekiel.

Isaiah, the first of the prophets, both in order and dignity, abounds in such transcendent excellencies, 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, connection, and arrangement: though in asserting this we must not forget the nature of the prophetic impulle, 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 of complete poems may be found, where the particular predictions are distinctly marked. The latter part, which I suppose to commence at the fortieth chapter, is perhaps 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 of the Gentiles; the restoration of the chosen people; 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, nor any want of order and connexion as to matter or sentiment in the different parts. I must add, that I esteem the whole book of Isaiah to be poetical, a few passages

passages excepted, which, if brought together, would not at most exceed the bulk of five or six chapters.

Jeremiah, though deficient neither in elegance nor sublimity, must give place in both to Isaiah. Jerome seems to object against him a sort of rusticity of language, no vestige of which, I must however confess, I have been able to discover. His sentiments, it is true, are not always the most elevated, nor are his periods 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, I can scarcely pronounce above half the book of Jeremiah to be poetical.

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 connection 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. His diction is sufficiently perspicuous, all his obscurity consists in the nature of the subject. Visions, (as for instance among others, those of Hosea, Amos, and Jeremiah) are necessarily dark and confused. The greater part of Ezekiel, towards the middle of the book especially, is poetical, whether we regard the matter or the diction. His periods, however, are frequently so rude and incompact, that I am often at a loss how to pro-

nounce concerning his performance in this respect. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as far as relates to style, may be said to hold the same rank among the Hebrews, as Homer, Simonides, and Æschylus among the Greeks.

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. This peculiarity has not escaped the observation of Jerome: he is altogether, says he, speaking of this prophet, laconic and sententious. But this very circumstance, which anciently was supposed, no doubt, to impart uncommon force and elegance, in the present ruinous state of the Hebrew literature, is productive of so much obscurity, that although the general subject of this writer be sufficiently obvious, he is the most difficult and perplexed of all the prophets. There is, however, another reason for the obscurity of his style: Hosea prophesied during the reigns of the four kings of Judah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; the duration of his ministry, therefore, in whatever manner we calculate, must include a very considerable space of time; we have now only a small volume of his remaining, which, it seems, contains his principal prophecies; and these are extant in a continued series, with no marks of distinction as to the times in which they were published, or the subjects of which they treat. There is therefore no cause to wonder, if in perusing the prophecies of Hosea, we sometimes find ourselves in a similar predicament with those who consulted the scattered leaves of the Sibyl.

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 shews how naturally it inclines to the use of metaphors, allegories, and comparisons. Nor is the connection 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

the vengeance to be taken of their adversaries. But while we allow this just commendation to his perspicuity both in language and arrangement, we must not deny that there is sometimes great obscurity observable in his subject, and particularly in the latter part of the prophecy.

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, I think, agree with me, 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.

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 style of Habakkuk is also poetical; especially in his ode, which indeed may be accounted among the most perfect specimens of that class. The like remark will also apply to Zephaniah; but there is nothing very striking or uncommon either in the arrangement of his matter or the complexion of his 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. Jonah
and

and Daniel are mere historical commentaries, except the prayer of the former. 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.

Extracts from Gregory's Translation of Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, and Isaiah.

64. MR. HENLEY.

THOUGH the performance of their hymns by two alternate choirs, among the Hebrews, were the more usual, it evidently was not the only mode: for, as the parallelism of sentences in their poetry is not restricted to distichs, but admits a varied form of iteration, so their psalmody, though usually confined to two alternate choruses, was sometimes extended to more. An example of the latter kind will appear in the following psalm:

P S A L M 135.

ΠΡΟΛΟΓΟΣ, or PRELUDE. Part 1.

High-Priest and priests, to the Levites:

“ Praise ye Jah!”

Levites, to the priests:

“ Praise ye the name Jehovah!”

Priests and Levites, to the congregation:

“ Praise him, O ye servants of Jehovah!”

The congregation, to the priests:

“ Ye, that stand in the house of Jehovah!”

The congregation, to the Levites:

“ In the courts of the house of our God!”

ΠΡΟΛΟΓΟΣ 2.

Priests, to the Levites:

“ Praise ye Jah, for Jehovah is good.”

Levites,

Levites, to the congregation :

“ Sing praises unto his name, for it is pleasant.”

Congregation, joining both priests and Levites :

“ For Jah hath chosen Jacob unto himself,
“ Israel for his peculiar treasure.”

H Y M N .

High-priest, followed by the priests :

“ For I know that Jehovah is great,
“ Even our Lord above all gods.”

Levites :

“ Whatsoever Jehovah pleased,
“ He did in heaven, and in earth,
“ In the seas, and in deep places :”

Congregation :

“ He causeth the vapours to rise from the ends of
“ the earth,
“ He maketh lightnings for the rain :
“ He bringeth the wind out of his treasures.”

High-priest, accompanied by the priests :

“ Who smote the first-born of Ægypt,
“ Both of man and of beast.”

Levites :

“ Sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee,
“ O Egypt ;”

Congregation :

“ Upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.”

High-priest and priests :

“ Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings :”

Levites :

“ Sihon, king of the Amorites,
“ And Og, king of Bashan,
“ And all the kingdoms of Canaan.”

Congregation :

“ And he gave their land an heritage,
“ An heritage with Israel his people.”

Priests :

“ Thy name, O Jehovah, endureth for ever.”

Levites :

Levites :

“ Thy memorial, O Jehovah, throughout all generations.”

Priests, Levites, and congregation in full chorus :

“ For Jehovah will judge his people ;
“ And will repent him concerning his servants.”

2.

High-priest, accompanied by the priests :

“ The idols of the heathen—silver and gold !
“ The work of mortal hands.”

Levites :

“ They have mouths, but they speak not ;
“ Eyes have they, but they see not.”

Congregation :

“ They have ears, but they hear not :
“ Neither is there any truth in their mouths.”

Priests, Levites, and congregation in full chorus :

“ They that make them are like unto them ;
“ Every one that trusteth in them.”

Αντιφωνησις.

High-priest and priests, to the congregation :

“ Bless Jehovah, O house of Israel !”

Congregation, to the high-priest and priests :

“ Bless Jehovah, O house of Aaron !”

High-priest and priests, to the Levites :

“ Bless Jehovah, O house of Levi !”

Levites, to high-priest and priests :

“ Ye, that fear Jehovah, bless Jehovah !”

Priests, Levites, and congregation, in full chorus.

“ Blessed be Jehovah out of Sion,
“ Who dwelleth in Jerusalem !”

Full chorus, continuing each division, to both the rest :

“ Praise ye Jah !”

From this analysis it is evident, that the Hebrew hymn is a composition not less regular than the Grecian ode, and of a much more varied nature than is generally supposed.

Gregory's Translation of Lowth's Lectures.

65. REV.

65. REV. THOMAS WEALES, D. D.

OUR blessed Saviour excels in that branch of oratory which consists in weight of argument, addressed to the understanding of his hearers. He is entitled also to no ordinary place in the list of pathetic writers.

Each of his discourses is an ingot of gold intrinsically and solidly valuable. Every tender and passionate string that belongs to the heart of man is skilfully touched in one or other of them. This great teacher does not merely address himself to our reason, which in most men is but weak, but to our senses and passions. A few naked precepts, however just and weighty in themselves, are thrown away upon the many. Their hearts are only to be penetrated or conquered by plain, full, and interesting examples. All our Saviour's parables are in this view admirable. Full of the noblest imagery and justest morals, they are wonderfully calculated to excite a strong sense of the vanity and emptiness of all things here below, and raise our hearts to a divine temper by a deep conviction of the transcendent worth and excellency of the things that are above; to prove the inherent baseness of vice, together with that misery which is inseparable from it, as well as the genuine charms of virtue, together with that happiness which is sure to go along with it.—

Let us single out a few of those parables (which may be considered as so many living pictures of the qualities and affections of humanity subjected to the eye) that are happily formed to awaken the most lethargic, or alarm the most presumptuous sinner upon earth.

The parable of the ten virgins contains in it the most pointed and awful appeal to the consciences, the strongest addresses to the hopes and fears of mankind. Our common nature obliges us to enter into the distress of the five foolish with an exquisite sensibility, lest their case should one day become our own. When we hear them exclaiming in the bitterness of their souls, "Lord, Lord, open to us," the tear of compassion steals down our cheeks whether we will or no. Their hearts must be frozen indeed, which are susceptible of no feeling or impression, upon listening to the sentence of eternal banishment from his presence: "Verily, "I say unto you, I know you not." That awful warning which the parable is closed with, cannot be heard without some degree of emotion by any mortal living: "Watch "therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour "wherein the Son of man cometh." After such a plain and
express

express declaration on the part of heaven, shall we not all agree, that it argues a man bereft of common sense to defer another minute the trimming of his own lamp? Is not the lowest degree of procrastination on our part the grossest of all mistakes, the most egregious of all follies?

When our Lord would make us thoroughly sensible of the profound folly of setting our hearts upon riches, was it possible for him to do it in a warmer and more effectual manner than in the parable of the rich man in the Gospel? His congratulatory speech of "Soul, soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;" is admirably expressive of his inward frame of mind, so altogether repugnant to the spirit of that religion which Christ taught. But what a sudden veil was drawn over all his full-blown joys by the reply which God arrested him with, in the midst of his unhallowed soliloquy! Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? are words that could not but enter, like daggers, into his affrighted ears, and harrow up his foolish soul.

ST. PAUL lays the greatest weight of his oratory upon the strength of argument offered to the understanding of his hearers. This great apostle possessed in a high degree the rare and useful talent of entering into the characters, prejudices, and expectations of others, and of knowing how to suit his applications prudently, but with innocence, to them. Several discourses of his are recorded by St. Luke, in which all the insinuating arts of the most polite and consummate address are displayed, all the thunder of the most vehement and commanding orator, without any of his idle parade or ostentation.

His apology before king Agrippa is perhaps the most delicate and masterly that ever was penned. Behold the friendless but undaunted prisoner of Jesus Christ stretching forth his hand and answering for himself before the most august and courtly audience assembled at his trial. "I think myself" (breaks forth the Christian hero) "happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews: especially, because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently." An exordium this, altogether suitable to and worthy of the great Apostle,

Apostle, who had joined all the elegance of the courtier to all the sincerity of the Christian, and could hardly fail to gain him an impartial hearing from a king, who was eminent for his literature and good sense. The honest plainness and simplicity of the narrative that follows cannot but please those tastes, which are the most unprejudiced and the most refined. "My manner of life from my youth up, which was at the first," &c. St. Paul, after the manner of the Grecian orator, arresting his thoughts in the midst of their career, with a seeming abruptness breaks forth, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Then returning to his apology, which he seemed to have lost sight of, he proceeds, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also," &c. Now mark the speech which a relation that carried with it all the genuine marks of truth and sincerity drew from the unhallowed lips of a Festus, one that was an utter stranger to either Jewish or Christian notions. "As he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself: much learning doth make thee mad." To whom Paul directly made a reply much too full of discretion and calmness to proceed from the mouth of a person who was beside himself. "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner." ver. 25, 26. Listen to and admire his sudden address to the king himself, as a witness of the truth of what he uttered, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." How infinitely taking, how sincerely complaisant was the apostle's answer to his own question! How could he possibly express with more grace and beauty his firm persuasion of the king's belief in those prophetic writings, which are so eminently fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ! And can we at all wonder that such an apology on the part of Paul should leave behind it such an impression upon the mind and heart of Agrippa, as was followed by that celebrated elogium, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian?" An elogium that drew after it as handsome a reply as ever was recorded in profane or Sacred Writ, and could alone be dictated by the best of hearts and heads: "And Paul said, I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day,

“ day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except “ these bonds.” Let me just remark, that the conversion of this great apostle is in itself one of the most convincing as well as touching motives to a belief in Christ Jesus. Such a change in a man so intelligent, so zealous for the traditions of his fathers, was of all others the most authentic, the most undeniable justification of all which he urged in behalf of the religion of Christ. Scarce a single discourse was delivered by him to the Jews, in which he did not appeal to himself as a living demonstration of the truth of the Gospel. But a Paul was not only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but to all mankind. He entered into many a country which the demon of idolatry had taken full possession of, and cast him out. The empire of faith was established by him in Athens and the Areopagus, where they sacrificed to the unknown God; in Ephesus, where superstition had placed its throne; in Rome, where ambition held its full sovereignty; in the court of Nero, which had been the centre of all vices.

His sermon at Antioch, in which he demonstrates to the Jews, that Jesus was the Messiah, is admirable in the reasoning part. The arguments which the great Apostle makes use of for that purpose are at once perfectly obvious to men of the lowest attainments, and infinitely strong to those of the highest. This excellent discourse opens with a brief epitome of the Jewish history down to the time that God raised up David for their king, of whose seed Jesus, according to promise, was descended.

“ Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. “ The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and “ exalted the people, when they dwelt as strangers in the “ land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out “ of it, &c. Of this man’s seed hath God raised unto Israel “ a Saviour, Jesus.” Christ descended naturally from David, not by Solomon (whom the Jews hold that he was to descend from) but by Nathan. Accordingly St. Luke, shewing his natural descent through the several successions of those from whom he took flesh and blood, deduces only Nathan’s line. St. Matthew, in his deduction of our Saviour’s pedigree, reckons only Abraham, to whom the first promise of the kingdom was made, Genesis 18. 6. intending to set down his political or royal one, by which he had a right to the crown of the Jews.

St. Paul having premised that the chief design of God in choosing Abraham, and the Patriarchs, and the nations of the

the Jews descended from them, for a peculiar and separate people, and delivering them from Egyptian bondage, was no other than the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah, who was to be born of their nation; he proceeds to convince them by the most irresistible arguments that Jesus was that Messiah, the true Christ himself. His first proof is drawn from the testimony of John the Baptist, when the Jews demanded of him if he himself was the person. "I am not he; but behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes I am not worthy to loose." Another at least equally forcible is taken from the exact accomplishment of the prophecies which were read every sabbath-day in their own synagogues. And it would be no easy matter to quote any one before or since Christ, who made his own sufferings and death (thus foretold) a necessary part of his original plan. "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. But God raised him from the dead."

That the resurrection of Christ was itself a full completion of the most remarkable prophecies made to their ancestors, appears from a couple which he hath selected out of Psalm 2. 7. Isaiah 55. 3.

St. Paul having thus demonstrated that Jesus was the Messiah, proceeds to shew them what inestimable advantages a risen Jesus hath procured to all believers. "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." The purgations and sacrifices of the Mosaical law did not purge the conscience, but only took away the political guilt, in relation to their civil and ecclesiastical penalties; and some offences were punished with death, admitting of no sacrifices at all. The warning which this discourse is closed with is sufficiently weighty and alarming, and at that instant especially needful. "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets. Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" clearly intimating their final destruction by the Romans. The effects which

which it wrought upon the Gentile converts to the Jewish religion, called Profelytes, were such as might be reasonably looked for from an harangue, in which the truth diffuses on every side a stream of genuine lustre. "And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles befought that the words might be preached to them the next sabbath." Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious Profelytes followed Paul and Barnabas, "who speaking to them persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next sabbath-day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming." For what avails sense or argument with men who are not guided by either, but purely by an evil heart or perverse will? But let them go on contradicting and blaspheming as they list, the truth remains firm and unshaken, and eagerly embraced by as many as love it, and are sincerely desirous to know it.

Let me just infer from this discourse of the great Apostle, that Christianity is not to be represented as a chain of abstract speculations, or metaphysical truths linked together in a certain form of words of human contrivance, but as a set of important facts, or remarkable scenes of the great plan of Providence, in which mankind are deeply interested, and which could not have been brought to light but by immediate Revelation. And when the Religion of Christ is placed before us in this view, it will not only make it more easily understood, but also more easily defended against the objections of its enemies.

St. Paul is no less to be admired for raising the affections, than convincing the reason of his hearers. The discourse, in which he took his leave of the elders of the church at Miletus, is an admirable specimen of the pathetic.

The exordium, in which he appeals to their own personal knowledge for his exemplary conduct, becoming an ambassador of Jesus Christ, is noble and affecting. "Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which beset me by the lying in wait of the Jews. And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, testifying to the Jews and also to the Greeks repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Is it

it possible to listen to the magnanimous resolution of this Christian hero contained in the verses that follow, without feeling the alternate emotions of pity and admiration? “And now behold I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I received of the Lord Jesus.” What a natural and genuine eloquence goes along with the inward feeling of a good heart! How glorious and triumphant, how big with joy and consolation is his solemn protestation and appeal to them, that himself is in no wise answerable for the loss of a single soul! Wherefore I take you to record “this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God.” His concern for them, lest they should after his departure be seduced by factious teachers, together with his recommendation of them to the divine care and protection, is exquisitely passionate and tender: “Therefore watch, and remember for the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance amongst all them which are sanctified.” The peculiar qualities in sentiment which occasion the impression of pathos, are no other than that ardent zeal for their eternal welfare, that pure and unfeigned love for the cause of his dear Lord and master, that thorough contempt for every species of danger and persecution, that disinterested spirit which coveted no man’s silver and gold.—

St. Paul’s epistle to Philemon, written in the year sixty-two, is a beautiful specimen of the tender and affecting. Never was a suit or address drawn up in more endearing and affectionate terms, never did it contain more pressing and invincible motives or arguments. How skilfully does the apostle conciliate his favour, by making honourable mention of his steadiness to the religion of Christ as well as of his charity to all its professors, before he opens his address in behalf of a servant that had robbed him? “Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved and fellow-labourer, and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house: Grace to you, and peace from

" God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my
 " God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, hear-
 " ing of thy love and faith which thou hast towards the
 " Lord Jesus, and toward all saints, that the communication
 " of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledgment
 " of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For
 " we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because
 " the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother."

The endearing appellation of brother, which he closes with,
 carries with it methinks no ordinary pathos, and could not
 but dispose him to lend a willing ear to the request that he
 was about to make. " Wherefore though I might be much
 " bold in Christ, to enjoin thee that which is convenient,
 " yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such a one
 " as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ."

How handsomely does he assume, though a prisoner, how
 humbly condescend, though an apostle! Listen now to
 his address of reconciliation itself, composed of the most soft
 and melting words that language can possibly afford. " I
 " beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten
 " in my bonds: who in time past was to thee unprofitable"
 (or rather injurious according to the original word) " but
 " now profitable to thee and to me: whom I have sent
 " again: thou therefore receive him that is mine own
 " bowels: whom I would have retained with me, that in
 " thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds
 " of the gospel. But without thy mind would I not do any
 " thing, that thy benefit should not be as it were of neces-
 " sity, but willingly. For perhaps he therefore departed
 " for a season that thou shouldest receive him for ever; not
 " now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved,
 " specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both
 " in the Lord and in the Lord." Was there ever such a
 spirit of generous humanity and compassion, such an un-
 feigned love and regard towards a reformed sinner? What
 an additional weight and emphasis must this suit in his be-
 half derive from what he adds in the verses that follow?

" If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as my-
 " self. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth ought, put that
 " on mine account. I Paul have written it with mine own
 " hand, I will repay it." Was it possible that all which
 the apostle had hitherto urged could fail of softening Phile-
 mon's dupleasure against his servant, he could not surely
 resent the force of, " Albeit I do not say to thee how thou
 " owest unto me even thine own-self besides," than which a
 finer

finer instance of that figure called a prolepsis, or omission, is not to be met with in any Greek or Roman writer. "Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord:" is much too touching to be withstood by the most obdurate breast that ever entered into the composition of a man. That entire confidence which St. Paul placed in him for the success of his petition, was, to an ingenuous mind, a new and forcible reason for an immediate compliance with it. "Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote to thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say." Strange! that such a master-piece in the epistolary kind, hath been deemed by some unworthy of a place among the writings of a Paul!

Christian Orator delineated, passim.

66. REV. A. BLACKWALL, M. A.

THE Old Testament is the rich treasury of all the sublimity of thought, moving tenderness of passion, and vigorous strength of expression, which are to be found in all the language by which mortals declare their minds.

The Hebrew is an original and essential language, that borrows of none, but lends to all. Some of the sharpest Pagan writers, inveterate enemies to the religion and learning of both Jews and Christians, have allowed the Hebrew tongue to have a noble emphasis, and a close and beautiful brevity. The metaphors in that admirable book are apposite and lively; they illustrate the truths expressed by them, and raise the admiration of the reader. The names of men, animals, &c. are very significant. One word is often a good description, and gives you a satisfactory account of the chief and distinguishing property or quality of the thing or person named.

It would be no difficult matter for a man of diligence and good taste, competently skilled in the Hebrew and classical learning, to prove, that the Hebrew Bible has every beauty and excellence that can be found in all the Greek and Roman authors; and a great many more and stronger than any in all the most admired Classics.

Was ever history related with such neat plainness, such natural eloquence, and such a choice variety of circumstances, equally probable and moving, as the history of the antediluvian patriarchs; of Abraham and his descendants; and particularly of Joseph and his brethren? Theocritus

and Virgil come nothing near to those lively descriptions, those proper and sweet comparisons, that native delicacy of turn, and undissembled fervency of passion, which reign in Solomon's divine pastoral.

The prevailing passion in such poems is described above the imitation of art, and the reach and genius of all other authors. The Wise man's Proverbs and Ecclesiastes contain a select variety of precepts of a good and happy life, derived from their true principles, by a strong genius, and very elevated capacity, improved by a thorough knowledge of mankind, and a long course of experience. They have such a superiority in their sense, and agreeable manner of expression, that any critic would wonderfully hazard his reputation, who should, with Julian the Apostate, presume to bring them into any comparison with the dry precepts of Theognis, or the affected turns and spruceness of the morals of Isocrates.

The laws and commandments of the most-high God are delivered in grave and awful terms; and if compared either with the Attic or Roman laws, it will immediately appear, that the first as much excel the last in force and softness of expression, as they do in the wisdom of their constitution, and their sure tendency to promote the sincere piety and happiness of mankind.

The Songs of Moses and Deborah, and the Psalms, that most precious treasury of devotion and heavenly poetry, raise the soul to the highest heavens; and are infinitely more marvellous and transporting than the noblest and most happy flights of Pindar and Horace. There is nothing in all the tragedians, not in Euripides himself, so masterly in his mourning strokes, that is equally moving and tender with the Lamentations of the prophet Jeremy—"Oh! that my head
" were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I
" might weep day and night!—O all ye that pass by, be-
" hold and see, if there be any sorrow like mine." The complainant is so very miserable, that he has no friend or comforter left to open his grief to; he is forced to implore the pity of strangers and passengers; and then his distress is so great and visible, that he needs no words to raise compassion: he only desires them to look upon his distressed state, and then judge whether any sorrow could be equal to his. 'Tis a piece of superlative beauty, and in one thought comprises all the eloquence of mourning.

Can any prejudice so far bias any man of common understanding (though ever so much an enemy to his own pleasure

ture and improvement, by having a low opinion of the sacred writers) as to make it a question with him whether Job's natural history, his description of the ostrich, the eagle, vulture, behemoth, leviathan, &c. do not very much excel Aristotle, Pliny, and Elian, as well in the eloquence, and grandeur of the language, as in the truth of the philosophy? The Greek and Latin poets have happily exerted their talents in drawing a fine horse, and yet no wonder that they all yield so much to the horse in Job; since the almighty and infinite Mind, who created that noble and useful creature, has graciously condescended to entertain us with a perfect and most transporting description of one of the chief pieces of his own workmanship in the animal creation.

One might with pleasure enlarge upon numerous instances of the sublimity and admirable beauties of the Old Testament, which are above imitation, and defy criticism and censure. But I proceed to name a few, out of many vigorous Hebraisms in the New Testament.—To do things acceptable to God, is common language. To do things acceptable before, or in the presence of God, is a Hebraism; but does it not enlarge the thought, and enliven and invigorate the expression? And is it any breach of the rationale of grammar, or does it any ways trespass upon concord or government? It places every serious reader under the inspection and all-seeing eye of the Most-High; and therefore is apt to inspire him with a religious awe for that immense and adorable Presence.

That God Almighty hears prayers, is an expression common to all writers. That prayers ascend up to heaven as a sweet-smelling savour to God, is an Hebrew form of speech, not of less vigour, propriety, or agreeableness.

'Tis a beautiful allusion to the odours and fragrances of sacrifice and incense ascending into the skies; grateful to God Almighty, as his own appointment, and a proper expression of the duty and obedience of his pious worshippers. In the Acts of the Apostles the prayers and alms deeds of the devout Cornelius are said to be ascended as a memorial before God; that is, as an acceptable sacrifice; for in Leviticus the offering of incense is called a memorial. St. Paul calls God to witness, that he vehemently loves the Philippians in the bowels of Jesus Christ; that is, with the most affectionate tenderness, and Christian charity. But could any words in any language represent that love and goodness with such energy and power as these, which affect both soul and body,

and pierce into our inmost constitution, which raise the tenderest sentiments of human nature, and heighten them by the strongest and most sacred endearments of Christianity? But 'tis in vain to bestow words upon any person to convince him of the excellence of this divine passage, who does not feel the force and pathos of it.

THERE are innumerable passages in the sacred writers of the New Testament, which arise to the utmost degree of sublimity: and we may observe, that in the divine authors the words are ennobled by the vigour and brightness of the sense, contrary to the manner of many other authors: where the diction and ornaments of speech chiefly contribute to the sublimity. The sublime is a just, grand, and marvellous thought. It strikes like lightning with a conquering and resistless flame. It appears beautiful either in the plain or figurative style; it admits all the ornaments of language: yet needs none of them; but commands and triumphs in its own native majesty. The true sublime will bear translation into all languages, and will be great and surprising in all languages, and to all persons of understanding and judgment, notwithstanding the difference of their country, education, interest and party. It carries all before it by its own strength; and does not so much raise persuasion in the hearer or reader, as throw him into an extacy, and transport him out of himself. We admire it at first without considering; and upon mature consideration we are convinced that we can never admire it too much. It defies opposition, envy and time; and is infinitely advanced above cavil and criticism.

The poor leper in St. Matthew had a just notion, that Jesus was a divine person under that veil and disguise of humility, that he put on during his abode upon this earth; adores him as Lord of all power; and applies to him in his own sacred person for deliverance: "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." Jesus did not correct his supplicant as attributing too much to him, but received his adoration; and showed he infinitely deserved it, by answering and acting with the power and goodness of the Creator and Saviour of all. St. Chrysostom, that excellent writer and sound critic, judiciously admires and sets forth the force and majesty of this expression, "I will, be thou clean!" *Θελω, καθαρισθῆναι*, is parallel to that grand original, so celebrated and admired by Longinus himself, *Γενθθῆναι Θεω*.—"I will; be thou clean," spoken by Christ to the leper, was the voice, not of man,

man, but God; who “spake and it was done; who commanded, and it came to pass.”

The grandest and most majestic figures in Longinus come nothing near to the sublimity of that awful address of the blessed Jesus, when he chides the sea, and hushes its boisterous waves into an immediate calm. *Σιωπα, πεΦιμωσο.* The waters heard that voice, which commanded universal nature into being. They sunk at his command, who has the sole privilege of saying to that unruly element, “Hitherto shalt thou go, and no farther; here shall thy proud waves be stopped.”

The sacred classics are more noble and sublime upon any subject than the other classics; but never do the Greek and Latin authors look so out of countenance upon the comparison, as when the discourse is upon God and divine subjects. No human wit could discover the mysteries of heaven, or discourse on them with an adequate and proper majesty of language.

Pindar, who speaks of divine persons and things with as much reverence and emphasis as any writer in the Pagan world, says of God, that he can catch the eagle on the wing, and out-strip the sea-dolphin. Which is a pretty thought, and neatly dressed; but how trilling and insignificant, if compared with that solid and glorious piece of sublime—“God, who quickens the dead, and calls things that are not, as things that are!”

All the lofty descriptions of the glory and dazzling dress of the inferior gods, and the messengers of Jupiter and Juno, are nothing comparable to that majestic description of the angel who descended from heaven to wait upon his Lord’s triumphant resurrection, though it is made up in a very few words, and those as plain as any in the language: “His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.”

There is some resemblance in two or three particulars betwixt a noble passage of Sophocles and one in St Paul to Timothy. In the first, among other fine expressions, the chorus addresses Jupiter in those beautiful terms:

*Αγχιως χρονω δυνατας
Καλεχχεις Ολυμπε
Μαρμαροεσσαν αγλιαν.*

The sacred writer gives the majesty of God the titles of ο μακαριος και μονος δυνατης — ο μονος εχων αθανασιαν, Φως οικων απροσβλου. Μονος in both places raises the character which the apostle gives, infinitely superior to *αγχιως χρονω δυνατης*.

—The

—The angels and ministers of God (who are less than the least drop, compared to that immense ocean of essence and eternity) are equal to the Jupiter of Sophocles; they don't grow old by time. But the only potentate, who only has immortality, is the incommunicable prerogative of the King of kings, and Lord of lords, the Father of men and angels. And to possess the purest light of Olympus is no way comparable to inhabiting light unapproachable.

The description of the majesty of Jupiter in the first Iliad has, as Mr. Pope justly observes, something as grand and venerable as any thing either in the theology or poetry of the Pagans. Nothing in the classics is superior to the original; nor was any passage in any author ever better translated than this by the great man above mentioned.

Ἦ, καὶ κυκνεῖσιν ὄφρυσιν νεύσει Κρονίων,
 Ἀμβροσίαι δ' ἄρα χεῖται ἐπερρωσάντο ἀνακίῳ
 Κραδίῳ ἀπ' ἀθανάτοιο, μέγαν δ' ἐλελίξεν Ὀλύμπου.

He spoke, and awful bends his fable brows,
 Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod;
 The ramp of fate, and sanction of the God:
 High heav'n with trembling the dread signal took,
 And all Olympus to the centre shook.

Set Homer's sublime, adorned with all the pomp of good words, heightened with all the loftiness of grand and ravishing numbers, and place St. John's description of the appearance of the judge of the world near to it, only expressed in a few plain and vulgar words, and adorned with its own native simplicity; and all the brightness of the poet will vanish, and be quite absorbed by the dazzling and rapturous glory of the Apostle. What is bending of fable brows, shaking of ambrosial curls; and Olympus trembling to the centre, to the heaven and the earth flying away before the face of the Son of God? I say no more: to enlarge upon and pretend to illustrate this passage would be presumption, as well as lost labour. Ὅτι ἀποπροσώπε εφύγεν ἡ γῆ καὶ ὁ οὐρανός, is so plain, that it does not need, so majestic and grand, that it disdains, commentary and paraphrase.

THE history of the man possessed with legion is described by the evangelists in such lively and glowing colours, such a clear propriety of expression, that the attentive reader has all that glorious scene of wonder and astonishment full in his eye

eye and mind ; and feels in his breast a perpetual and quick succession of different passions, which keep up his concern and attention.

Who is not shocked with horror and trembling at the first appearance of the raging demoniac, who was so fierce, that no chains or fetters could hold him ; and so mischievous, that he turned the place he haunted into a desert ?

But then how agreeably are our thoughts relieved ? what an exultation and triumph of joy succeeds, when you see the dreadful possessed creature prostrate at the feet of the mild and humble Jesus ; and the man's infernal tormentors acknowledging our Lord to have sovereign command over all the powers of hell and darkness ?

Then with what religious awe, reverence, and tenderness of devotion do we behold the mild Saviour of the human race commanding the infernal legion to quit their possession of the miserable sufferer ! With what sincere good-will and charity does every Christian reader congratulate the poor man's happy deliverance ? With what pleasure does he see him sitting at the feet of his great deliverer decently clothed, serene, and restored to perfect soundness of mind ? Next our compassion for the man is moved, when he is afraid of parting from Jesus ; and fervently prays he may attend his sacred person, fearing, it is probable, lest when he left his good benefactor, his old tormentors would again assault him. In the conclusion, we are entirely satisfied, admire and adore the wisdom and goodness of our blessed Saviour, who at once delivered the poor man from all his fears, by giving him a commission to preach to his acquaintance and neighbours, those heavenly doctrines which destroy the interest of the devil ; and secure all that believe and practise them from the power and malice of all the apostate spirits of darkness.

THE whole narrative of Lazarus is adorned with a great number of the most moving and lively circumstances ; which are to the mind as the most beautiful and diversified landscape to the eye. 'Tis a master-piece and great pattern of genuine sense and eloquence. There is a peculiar pomp and solemnity in the account of this miracle, which was immediately preparatory to that of our Saviour's raising himself the third day after his miraculous submission to death and the grave.

Our

Our Saviour's stay two days after the message, and pathetic address of the mourning sisters, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick"—kept them a little longer in suspense and grief; but it shewed his perfect wisdom and goodness, as it made the wonderful work more remarkable and conducive to the conviction of the spectators.

If the Son of God had immediately gone and recovered Lazarus of his sickness, the miracle would not have had so many witnesses, nor have been entirely free from objections, which at least would have lessened it: but to raise a person four days dead, offensive and reduced to corruption, was a surprize of unutterable joy to his friends; removed all possible suspicion of confederacy, silenced the peevishness of caviling, and triumphed over all the obstinacy and impudence of prejudice.

How amiable is the modesty and wisdom of our meek Saviour, when he says, "Lazarus is asleep, and I go to awake him!" He was not pleased to say, Lazarus is dead, and I go to raise him up—to prevent any appearance of vanity or ostentation. Great words are an improper introduction to such astonishing actions.—They sufficiently shew and magnify themselves. With what mildness and compassionate condescension does the Saviour of the world bear the peevishness and infirmities of his apostles, and cure the mistakes of Martha, cherishing her weak faith, and by steps raising her to the acknowledgment of his divinity!

What a solemn concern, what tenderness of devotion possess every Christian heart, when he attends the ever adorable friend of mankind to the place, where Lazarus lay, among the mourning Jews and his disconsolate friends, the hospitable Martha, and the devout Mary!

He, who had all the tenderness and goodness, without the faults of human nature, he consoles and sympathizes with the distressed mourners with all the inward concern, and outward expression of undissembled grief. "He was troubled, groaned in spirit, and wept." After this one cannot but pity the weakness of those orthodox Christians, who were offended at a passage parallel to this in St. Luke, and would have struck it out of the canon, as a dishonour to our blessed Saviour, as Epiphanius relates the thing. How meanly do we think of the affected formality, and unnatural unconcern of the stoics, when we read of the wisest and divinest person that ever appeared in the world—*Ἐδὲ πύσεν. ὁ Ἰησους?* This spoils all the pointed and smart sayings of Seneca upon the unconcern and courage of his wife

wife man; and makes us in love with that saying of the sinner, so full of good nature and good sense:

Lachrymæ nostri pars optima sensus.

But after we have been highly pleased and entertained with our Saviour's most genuine expressions of friendship, tenderness, and generous compassion, with what wonder and devout awe are we struck, when we hear that royal and godlike command, "Lazarus, come forth!" With what surprize and amazement do we view the astonished prisoner of the grave in his funeral attire start up at that voice which all nature obeys! Before, Jesus expressed all the tenderness of the most generous, and prudence of the wisest of men; here he claims his full authority; speaks and acts with the majesty of the God of gods, and declares himself the resurrection, the life, and the truth.

THE eighth chapter to the Romans is a noble piece of divine eloquence, full of the sublime mysteries of Christianity, adorned and strengthened with the most emphatical and beautiful figures. From the tenth to the twentieth verse there is a perpetual variation of person. He tells them of their high privileges, in having the Spirit of God inhabiting and inspiring them, which would be their present security against the enemies of their salvation, and a precious pledge of a happy resurrection of the body, and immortality. In the next verse he joins himself in the exhortation, and equal concern he had in leading that good and Christian life, which such precious promises and privileges require, which makes advice more easy and acceptable. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Having thus encouraged and prepared them, he alters the manner of his speech, and immediately addresses to them, and presses them to purity of life, and Christian mortification with boldness, and a charitable vehemence. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if thro' the spirit, ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." How wonderfully does the eloquent and devout apostle inlarge upon the inestimable blessing and honour that he and all sound Christians enjoyed thro' the counsel and comfort of that Divine Spirit, which inhabits the chaste minds and bodies of Christians as acceptable temples? How noble is that amplification, how exact, how charming the opposition! "The Spirit itself beareth witness

“witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him.” Whether we take the nineteenth and following verses to be meant of the rest of mankind, besides those who had embraced the faith of Christ, or of the inanimate creation, to which the actions and passions of the rational are by the best authors with great vigour and vehemence applied; the expression is proper, and very significant, the metaphor clear and sprightly. But if they be applied to the latter (which, in my opinion, avoids several difficulties attending the other interpretation) it is the noblest prosopopœia in the world. So great is the salvation purchased by Christ, so infinite the glory of the resurrection, and the enjoyments and triumphs of the future state, that even the inanimate world is described as an order of rational beings, lifting up their heads with eager expectations of that glorious day, and hoping to share in the joys which will attend the renovation of all things; and to be admitted into the full and most glorious liberty of the sons of God.

In the twenty-ninth and two next verses, all the steps and methods, in which the goodness and wisdom of God trains mankind up to the full enjoyment of the salvation purchased by Jesus Christ, are represented in a natural and most charming gradation, which raises up all good Christians to the highest preferments and inward glories of heaven. “Whom he foreknew, them he appointed to be conformed to the image of his Son; and whom he appointed, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Then, from the consideration of these immense favours conferred on good Christians, the apostle draws a conclusion in the form of a vigorous interrogation: “What shall we then say to these things?” We need no farther assurance, no stronger arguments for patience under our sufferings for the gospel; and waiting with joyful hope of our happiness in the completion of all the promises, and consummation of all the blessings designed for us.—“If God be for us, who can be against us?” We are secured of the friendship and protection of God, which will effectually guard us against fear and danger: and render all the malice and efforts of enemies on earth and in hell, impotent and ineffectual. And does not this divine author, in the next verse, further assure all Christians of their happy interest in the father of heaven,

heaven, and the certainty of their supply of all things really good for them, from his care and bounty, by the most convincing and endearing argument that ever was used, or can be applied and addressed to creatures capable of being persuaded and obliged? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" A way of reasoning that at once convinces the judgment, and captivates the heart; that raises all the tender and devout passions that can work in an human soul; and is a resistless motive to the firmest hope, most flowing gratitude,—to all the duties and graces of Christianity. There is a great emphasis in the words "spared not his own son," which cannot with any propriety, be applied to any mere man, or most glorious creature whatever. "His own Son" is by way of eminence or distinction from those that were sons of God by adoption, and the grace of his own natural son: and the Father not sparing him, supposes an antecedent relation of the highest kindness and most sacred endearment. Then the sacred writer with great rapidity and fervour of spirit, proceeds to a great variety of triumphant interrogations, which imply full assurance that nothing can separate Christians from the love of Christ their Saviour. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" What can be added to this select enumeration of temporal evils, or things terrible in this world?

So far are all things dreadful to human nature from being able to alienate us from our Saviour, that in all of them we are more than conquer; a vigorous word of noble assurance comprising the sense of a full period. It is well explained by Dr. Whitby on the place: For we not only bear, but glory in tribulation, Rom. 5. 3. We are in deaths often, but still delivered from death, 2 Cor. 1. 10. And as the sufferings of Christ abound towards us, so also doth our consolation under them abound through Christ.

To conclude this most divine and rapturous portion of Scripture, St. Paul expresses our unalienable and eternal interest in the merits and goodness of our blessed Saviour in the affirmative way, by mentioning every thing that might be a danger of temptation: and when he has enumerated all things that possibly might tend to withdraw us from our duty, and ruin us in the favour of our immortal friend; by a very eloquent and fervent redundance of speech, he adds, "or, any other creature," any other thing or being

in universal nature. What stedfastness of faith, what joyfulness of hope, what conscioufness of integrity, what rapturous flights of divine love are here expressed in the most exalted suitable eloquence?—"For I am persuaded that
 "neither fear of death, nor hope of life, nor angels of
 "satan, nor princes, nor potentates, nor sufferings present, nor sufferings to come, nor heights of preferment,
 "nor depths of disgrace, nor any other creature or thing,
 "shall be able to separate us from the love of God in
 "Christ Jesus our Lord."—

WE have in the fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians the fullest account of the resurrection of the dead that the whole scriptures afford, plainly described, strongly proved; ennobled with the most august mysteries, and grand sentiments: and adorned with all the beauty of composition, choice of words, vigour, variety, and magnificence of figures.

It is like the richest, and most delicious paradise in the world, that flourishes with every beauty which the earth, under the most favourable influences of the heavens, can produce; and all the rich and salutary fruits which can regale the palate, and preserve the health of mankind. As to the figures, which are the least beauties of this noble discourse, they are more numerous and lively than in any piece of eloquence of equal length in any language. Here you have the metaphor with all its sprightliness, and clear allusion: the *protopopœia*, or creation of a person, with all its surprize and wonder: interrogation with its most pressing vehemence and rapidity: amplification, with its unexhausted stories, and entertaining variety: repetition, with all its emphasis, quickness of *tura* and charm of harmony: the *epiphonema*, or concluding remark, with all its soundness of sense and sagacity, all its dexterity and happiness of application. The great apostle's entrance upon his subject, and address to his converts, who began to waver, is very prudent and engaging, set off in the choicest words, and most persuasive expressions. He tells them, that he declares no other gospel than what they received, stood in, and should be saved by, if they persevered in the sound faith. You received it not only by words, but *râtions*, signs and wonders; it was delivered to you as a depositum, or sacred pledge, which ought to be kept inviolable and undiminished; because it is of infinite value, and every strict account must
 be

be given of it at the last day. When the good man magnifies his own labours, to keep up a credit against a faction in his church, who endeavour to blemish it, and defeat his ministry, he takes off the offence of self-commendation by the humblest and sincerest acknowledgments of his former faults; by taking all the shame of his bigotry and spight to Christianity upon himself; and ascribing his pre-eminence above others, and his glorious success in preaching the gospel, which before he laid waste, to the mighty power and free grace of God.

Then the noble champion of Christianity produces his variety of strong reasons to establish this fundamental doctrine of it, upon which all our precious hopes rest: which the devil attacks with all his engines, and is the grand subject of the scoffs and ridicule of the Corinthian and other Pagan philosophers, inspired and deluded by that malicious impostor.—What a close chain and connexion of arguments make up this very learned and elaborate discourse! How do reasons upon reasons arise; and one beauty and wonder closely succeed another! There is full satisfaction in the strength of his reasoning, and perpetual pleasure in the variety of it. The apostle, says an eloquent writer on this subject, with a resistless force and conviction, proves, what was utterly abhorrent to the Heathen philosophers, that filth and rottenness are the preparations to glory; and dust and ashes the seed-plots of immortality. What strong, what joyous assurances does he give us, that our grave will not so much be the conclusion as the interruption of our lives; a short interval between the present and the future; and a passage to convey us from this life, to one of glory, and eternal enjoyment!

With what becoming seriousness and solemnity does the great man introduce his discovery of the most sublime and important mysteries that ever were revealed to angels or men! In what an awful manner he raises their attention and reverence! “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven. Behold! I shew you a mystery.” How many sublime and glorious doctrines does this illuminated man discover in one breath! The order of the resurrection: those who die in Christ shall rise next to their master; by virtue of whose resurrection they rise to eternal bliss. The end of Christ’s mediatorial kingdom: the agility, brightness, and glory of celestial or resurrection bodies. The different degrees of glory in persons differently qualified. That some Christians shall sur-
vive

vive at the day of judgment, and undergo a change equivalent to death, and be transformed in an instant into unutterable brightness and dignity. Those awful expressions, *εν ελθρω, εν ριπη οφθαλμου, εν τη εσχρατη σαλπιγγι (σαλπισει γαρ) και οι νεκροι εγερθησονται αθηαρτοι, και ημεις αλλαγησομεθα*, strike every attentive reader with surprize and trembling.

Towards the close, the apostle, having prepared the way, and gained authority by a firm and resistless chain of arguments, exhorts his Corinthians to suitable faith and practice with a noble earnestness; and reproves them with a charitable severity. "Awake to righteousness"—Awake and be sober (so the emphatical word signifies) for it looks like drunkenness and distraction in any one by infidelity and vice to extinguish such glorious hopes, such joyous expectations, which are only supported by this grand article of the resurrection.

In pursuance of this most rational and resistless discourse, St. Paul, in the fervour of his spirit, and firmness of his faith, breaks out into a song of victory and triumph over death and the grave; by him described as dreadful tyrants, armed, and long victorious over human race. He represents the monsters as already subdued, and treads on the necks of those universal conquerors. Then he passes on to adore our blessed deliverer, the great captain of our salvation, and raise a trophy of gratitude to the Lord of Hosts, the only giver of all victory, the resurrection and the life; who has brought immortality to light by his gospel, and triumphed over hell and death, even upon the cross.

Then how just, how moving and emphatical is the practical conclusion from this doctrine? "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable," where we have two strong words to the same sense, to express the importance of the doctrine, and increase the vehemence of the exhortation.—"Always abounding in the work of the Lord." He did not barely say, working, or doing the work of the Lord, but abounding in it; governing your own souls and bodies by an unblameable conduct, a pure and strict discipline; serving God with sincerity and fervency of spirit, and promoting the interest of mankind with indefatigable diligence, and unceasing labours of love. What labour can be a trouble, nay, what labour can be otherwise than the highest pleasure to him, who is assured that his Saviour will "change his vile body, that it may be like unto his own glorious body," will give him perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul, and bestow on him the inestimable

able reward of an immortal life of the sweetest and most happy enjoyments?

THAT passage of St. Paul, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, is a consummate piece of sublimity, having both grandeur and inexpressible elevation in its thought; true emphasis and magnificence in its language, and the noblest numbers and harmony in its contexture or composition. Never were the same number of words more happily and harmoniously placed together. Turn them into any feet that prosody can bear, and they must fall into excellent and well-sounding numbers. The long and short syllables are perfectly well mixed, and duly tempered, if you measure them thus: *Καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν—αιωνιον βαρος δοξης*, the numbers will be grand and noble. Every one sees how exact and beautiful the opposition is betwixt “affliction—want, disgrace,” and “pains;” and “glory,”—which in the sacred language is every thing honourable, great and desirable; and between the present “light affliction for a moment;” and the far more exceeding and eternal weight “of glory.”

Upon this passage a sharp commentator says, What an influence St. Paul's Hebrew had upon his Greek, is every where visible. “Kabod” in Hebrew signifies to be heavy and to be glorious; St. Paul in the Greek joins them, and says, “Weight of glory.” And does not the Hebraism add strength and beauty to the phrase? Is it any trespass against propriety of language, and rational grammar, to put together an assemblage of agreeable ideas to invigorate the style, and clear the sense? The ancient and modern translators sweat and labour to render this passage, are forced to use irregular expressions, and words and phrases which exceed all comparison. Their efforts tho' laudable, have very little effect; they sink infinitely below the astonishing original.

The pleasure which the learned and devout reader receives from the brightness of the metaphor, the harmony of the construction, and the exactness of the beautiful opposition, is entirely swallowed up by the sublimity of the thought. *Καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αιωνιον βαρος δοξης*, take him off from considering the lesser beauties. He is agitated with variety of devout passions; his heart beats, and he sheds tears: he believes, and wonders; his joy and gratitude are mixt with fear and trembling: that God thro' his dear and eternal Son should be so gracious to human race, lapsed into wickedness

wickedness and rebellion, as to prepare for them such immensity of honour and happiness, as no words or thoughts can reach. Here invention is confounded, and eloquence struck dumb. In the most celebrated trifles of earth it is easy to over-magnify, and use hyperboles; but in the glories of heaven there is no place, no possibility for hyperbole. Pass from one strength and loftiness of language to another; speak with the tongues of angels and men; go thro' all the most triumphant topics of amplification, and you must still for ever fall short of the infinite greatness and dignity of the thing. It is inconceivable, unutterable joy and happiness, eternal admiration and rapture!

FROM the twelfth verse of the sixth chapter of the first epistle to St. Timothy to the end, we have an admirable piece of eloquence, and clean composition, made up of the best-sounding and happily-significant words, emphatically expressing very solid and sublime thoughts, which is naturally and easily divided into four periods as good and full as any in Tully or Demosthenes. Would you entertain yourself with the choice delicacies of sweet and harmonious structure? Diligently read that divine lecture of morality in the twelfth chapter of the Romans. There the members of the periods answer one another with a very agreeable variety of sentiments, and Christian doctrines delivered in a few pure and proper words; and a wonderful smoothness and equality of numbers, without nicety or affectation, easier than Isocrates, rapid and vehement as Demosthenes. The great eloquence of this chapter, and its quick and accurate turns, the excellent critic St. Austin admires, and after him Erasmus; who says in conclusion of his just encomium, that no music can be sweeter. That fine passage of the Apostle to the Thessalonians (1 epistle, verse 14) is as admirable for the purity of its moral, and diffusiveness of its charitable meaning; as for the elegance and force of its words, and the delicate turn of its structure. The union of the words within each comma or stop, and their mutual relation and assistance, is exquisitely proper and natural. The noble period runs on with strength and smoothness, and ends close and full: both the ear and judgment are satisfied. Let a man of discernment and taste in these matters diligently read these passages selected out of the sacred writers, with Ephesians 3. 18, 19, 20, 21.—2 Peter 3. 16, 17, 18. and numerous others which he himself will readily observe, and he will

will receive the highest entertainment that the mind can have from true grandeur of thought, and nobleness of expression; from a bold and free construction, and the harmony of the sweetest and best sounding numbers.

ST. MATTHEW has all the characters of a good historian, truth and impartiality, clearness of narration, propriety and gravity of language, order of time well observed.—He is grave without formality or stiffness; plain with dignity; and agreeably copious and full in his relation of our Lord's most divine discourses and healing works of wonder.

ST. MARK follows the steps of St. Matthew, and sometimes interprets and explains him. Like his great master St. Peter he has a comprehensive, clear, and beautiful brevity. His style comes up to what the noblest critics demand of an historian, that his style be majestic, and grave, as well as simple and unaffected. His narration should be animated, short, and clear; and so as often to outrun the impatience of the reader. He sometimes uses the repetition of words of the same original, and like sound, which the most vigorous authors do: he does it sparingly, and whenever he does it, to me it appears very graceful and becoming. This divine writer, notwithstanding his brevity, makes several noble reflections, and brings in many curious remarks and circumstances, which are omitted by the other evangelists.—In short, the gospel of St. Mark, considering the copiousness and majesty of the subject, the variety of great actions, and their surprising circumstances, the number of sound morals and curious remarks comprised in it, is the shortest and clearest, the most marvellous and satisfactory history in the whole world.

ST. LUKE is pure, copious, and flowing in his language, and has a wonderful and most entertaining variety of select circumstances in his narration of our Saviour's divine actions. He acquaints us with numerous passages of the evangelical history not related by any other evangelist. St. Trencous particularly mentions many parables, relations, accounts of times and persons omitted by all the rest. 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. The narrative of the acts of the Apostles is perspicuous and noble; the discourses inserted emphatical, eloquent, and sublime. He is justly applauded for his politeness and elegance by some critics; who seem to magnify him in order to depreciate the rest of the evangelists; when yet it is plain he has as many Hebraisms and peculiarities as any one of them; which they are charged with as faults and blemishes of style.

THE style and character of St. John is grave and simple, short and perspicuous.—As to his language, it is plain and sometimes low, but he reaches to the heaven of heavens in the sublimity of his notions.—The venerable plainness, the majestic gravity and beautiful simplicity of this writer will always by men of judgment be valued above all the pomp of artificial eloquence, and gaudy ornaments of sophistry and the declamatory style.

This inspired writer has frequent repetitions to press his important doctrines with more closeness and vehemence. He often takes one thing two ways, both in the affirmative and negative. “He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life.” This part of his character, it is hoped, may escape the severe animadversion of the critics, because the politest and noblest writers of Greece use the same repetitions.

This glorious gospel completes the evangelical history, and enriches it with several most heavenly discourses and miracles of the world's Saviour, not recorded by any of the three divine writers before him. The five first chapters give an account of his works of wonder before the Baptist's imprisonment. He enlarges upon the eternal existence of our Saviour, and gives us a most edifying and delightful account of his conversation for many days upon earth with his apostles and select disciples after his victorious and triumphant resurrection.

The style and terms, the spirit and sentiments of his two last letters, are not only alike, but often the very same as in the first. Every line is animated with the spirit of unfeigned charity, recommended in divers ways, and by various reasons; which is the peculiar character of this beloved disciple, and the great glory of Christianity.

The Revelation is writ much in the same style with the gospel and epistles, and entertains and instructs the reader with variety of Christian morals, and sublime mysteries.

From

From this noble book may be drawn resistless proofs of our Saviour's eternal existence; the incommunicable attributes of eternity and infinite power are there plainly and directly applied to Jesus, the Son of God.

It is in vain to look for more lofty descriptions or majestic images than you find in this sacred book. Could the acclamations and hallelujahs of God's household be expressed with more propriety and magnificence than by the shouts of vast multitudes, the roaring of many waters, and the dreadful sound of the loudest and strongest thunders?

And how transporting an entertainment must it be to the blessed, to have all the strength of sound tempered with all its sweetness and harmony, perfectly suited to their celestial ear, and most exalted taste! The description of the Son of God in the nineteenth chapter, from ver. 11 to 17, is in all the pomp and grandeur of language. We have every circumstance and particular that is most proper to express power and justice, majesty and goodness; to raise admiration, and high pleasure, corrected with awe.

WE have already had several occasions to speak of the great St. Paul; and what can be said worthy of him? How shall we begin, or where shall we end? Shall we admire this noble preacher and champion of the cross for his perfect knowledge of religion; for the copiousness and variety of his style; for the loftiness of his thought; for the dexterity of his address; for the wonderful extent of his genius; or the more admirable comprehension of his charity? He has every charm of eloquence in his writings; and, when there is occasion, shews himself master of every style.

Those transpositions, embarrassments, and as some people call them, inconsequences, which are found in some of his epistles, proceed, as St. Trencous justly observes, from the quickness of his arguings, the fluency of his language, and the divine zeal and impetuosity of his spirit.

Those places, which incompetent judges esteem faulty and solecistical, are generally some of his noblest and sublimest passages; and proceed from his vehemence, great skill in the Old Testament, the plenty and vivacity of his thoughts, We have parallel forms of speech in the noblest Greek and Roman authors; and they are so far from being prejudicial or disagreeable to a capable reader, that they only raise his curiosity, and sharpen his diligence; which will always be rewarded with discoveries of beauties, and improvement in

the most admirable and useful notions. Sometimes St. Paul drops in the objections of others, and gives his answers without any change in the scheme of his language to give notice, as Mr. Locke justly observes. And the greatest masters in the two noblest languages in the world often do the same; particularly Demosthenes, Tully, Horace, Anacreon.

IN the divine epistle of St. James are to be found, vigorous and expressive words, a beautiful simplicity, lively figures, natural and engaging thoughts, and solid eloquence altogether worthy of an apostolical pen.

Is there to be found a more vigorous and beautiful description of the mischiefs and malignity of an unbridled tongue than in the third chapter? Nothing upon the subject, that I have seen, comes up to the propriety and vigour of its single and compound words, the liveliness of the metaphor, the variety of its allusions and illustrations, the quickness of the terms, and the fitness and force of its comparisons. Is there not wonderful emphasis and eloquence in that sublime description of the bountiful and immutable nature of the blessed God? "Every good and perfect gift is from above, from the Father of lights." Salutary gifts do not, as stupid heretics pretend, proceed from the stars, but far above all worlds, from the Father of all the heavenly inhabitants, and Creator of all the heavenly bodies, with whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning. The terms are exactly proper and astronomical, according to the appearances of things, and the common notions of mankind. Upon this appearance and received opinion, the sun, the prince of the planetary heavens, has his parallaxes or changes, appears different in the east, in his meridian height, and decline to the west. He has his annual departures from us, which are the solstices or *τροπαι*. according to these departures he casts different shades. But God is the unchangeable sun that does not rise or set, come nearer to, or go farther from any part or space of the universe; an eternal unapproachable light, without any variation, eclipse, or mixture of shade.

ST. PETER's style expresses the noble vehemence and fervour of his spirit, the full knowledge he had of Christianity, and the strong assurance he had of the truth and certainty of his

his doctrine; and he writes with the authority of the first man in the college of the Apostles. He writes with that quickness and rapidity of style, with that noble neglect of some of the formal consequences and nicety of grammar, still preserving its true reason, and natural analogy (which are always marks of a sublime genius) that you can scarce perceive the pauses of his discourse, and distinction of his periods.

A noble majesty and becoming freedom is what distinguishes St. Peter: a devout and judicious person cannot read him without solemn attention, and awful concern. The conflagration of this lower world, and future judgment of angels and men, in the third chapter of the second epistle, is described in such strong and terrible terms, such awful circumstances, that in the description we see the planetary heavens and this our earth wrapped up with devouring flames, hear the groans of an expiring world, and the crashes of nature tumbling into universal ruin.—

I cannot, with some critics, find any great difference betwixt the style of the first and second epistles; it is to me no more than we find in the style of the same persons at different times. There is much the same energy and clear brevity; the same rapid run of language, and the same commanding majesty in them both. Take them together, and they are admirable for significant epithets, and strong compound words; for beautiful and sprightly figures, adorable and sublime doctrines; pure and heavenly morals, expressed in a chaste, lively, and graceful style.

ST. JUDE, says Origen, writ an epistle in few lines indeed, but full of vigorous expressions of heavenly grace. He briefly and strongly represents the detestable doctrines and practices of the impure Gnostics and followers of Simon Magus; and reproves those profligate perverters of sound principles, and patrons of lewdness (which are generally the same persons) with a just indignation and severity; and at the same time exhorts all sound Christians, with a genuine apostolical charity, to have tender compassion for these deluded wretches; and vigorously to endeavour to reclaim them from the ways of hell, and pluck them as brands out of the fire.

The Apostle takes the sense, and frequently the words of St. Peter's second chapter of his second epistle; sometimes he leaves out some of St. Peter's words, sometimes he enlarges and gives a different turn to the thought.

Both

Both the divine writers are very near akin in subject, style, vehemence, and just indignation against impudence and lewdness; against insidious underminers of chastity, and debauchers of sound principles. They answer one another in the New Testament, as the prophecy of Obadiah and part of the forty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah do in the Old.

There are no nobler amplifications in any author than in these two divine writers, when they describe the numerous villainies of the Gnostics in a variety of instances; which they severely brand, emphatically expose, and yet happily express in all the cleanness and chastity of language.

Sacred Classics, passim.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

BOOK

B O O K IV.

Excellence and Facility of the original Languages of the Holy Scriptures, with various Instances of great Attachment to and knowledge of those inestimable Writings.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

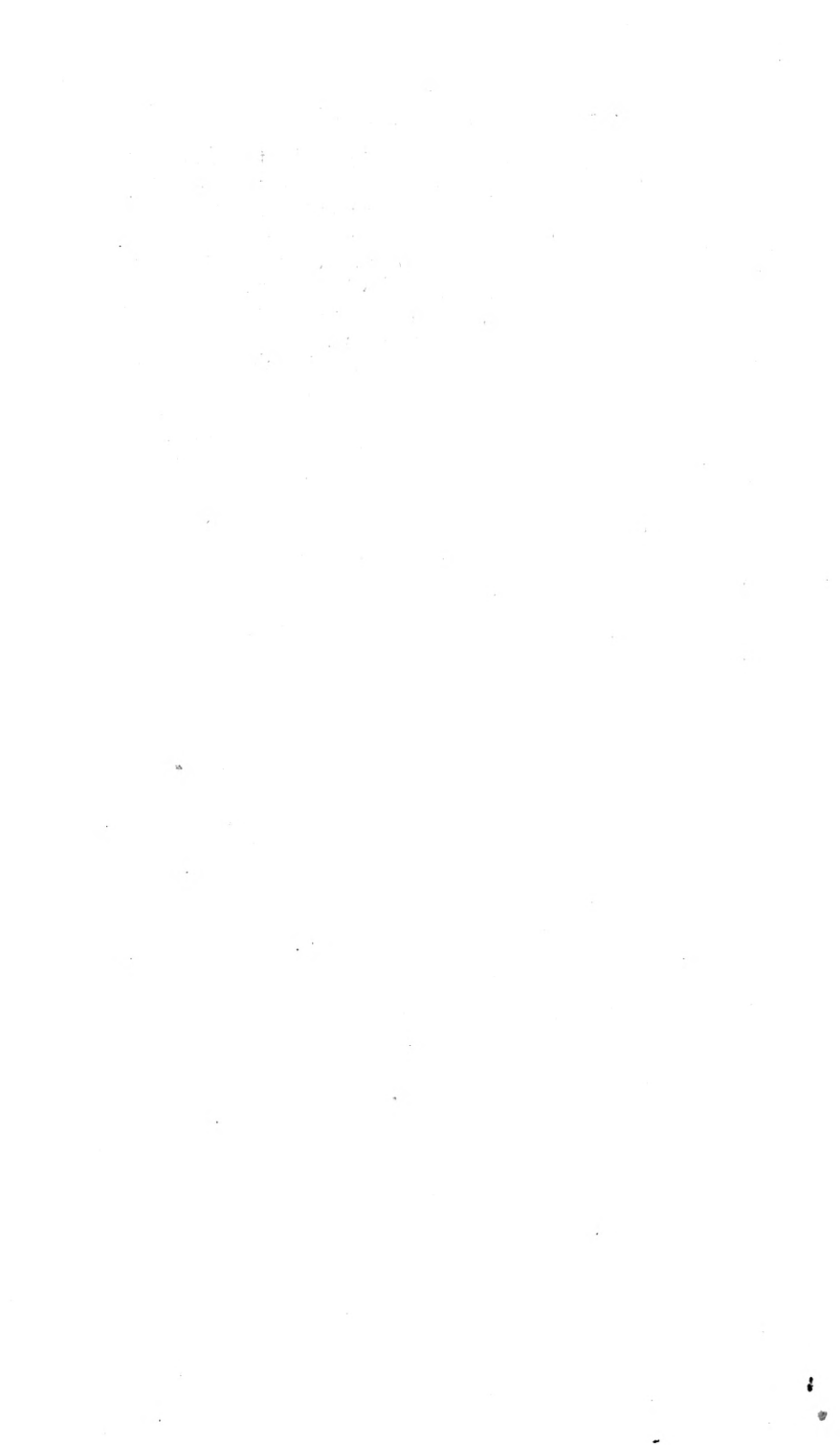
IT was on the revival of letters, and by the study of the Greek and Hebrew Languages especially, that the Reformation took place in various parts of Europe. A cloud of learned men was raised up by Providence, who, with great diligence and assiduity, cultivated the study of sacred, as well as profane literature. The consequence was then, as it always will be, under similar circumstances, light broke in upon them, darkness and error were dissipated from their minds, and they became so many happy, and highly honoured instruments, in illuminating the world. This reformation, however, though great and important in itself, was then, and still continues to be, very partial and defective. And, if at any time it becomes more general and compleat, it must be, I apprehend, by a reviving attention to the Holy Bible. Nor will the Bible, humanly speaking, ever be universally received and respected, but by a more general application to the original languages, especially among the clergy and gentry of the land. For this purpose a foundation must be laid in our grammar schools. Till then, the knowledge of the original language of the Old Testament must, from the very nature of things, be extremely partial and confined. No person in Switzerland, we are told, can be admitted into Holy Orders, who is not tolerably well versed in the Hebrew, as well as the Greek and Latin tongues. A statute of the same kind in this country might be attended with the happiest effects. It would necessarily turn the attention of the masters of our classical schools to that language, and of consequence to the study of the Old Testament, in conjunction with

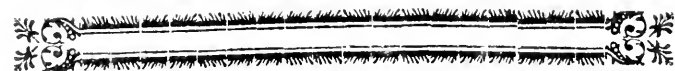
with the New; and then the pious and elegant labours of a Lowth, in that way, would become much more eminently and extensively useful, than they are at present. It will be seen, with a degree of conviction not easy to be resisted, in the following collection, how very excellent, entertaining, and easy, the two languages are, in which the Holy Scriptures are, principally, written; and that considerable numbers of both sexes have applied themselves, with much pleasure and success, to the cultivation of them. Such persons are, at all times, the ornament and blessing of their own, and the boast and glory of every other age.

Translations, indeed, in all common and ordinary cases, do well supply the place of the original text, and are such helps and benefits as can never be enough and sufficiently prized. But our own translation, and all other translations of the Bible, or indeed of any other book, however accurate and excellent, must, from the very nature of the thing, fall vastly short of the original, in spirit and elegance. If, therefore, through our indolence and want of taste, or rather, I might say, if through our perverseness and want of piety, we are contented to drink of the foul and muddy streams, when we might quench our parched and thirsty souls at the pure and limpid fountain of everlasting truth, I tremble for the account we shall make to the great Author of our being when he comes to judge the world in righteousness! Indeed he hath told us beforehand what will be the doom of all such neglecters and despisers of his benefits: “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 sowed; 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, didst thou know that I reap where I have not sowed, and gather where I have not sowed? 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 that 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.”

A single hour each day uniformly spent in the study of God's Word, would enable the most common and moderate understanding, to read the Old Testament in Hebrew, and the New in Greek, in a much less time than is usually supposed; and would afford a degree of pleasure and satisfaction to the mind, even in the acquisition, which is vastly superior to all sensual enjoyments. And how many hours do our gentry of both sexes, and many, even in the common and middling rank of people, spend in sloth, in idleness, and in folly, which might be admirably well employed in obtaining the original languages; or, at least, in reading and studying the excellent English version we are already favoured with. I wish they could be persuaded to believe (what is the truth) that the Bible is not only the most useful and instructive, but the most entertaining and delightful Book in the world, whether read in the original, or in our own common and venerable translation.

If other testimonies were wanting to the truth and excellency of the Holy Scriptures, besides those contained in the former part of this work, many of the most decided and honourable ones will be met with in this and the subsequent book.





SACRED LITERATURE.

B O O K IV.

Excellence and Facility of the original Languages of the Holy Scriptures, with various Instances of great Attachment to and Knowledge of those inestimable Writings.

I. E. CHAMBERS, ESQ.

THE Hēbrew language, called also absolutely Hebrew, is the language spoke by the Hebrews, who were so called, as is most probable, from Heber, the son of Shem, wherein all the books of the Old Testament are written; whence it is also called the holy or sacred language.

There is no piece, in all antiquity, written in pure Hebrew, beside the books of the Old Testament; and even some parts of those are in Chaldee.

The Hebrew, then, appears to be the most ancient of all the languages in the world; at least it is so with regard to us, who know of no older. Some learned men will have it the language spoken by Adam in Paradise; and that the saints will speak it in Heaven; alledging, that it is so concise, and yet so significant, so pathetic, and yet so free from levity, or bombast, as of all languages to approach nearest to that of spirits, who need no words for conveying their ideas to each other. Dr. Sharpe adopts the opinion, that the Hebrew was the original language; not indeed that the Hebrew is the unvaried language of our first parents; but that it was the general language of men at the dispersion; and however
it

it might have been improved and altered from the first speech of our first parents, it was the original of all the languages, or almost all the languages, or rather dialects, that have since arisen in the world.

The Hebrew, such as we have it in the Holy Scripture, is a very regular, analogical language, and is particularly so in its conjugations. Properly speaking, there is but one simple conjugation; but this is varied in each verb seven or eight different ways, which has the effect of so many different conjugations, and affords a great number of expressions, whereby to represent, under one single word, all the different modifications of a verb, and several ideas at once; which in the modern, and most of the ancient and learned languages, are expressible only by phrases.

The Greek language has a great copia or stock of words: its inflexions are as remarkable for their variety, as those of most of the other European tongues for their simplicity. It has three numbers, singular, dual, and plural, and abundance of tenses in its verbs, which makes a variety in discourse, prevents a certain dryness, which always accompanies a too great uniformity, and renders the language peculiarly fit for all kinds of verse.

Cyclopædia.

2. M. JUVENAL DE CARLENCAS.

THE knowledge of languages opens the entry to the sciences. The orientals, the inventors of the arts, satisfied themselves with speaking well their mother-tongue, without giving themselves the trouble to learn strange languages. The ancient Egyptians, in their happy ages, had no ambition to push themselves abroad; they found at home wherewithal to satisfy all their wants; and being constant observers of their maxims, they carefully avoided the introducing among them the language and manners of their neighbours, whom they looked upon as barbarians; and indeed they were less polite than they.

I except their neighbours the Hebrews, who with a noble simplicity were very polite: but they were a people in a special manner separated from all others; they abhorred the customs of the Gentiles; and despised their studies, where every thing favoured of idolatry. The book which God had put in their hands, was to them instead of all other books, and contained all that they ought and wanted to know. The language in which the book is written, is perfectly

fectly conform to the character of that people. It is simple in its words, all derived from a few roots, without any composition; it is rich, solid, and clear in its expressions, which give distinct ideas, and form sensible images: and, which seems to me very remarkable, this language suffered no change at all from Moses down to the time of the Babylonish captivity: then, that is, during the seventy years that the captivity lasted, the Hebrew ceased to be the common language of the Jews, who substituted in its room the Syriac or Chaldaic. Since their return from the captivity, there have been none but the learned, who understood Hebrew; besides, they abandoned the use of the ancient Hebrew letters (which the Samaritans kept) and took those of the Chaldeans, which we improperly call Hebrew letters.

History of the Belles Lettres and of the Arts and Sciences.

3. MONSIEUR LANCELLOT.

THE Hebrew is the most ancient of all languages, from whence the Greek itself derives its origin.—

The Greek contains in itself all the beauty and advantage of all other languages, whether for its perspicuity, strength, or sweetness. *New Method of learning Greek.*

4. EDWARD LEIGH, ESQ.

THE three learned languages were sanctified by Christ upon the cross. Latin is a common tongue, Greek a copious tongue, but Hebrew the most ancient and holy tongue. For antiquity, it is the tongue of Adam; for sanctity, the tongue of God. In this tongue God spake to the prophets and patriarchs; in this tongue the angels spake to men; in this tongue the prophets wrote the Old Testament; this tongue, as is thought, shall the saints speak in heaven.—

Those who bestow most pains in searching into the original languages, and are most skilful therein, must needs be the best textsmen and interpreters of Scripture.—

The two Testaments are the two paps of the church, from which we suck the sincere milk of the Word: one pap is not more like to another than are these two for substance; but for language they vary, as two breasts may differ in colour. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, which is the most ancient and maternal language; and the New Testament in Greek, a most copious and fertile tongue.—These two languages, the Hebrew and Greek, are the two eyes of a divine. *Critica Sacra, passim.*

5. REV. ANDREW SYMPSON.

THE learned who are skilful in Greek and Hebrew, have no small advantage of others. These see not but by the others eyes; those see with their own what is written in the Holy Scriptures. They hear the very same words which God once spake unto his people.—They can perceive the peculiar and native elegancy, the sweet allusions and cadences of words, with the rich and lofty expressions in the original, which the most exquisite translation doth not fully attain unto. In a word, whereas others can but drink of the waters which run through the channels of translations, they may have recourse unto the fountains themselves, drink at the spring head, where the waters must needs be both sweeter and clearer. For,

Dulcius }
Purius } ex ipso fonte bibuntur aquæ.

The streams in sweetness never can compare
With those pure waters which in fountains are.

The New Testament Greek is not of another sort, diverse, unlike, or different from other Greek authors, historians, poets, orators, &c. such as was every where spoken and understood. This Pfochenius proveth at large, shewing by an hundred instances extracted out of so many texts of the New Testament, that the very same words and phrases, which the evangelists and apostles there set down, may be found in Homer, Hesiod, Isocrates, Euripides, and other Greek authors. The New Testament Greek is so little that by one hour in the morning and evening, in one week it may be read over with ease and great delight. There are in all only 5242 Words. It being so short, and which may be so soon learned, why should it be so much neglected, so little looked on? If Alexander the Great did so highly prize Homer's Iliad, that he put it in a casket garnished with gold and pearl, carried it along with him as his Vade-mecum, and placed it every night under his pillow; in what high esteem ought Christians to have the New Testament? The heart of man is not able to conceive, neither the tongue of man or angel fully and sufficiently to express the excellency, dignity, worth and utility thereof.

Joseph Scaliger writes of himself, that in four months space he read over all the Greek poets, selected out of them what he thought most excellent, and composed also a grammar. What he did in so short a time, may not others do,

do, through God's blessing, in a longer? The Greek primitives are not so many, but that in a few weeks they may be got by heart, and through daily use become so familiar, that they may still be kept in memory.

Preface to Greek Lexicon.

6. JESUS THE SON OF SIRACH.

THE same things uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them: and not only these things, but the law itself, and the prophets, and the rest of the books have no small difference when they are spoken in their own language.

Prologue to Ecclesiasticus.

7. REV. JOHN PARKHURST.

I FRANKLY declare that though nothing scarcely is easier than to acquire the rudiments of the Hebrew language, when unembarrassed with points; yet that the study of it is a study for life; and that the Hebrew Scriptures, like all the other works of God, will, to the humble and diligent inquirer, be continually opening new scenes of information and delight.—

I can venture to assure any person of tolerable parts and abilities, that an application, properly directed, of two or three hours every day, to the Hebrew language, unadulterated with the Rabbinical points, will, in a few months, enable him to read in the original, with ease and delight, most parts of the Old Testament.

The learned reader will indulge me with one reflection on the great facility of the Hebrew grammar—a reflection indisputably true, and which I would especially recommend to the consideration of all those who are entrusted with that important charge, the education of youth. It is this: Since the Hebrew grammar, unsophisticated by Rabbinical points, is so very easy, simple and concise, and those of other languages so difficult, complex and tedious, so clogged with numerous rules and exceptions, it is evident that the most natural and rational method of teaching the learned languages would be to begin with the Hebrew. I now argue only from the greater easiness of the grammatical part, and do not urge, that Hebrew is certainly the common mother of Greek and Latin, if not of all other languages, all of which that I have any knowledge of carry manifest resemblance to their original parent: and the nearer the fountain, the purer the

stream; the more ancient and uncompounded the language, the more similar it is to the Hebrew.

And I beg it may be seriously and impartially weighed on this occasion, especially by the instructors of our youth, whether to begin with teaching that original and sacred language, and then to descend to the Greek or Latin, would not be a most likely method of making those, who have the benefit of a learned education, not only better grammarians and better scholars, but, what is of infinitely greater consequence, sounder divines, and better christians.—

Among the various attacks that have been of late years made upon divine revelation by open or disguised infidels, it is not to be wondered that the style of the inspired penmen of the New Testament has not escaped their malignity: and it must be owned that some well-meaning Christian writers have undesignedly contributed to propagate and confirm the notion of its barbarousness, by calling many forms of expression Hebraisms, which do indeed agree with the Hebrew idiom, but which are also found in the purest of the Greek classics, who cannot be supposed to have had any direct acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue.

In the apostolic age Greek was the most universally spoken and understood of any language upon earth. In all the eastern parts of the world it had undoubtedly received a strong tincture from the Hebrew and oriental tongues. And the books of the New Testament were written not only for the benefit of this or that particular church, or people, but of the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles. Such being, in the time of the apostles, the real state of the Greek language, and of mankind in respect to it, and to the evangelical writings, we may defy the utmost wit and malice of the enemies of God's revelation to point out a wiser method of communicating the Scriptures of the New Testament to the world, than that which the Holy Spirit has actually employed, namely, by causing those divine oracles to be penned in such a Greek style, which, at the same time, that it might in general be understood by every man who was acquainted with the Greek language, was peculiarly conformable to the idiom of the Jews, and of the eastern nations: and the adorable propriety of this latter circumstance will appear still more evident, if we reflect, that in the apostles days the world, both Jewish and Heathen, had been for about 300 years in possession of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament; the Greek of which translation did likewise greatly abound

abound in Hebrew and oriental forms of expression, many of which are adopted by the evangelical writers.

8. BISHOP LOWTH.

THE Greek beyond every other language is copious, flowing, and harmonious, possessed of a great variety of measures, of which the impression is so definite, the effect so striking, that if one should recite some lame and imperfect portion of a verse, or even enunciate hastily several verses in a breath, the numbers would nevertheless be clearly discernable: so that in these every variety essential to poetry and verse may be provided for almost at pleasure, without the smallest injury to the different metres. But in the Hebrew language the whole œconomy is different. Its form is simple above every other; the radical words are uniform, and resemble each other almost exactly; nor are the inflexions numerous, or materially different: whence we may readily understand, that its metres are neither complex, nor capable of much variety; but rather simple, grave, temperate; less adapted to fluency than dignity and force.—

It is scarcely, or not at all possible for any translation fully to represent the genuine sense of the sacred poets, and that delicate connection which for the most part exists between their poetical imagery, and the peculiar circumstances of their nation. This connection frequently depends upon the use of certain terms, upon a certain association between words and things, which a translation generally perplexes, and very frequently destroys. This, therefore, is not to be preserved in the most literal and accurate version, much less in any poetical translation, or rather imitation; though there are extant some not unsuccessful attempts of this kind. To relish completely all the excellencies of the Hebrew literature, the fountains themselves must be approached, the peculiar flavour of which cannot be conveyed by aqueducts, or indeed by any exertion of modern art.—

The Hebrew language, which was for a series of years in a manner obsolete and neglected, has been lately cultivated with such attention and application, and has obtained so respectable a place among the other branches of erudition, that it seems to have recovered, after a tedious exile, all its former dignity and importance. Proceed, therefore, Gentlemen, in the same career with the same ardour and success, and consider it as a work worthy of your utmost exertions to illustrate and cultivate this department of literature. You will find it no less elegant and agreeable, than useful and in-

structive; abounding in information no less curious for its extent and variety, than for its great importance and venerable sanctity; deserving the attention of every liberal mind; essential to all who would be proficient in theology; a branch of literature, in a word, which will confer credit upon yourselves, will be an honour to the university, and an advantage to the church. *De Sacra Poesi, passim.*

9. REV. HENRY AINSWORTH, D. D.

THE literal sense of Moses's Hebrew (which is the tongue in which he wrote the law) is the ground of all interpretations; and that language hath figures and properties of speech different from ours. Those therefore in the first place are to be opened and thoroughly understood, &c.—By the records of the Rabbins many particulars about the passover Christ kept; the phylacteries which the Pharisees wore, and other things mentioned in the evangelists, will be much cleared. Without the help of the Rabbins many of those legal rites (especially in Exodus and Leviticus) will not be easily understood; wherefore the evidence brought from the learned Jews, will help both to understand some scriptures, and to end some controversies. *Preface to Annotations.*

10. MR. ROBERT AINSWORTH.

IF I mention Hebrew in the next place, it is because I think some knowledge of that language, tho' of no benefit in the ordinary occurrences of life, may afford pleasure to a Gentleman, and may be of use to him if he should happen afterwards to turn his thoughts toward divinity.

On Education.

11. REV. JULIUS BATE.

HEBREW is the language God taught Adam; it is the only language, all whose words are affixed to ideas; and the writers in it were infallibly directed by the Holy Spirit what words to use, and how to put them together. From its author, we have reason to expect the utmost perfection a language is capable of, viz. the utmost simplicity, certainty, and expressiveness; all which arises from its words not being arbitrary signs, as in other languages, but natural, or substitutes of ideas, and so applicable to any thing where the same idea is to be found. As the language is the concise of all
others,

others, those rules of grammar which are the easiest, plainest, and most concise, will bid fairest to be thought the truest.

Preface to his Grammar.

12. BUXTORF.

WHAT can give a greater dignity to this language, than its being the first language of mankind, its being the language of God, the language of angels, the language of prophets? For God himself breathed this language into the first parents of mankind, Adam and Eve, at their very first creation, that they might explain their sentiments to one another, and in proper and convenient terms express whatever is comprehended in the whole universe of nature. This God made use of, to manifest his boundless grace and will to men. In this language the holy angels talked with mere men. In this the prophets copied out the divine word concerning the eternal salvation of men. But if antiquity procures esteem to things of a durable nature, what bears an earlier date than this language, that is coeval with the world itself? And if the dignity of the author enhances the dignity of a thing, what deficiency can there be here?

In a word, if the excellency of the subject matter that is laid down in these writings, conduces any thing to the dignity of the language itself, what can be imagined more worthy, than that which leads us to the saving knowledge of God himself! which shews the manner of attaining eternal salvation? O! truly laudable and worthy study! O! industry beyond all praise! whereby a man is enabled in the same language knowingly to converse with God, with holy angels, with patriarchs, and with prophets, and clearly to unfold to men the mind of God from the language of God.

Dedication to Thesaurus.

13. CALMET.

IT is the united testimony of the most learned critics and greatest masters of the Hebrew tongue, that there are to be observed in that language all the marks of antiquity desirable, that it is short, simple, expressive, rich and fruitful.

Bibliotheca Biblica.

14. CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE.

IT gives me a sincere pleasure to observe, that among your correspondents there are not wanting who enquire into the nature and genius of the Hebrew tongue, that first and

best of languages, in which far the greater part of the Scriptures are written, and without which they cannot be thoroughly and critically understood.

15. COTTON, D. D.

BUT for the Hebrew I am more importunate with you, and the more so because 'tis one remarkable instance of the depraved gust, into which we are of later years degenerated, that the knowledge of the Hebrew is fallen into so much disrepute as to make a learned man almost afraid of owning that he has any thing of it, lest it should bring him under the suspicion of being an odd, starved, lank sort of a thing, who had lived on Hebrew roots all his days. What would an Amama and the rest of the brave men, who shone in the former age, and had souls like the gates of the temple, say, if they might rise, and see the men of this generation! 'Tis true, the knowledge of the Hebrew, is contrary to the old maxim, *Difficilia quæ pulchra*, with very little difficulty attained unto. Even our little damsels, like Blæfilla, the daughter of Paula (concerning the mother of whom Jerome reports the same, that he does of the daughter) make nothing of coming at this uncommon ornament. And Cooper says truly, that if students would spend as much time at it in a morning or an evening as they mispend on an unprofitable pipe of tobacco, they would in a few days be masters of it. It is also to be owned, that there appears nothing more impertinent, than a little Hebreician, vapouring and swaggering, as if he had all the learning in the world; and laying hold on all occasions to throw out an Hebrew clause or word, for nothing but the ostentation of his mighty accomplishment. Nevertheless the knowledge of the Hebrew is to be valued and pursued, on this design; it will enable you to penetrate further into the deep things which the Spirit of God has laid up in his Oracles than you could possibly do, by seeing them only in some translation. Though with much more cause than the modest Melanchton, I may confess, *Me vix primis labiis degustasse Hebraicas literas*; yet as he declared, what Hebrew he had helped him so much in his judgment of the greatest matters, he preferred it before all the wealth of a kingdom, so I may humbly declare, I scarce ever take an Hebrew Bible into my hands, but I am gratefully surpris'd with something I never thought of; I ever have some view, and see something, I never saw before. So that I do not wonder at Luther for making a serious protestation, that what knowledge he had of the Hebrew,

brew, was of more use and price to him, than the greatest heap of gold that could be set before him.

Manuduſtio ad Miniſterium.

16. Mr. DAVIS.

THE knowledge of the Word of God in the Hebrew is neceſſary to the Church of God, as well to the people as miniſters.—

A tranſlation of the Word of God, whether Latin or Engliſh, is not ſo ample, but very many faults may happen. It is impoſſible that the Holy Scriptures may be ſo tranſlated, as not to be far more excellent in the original.

Ded. to Buxiorſ's Epitome.

17. DR. DICKENSON.

IT is ſcarcely to be doubted, but that God at the beginning taught Adam the nature of things, and inſtructed him in impoſing names, ſo that they ſhould agree with the nature of things. So that the Hebrew language, though it abounds not in words, yet it is above all others remarkable for thoſe that are ſignificant or expreſſive.

Phyſica vetus et vera.

18. REV. THEOPHILUS GALE.

THAT the greateſt part of human literature owes its original to the Sacred Scriptures and Jewiſh church, is an aſſertion which wants not antiquity, nor yet reaſon for the demonſtration thereof. Hence the ſcope and deſign of this diſcourſe is to demonſtrate, that moſt of thoſe arts and ſciences that ſhone among the gentile philologers and philoſophers, were indeed but traditional beams of ſcripture revelation. The wiſeſt of the Heathen were fain to light their candles at the fire of the ſanctuary, to derive their knowledge from the oracles of God, ſeated in the Jewiſh church, as will evidently appear by what enſues.

Truth is more ancient than all, and if I am not deceived, the antiquity of divine writ has in this profited me, that I am fully perſuaded, it was the treasury of all following wiſdom. Which of the poets, which of the ſophiſts, who did not drink altogether of the Prophets fountain? Hence alſo the philoſophers quenched their thirſt; ſo that what they had from our ſcripture, that we received from them again. Plato himſelf drew many things from the Hebrew fountains. Pythagoras transferred many things out of the Jewiſh institutions

tions into his own philosophy. Yea, the poets have borrowed their best stage attire from the glorious wardrobe of Israel.

Court of the Gentiles.

19. REV. HENRY HAMMOND, D. D.

IN order to search out the primitive, true, and literal sense of the difficulties and abstruse passages in the book of Psalms, I was obliged to have recourse to the directions and elucidations of the Jewish Scholiasts, which furnished me with no small light therein.

Preface to Psalms.

20. BISHOP HARE.

THE New Testament cannot be understood without the Old; the truths revealed in the one are grounded on the prophecies contained in the other: which makes the study of the whole Scriptures necessary to him, that would thoroughly understand a part of them.—The whole New Testament is written in a language peculiar to the Jews. The idiom is Hebrew or Syriac, though the words be Greek.

21. JOHANNES ISAAC.

I HAVE accurately compared the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah with many translations, and do ingenuously profess, that I have found, in that chapter, an hundred times more mystery, concerning Christ, contained in the Hebrew text, than can be found in any translation.

Upwards of two hundred testimonies concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, may be brought out of the original Hebrew, that appear not in the vulgar Latin, or any other translation.

Disputation between a Protestant and a Jew.

22. PÈRE LAMY.

PREACHERS are the more inexcusable in neglecting the Scriptures, in that they can no where find so rich and inexhaustible a fund for their purpose as there. All the foundation of true eloquence, extraordinary actions, rich expressions, fine examples, apt comparisons, and striking figures, are found in them in great abundance.—We also find in them all those ornaments, which give strength and dignity to a discourse. And with all assistances, it is yet further necessary that we should understand Hebrew, if we would perfectly understand the Scriptures. This was the original language in which these divine books were written.

It

It has a force and energy which the versions cannot come up to. If any thing could supply the want of knowing it, it would be the number of versions. The different turns the interpreters give it, and the different expressions they make use of, shew the force of the word which they translate. It is my hearty desire, dear reader, that this work may be of some assistance to you; that so being charmed with the pleasures which the Scriptures give, you may be able to cry out with St. Austin, Let thy Writings, O my God, be my chaste delights.

God grant, that the Sacred Writings (lovely as they are) may meet with that degree of affection which they deserve. That men may now apply themselves to the study of them, since they can do it with so much ease and pleasure; that they may lay aside that vain curiosity which leads them indifferently to the reading of all sorts of books; that they may grow weary of those false and dangerous pleasures which they take in a multitude of wicked treatises; and that they may have a taste for those delights and comforts, which the Sacred Volumes ever afford to those who read them with a spirit of piety and devotion.

It is necessary to examine into the language, in which the books contained in the Bible, were written. Nothing can give more light into them, than the knowing the character, turn, and propriety of that language. There is no room to doubt, but that as the Scripture, properly speaking, is nothing else, but a book full of the promises which God made from the beginning of the world, so he made use of the most ancient language that was in use among those pious men, to whom he communicated his promises. Now the Hebrew tongue was the first of all languages; it was that which Adam spoke: the confusion of languages after the deluge made no alteration in it; and it is therefore the mother and source of all other languages. And this is what I pretend to shew in this chapter, and with it the antiquity of the books of Moses, which the most ancient writings of the Pagans cannot come near.—The explanation of names is not to be found in any language, but the Hebrew. It is in that alone we see the reasons, why the first men were so called; as why in the present instance, the first man, who was formed out of the earth, was therefore called Adam. This relation between names and things is not to be found in any other language. The Hebrew conjugations have also great energy and force in them. They express not only the action, but also the manner how it was done, and whether a person acts
by

by himself, or another, which make different senses, and ought to be well distinguished; for if, for instance, we had the original words of Jesus Christ, we might then perceive that when he said, The son of man knoweth not the day of judgment, he might have so pronounced the verb, that it would according to the conjugation in which he put it have signified, that the son of man did not make known the day of judgment.—In the conjugation hiphil, the verb signifies a double action.—The Hebrew has also an emphatic energy, which the versions cannot equal; but if they could, and we could perfectly understand the scriptures, without understanding it; yet it would be a sufficient motive to learn this language, that it had been consecrated by the mouth of God. Thus we see in Ecclesiastical history, that a Father of the church advised virgins and pious women to study it. St. Jerome does so in his letter to Paula, upon the death of her daughter, Blæssilla. What all Greece admired in origin, says he, we have seen in this young damsel; she not in some months, but in a few days, learned Hebrew enough to sing and to understand the Psalms, as well as her mother. The Fathers and the canons go farther than this with regard to divines, and those who by their dignity are obliged to explain the Scripture, for they absolutely require it of them. Clemens the sixth, in the general council of Vienna, ordered that the Hebrew professors should be established in the universities. And indeed is it not a shame for the ministers of God, not to understand the language in which he spoke, but to want an interpreter to explain it to him? Historians tell us, that Themistocles resolved rather to employ a whole year in learning Persian, than speak to the king of Persia by an interpreter: and what then ought not he to do who is obliged to converse daily with the king of kings, to receive orders, and carry them to the people? To which I add, that the having recourse to the original, is absolutely necessary, when either passages are obscure, or the copies vary, or interpreters disagree. The rule which St. Jerome and St. Austin prescribe, is, *Ut ei linguæ potius eredatur, unde est in aliam per interpretes facta translatio*: Recourse, says St. Austin, must be had to the original.

*Preface to Apparatus, and Introduction to the
Holy Scripture, passim.*

23. PILKINGTON, PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD.

AS the writers of the New Testament had been so long used to the Hebrew idioms of speech, this must occasion a difficulty

difficulty of rightly understanding several passages, to those who are unacquainted with the peculiar appropriation of the Hebrew words, and idioms of that language.—The English version by no means preserves the distinctions observable in the Hebrew; neither indeed does any other version: and therefore the propriety of the Scripture language can only be discovered and judged of by those who read the original.—

It is contrary to a general received opinion, to suppose that the words in the Hebrew language are used with as great, if not greater, propriety and precision than those of any other; but as I am persuaded of this truth by the comparison of several versions with the original, and as I impute the inaccuracy of the versions in many places to the want of attending to this observation, I shall lay before the reader some remarks, which may probably induce him not readily to admit the charge of barrenness or uncertainty, too frequently imputed to the Hebrew language, upon general assertions only.—There is a greater precision in the Hebrew language than is commonly imagined, and the words are used with very great propriety.—It points out a precision in the Hebrew language unknown to any other, and consequently the Scriptures can only be read to the best advantage in the original.

Remarks, passim.

24. REV. RICHARD GREY, D. D.

THE late general neglect of studying the Hebrew learning, towards the revival whereof, there appears at present a good disposition, seems chiefly to have been owing to these two causes, an apprehension of the great difficulty of learning that language, and the common and even proverbial reproach cast upon it, as a dry unentertaining study, fit only for men of a dull and plodding genius, who want abilities to excel in politer and more valuable knowledge. Whereas in truth it is a language not only easy, but delightful; a language for uniformity and simplicity, of all others the most easy, and yet at the same time so full of excellent wisdom and skill in the contrivance of it, as setting aside the consideration of it in a religious view (as containing the Oracles of God, and conveying to us the knowledge of the most necessary and important truths, with the utmost propriety, perspicuity, and certainty) and considering it merely as a language, will afford exercise for the acutest parts, and give pleasure to the most curious.

Preface to Grammar.

25. DELAUNE.

25. DELAUNE.

THE knowledge of the original languages, in which the Scriptures are penned, is of very great necessity, that we might converse with that sacred book in its own emphatic and native idiom.

Preface to Philologia Sacra.

26. REV. DANIEL FEATLY, D. D.

THE fountain only is most pure; the rivers or Greek versions, are in some places muddy, in others brackish, though, for the most part, not unwholesome; but those who content themselves with the Latin Vulgate, are like those who drink out of marshes, where the water is generally foul, and in many places unwholesome and infectious.

Hebræi fontes bibunt, Græci rivus, Latini paludes.

27. GELL.

THE reasons why those Hebrew words, which are in the New Testament are left untranslated, are, first, because they have so manifold significations as cannot so fully be expressed in other languages. Secondly, because many mysteries contained in them, would be entirely left out, or lost in all translations.

28. GOUGE.

THE knowledge of the original tongues is most assuredly a great help to find out the *Sensum & animum Prophetarum*, the sense and meaning of those holy men, that were penmen of the Holy Scriptures.

29. ROSS.

IS there any argument that the original is in the wrong because translations are? Or that because there have been many bad translations, there can never be a good one? Or, in fine, that because several of its terms and phrases are ambiguous, they must puzzle one who has the necessary qualities of a translator, who is a master of the languages in which the Scriptures were writ, who knows the customs to which they allude, understands the design of the author, considers the context, lays aside prejudice, consults reason, and has true notions of God and Jesus Christ?

Preface to Essay for New Translation.

30. LEE.

THE holy language represents the most pleasing and agreeable conformity. There is in Christ the wisdom of God; to a soul, that has what the Scripture naturally assigns the inward man, a spiritual palate, a right sense of things, (רָךְ) by this sweetness the natural honey, or, &c. yields to the taste, is plain from the use of the words מֵחָן & מְלִיץ, particularly in Proverbs 1. 6, and 15. 21. by way of analogy.—And that it is a just representation the believer knows.

Sophon.

31. LINGUIST.

THE Hebrew language is commonly esteemed the great spring of languages. The necessity and importance of a just skill in it is at the first view apparent to a scholar in general, and particularly to a divine. The former will never become a true judge of other languages till he can trace them, as far as possible, to their fountain; and as the latter is contemptible and lifeless, if void of a knowledge of the Scripture, so that must be drawn from the tongue in which it was written. The necessity of it is founded on the light that is derived or cast upon the New Testament from the Old, on the precarious, weak, insufficient, and often false knowledge, that is taken from versions, just as if a Greek author could be mastered purely by the help of a Latin translation.—And it is a further motive to the study of Hebrew, that it hath its peculiar graces and elegancies, as well as others; the critical niceties of it are very numerous, and not yet fully cleared. The Jews cannot be converted without it; and that the Bible is a book of the highest concern, as well as in some parts of the greatest antiquity in the world. It is certain, the critical part of this tongue is not yet exhausted.—Even the faults of the versions make the original necessary; those of the 72d, are very gross, and those of the Vulgar Latin, are almost numberless.—The dignity of this tongue appears not only in its antiquity, fruitfulness, and production of others, &c. but in its being inspired by God into Adam. The Hebrew excels also in use of etymology, names of people, places, deities, &c. Erpenius speaks in an oration on this tongue, Anno 1621, of a work designed by Casaub for shewing the derivation of the Greek from it. First, by certain postulata; secondly, by the affinity of words: thirdly, by words changed, transposed, unchanged, or more obscurely allied to it. But it is most useful in religion

gion, &c.—But the Hebrew is the most pure, simple, ancient, and radical language. The elegance of it is set before the Greek and Latin, by the learned Erpenius, Orat. 3. Where he has shewn also, that the other eastern tongues flow from it, and that most Greek themes, or primitive words arise out of it. The old acrostic in the Psalms and Lamentations prove, it gives the names, and order of letters to other alphabets; the Old Testament cannot be understood without it; and by it St. Jerome explained the Scripture more happily than any of the Fathers. The Hebrew only is from God, and the mother of all other languages.

Compleat Linguist.

32. REV. CONYERS MIDDLETON, D. D.

THE critics declare that John of all the other sacred writers of the New Testament, abounds more peculiarly in Hebrew phrases; to understand the true sense of his writings, it is necessary to know Hebrew as well as Greek itself.

Answer to Dr. Bentley.

33. REV. SIMON OCKLEY, B. D.

SINCE the understanding of the Old Testament is very necessary to Christians—it will thence follow that the accurate knowledge of that language wherein it was written is also necessary; for without this it is impossible to investigate its meaning: for whoever depends on a version only, does not so properly see with his own eyes, as with those of others; and hence it is that many have feigned to themselves various opinions, which they have been mighty fond of, but which when the errors of the versions are removed have no foundation in the original text.

I add, if he is ridiculous to all, who will read only a Latin version, however accurate; of a Greek author; and that for this reason, because he cannot hereby attain the sense and elegance of the author, how justly shall we be derided by those who understand Hebrew, if relying only on a faulty version, we neglect the fountain itself.

Introductio ad Linguas Orientales.

34. P. ST. PAUL, D. D.

HOW comes it to pass that no language meets with so much disdain? That no one is entered upon with greater trouble and reluctance? And as if the labour bestowed upon it

it would be fruitless? Whence is it no language should expose its students to greater ridicule and contempt? Perhaps this is the reason, because most people apply themselves to it too late, nor till after they have dipped into the rudiments of philosophy. It is to be wished therefore, that the masters of Westminster, Paul's, and Charterhouse schools, would follow the example of some few others, and exercise their scholars in it before they go to the Universities; and that the youth themselves would encounter that labour while they are young, which will be much more burthensome to them in their more advanced years.

Be that as it will, this language is so far from being hedged up with thorns, that, on the contrary, it is learnt with less labour and pains, than the Greek or Latin tongue; and the Oracles of God set forth in the Hebrew tongue may much sooner be understood, as to the sense of the words, than Demosthenes or Cicero's Orations. Since this is the case, I would that our youth, who either have already entered, or shall hereafter enter upon the study of divinity, be advised to exert their utmost abilities in this study; by the help of which they will gain a much safer and better grounded knowledge, not only of the Oracles of the Old, but also of the Hebrews of the New Testament, than by the assistance of versions and commentaries.

Pref. Methodus Heb.

35. PHIL-EBRÆUS.

THE Hebrew Scriptures, contain the sum of all we can know in divinity, or natural things; and I may venture to say, he who attempts to be either a divine or a philosopher, without understanding the great use and benefit of this elucidating sum, of God's forming and fixing up in the heaven of his most Holy Word, is just as wise as he who throws away his telescope to view the stars, or, he who would traverse a mighty ocean without his compass: for what is such a one doing? he is reasoning without principles, or rather from such, which the more he reasons from, the further he will be from satisfying himself, or any one else. This ignorance of the Hebrew Scriptures has been the next cause of all the jargon published in defence of them, of all the infidelity in the world, of all the false philosophy and errors in divinity amongst us, and in proportion as they are understood, these misleading principles must vanish and entirely disappear. The Hebrew language is stamp'd with the character of divinity, whilst all others (the Greek not excepted)

wear

wear the badge of Babel : thus it stands fixt as a monument of brass, or rock of adamant, and its infallible certainty is not to be destroyed by all the efforts of men, while all others must be resolved into that confusion which gave them birth ; and while these are the channels of all error that remains ; those are the source of all truth, the fountain from whence it springs, the point in which it centres, the garden where it grows, the mine from whence it must be dug, would not this therefore, added to the present school learning, be an ornament and give a lustre to it ; analogous to the sun's dispelling the darkness of the night, or the light's bursting forth in the day that the Elohim spake it into being, when it rent the rigid bands of darkness, and pierced to the centre of the chaos, and brought confusion into order ? Give me leave therefore to ask, why should men be intimidated, by mocks and sneers, from studying this kind of learning ? or why indulged in the neglect of it ? especially since its divine original is as demonstrable as twice three are equal to six, and since there is in it an inexhaustible fund of truth and learning, and since from this sacred armory there is an invincible artillery to be got more than for defence, and quite sufficient to batter down all the strong holds of hell, to put to flight the whole armies of the aliens, to break their shields and dash their helmets to pieces, to wound the hairy scalps of the whole rout of enemies, and make them hide themselves in holes, like so many baffled cowards. Why this has not been done becomes not me to say, but that it will be done is more than probable.—I humbly conceive, while this continues to be neglected, as it has been too long, it would be wonderful indeed not to see error, libertinism, superstition, bigotry, enthusiasm, and infidelity, put forth their hideous heads by turns ; and how these can be prevented, but by the use of those means which Christ himself commands and recommends, to enlighten, and enliven, and make us like himself, is entirely above my conception. John 5. 39. " Search the Scriptures."

36. REV. WM. ROMAINE, M. A.

IT is a certain, but a melancholy matter of fact, that there has been more ridicule wasted upon Solomon's Song, than upon any other portion of God's Word. And we need not marvel at it. The devil has a particular spite against this book : he hates the subject, and he hates the composition. He cannot bear to hear of man's being restored to that fellowship and communion with God, which himself once had,

but

but can never hope for again; and therefore this treatise upon it is the object of his most devilish malice, and he is always stirring up his agents to write and to speak contemptibly of it; altho' this book is plain enough to them who are properly qualified to read it: if you understand the true genius of the tongue in which it is written and have some insight into the subject of which it treats, it will then be as intelligible as any other portion of Scripture; but the enemies of this book understand neither of these particulars. They are not qualified to judge, and yet they venture to condemn. First, they are not acquainted with the nature of the Hebrew tongue, without which no man can pretend to be a critic upon the writings of the Old Testament. If any person should write professedly against Homer, and try to prove there was no genius, invention, or sublimity in his poems, with what contempt would the learned treat his performance? especially if they knew, that this Ignoramus did not understand one word of Greek, no nor one letter.

If such an attack upon Homer appears ridiculous to men of learning, how much more ridiculous should an attack of the same nature appear upon a treatise in Hebrew: because the Hebrew is more difficult to be translated word for word than the Greek author can be. It has some peculiar proprieties and idioms which no other language has, with which every critic should be acquainted, lest he should raise objections that would only betray his own ignorance. The Hebrew is a fixt language. It is fixt in nature and cannot change, unless nature should. Every word stands for material and sensible objects, which God created to represent and to give us ideas of some correspondent and spiritual object. Like as in parables there is an outward and literal sense, by which an inward and spiritual meaning is conveyed, so it is in every Hebrew word; and a critic should understand Hebrew upon this plan. He should be acquainted with the genius of the Hebrew tongue, and with its manner of expressing spiritual things under their appointed images in nature. And it is more necessary he should have this knowledge in order to understand this book, because it is the worst translated of all Scripture. Our translators have not failed more in any part of the Old Testament than they have here. Instead of giving us the spiritual meaning of the words, they have seldom given us any thing but the literal sense, and sometimes they have given us the Hebrew word without any translation at all. If they had translated the prophecy of Isaiah in the same injudicious manner, it would

have been as abstruse as this book is. I hope to see it made as intelligible as the prophecy of Isaiah. There are several persons at present in our church of great leisure, and great abilities, and it is much to be wished they would employ them in explaining this book. The most proper method they could take seems to me, to settle first the true literal sense of every word in the Song, and then, as it is entirely a spiritual book treating of communion with God, to fix the spiritual idea to each word; and where we have not a proper word in English to express the full sense of a Hebrew word, they might give it in a short paraphrase. When ever this is done, the mouths of our ignorant mockers will be stopped, and it will appear that all their objections arose from their ignorance. Thus the enemies of this book are ignorant of the true genius of the Hebrew tongue, in which it is written; and they borrow their arguments against it, not from the faults of the book itself, but from the faults in the translation.

Sermons on Solomon's Song.

37. SERIOUS ADDRESS.

THE Bible is the grand repository of all the truths of our most holy religion. It is written, in its original languages, with the utmost perspicuity, elegance, and purity of style; it also contains every valuable branch of knowledge. True philosophy, superior to the wild conjectures of ancient and modern naturalists—Beautiful and sublime descriptions, far exceeding the much celebrated pieces of antiquity in imagery, and diction.—But, above all, many absolutely necessary, very plain, yet important truths, infinitely more excellent than the uncertain guesses of Heathen moralists.

To the Educators of Youth.

38. REV. GREGORY SHARPE, L. L. D.

THE learned Faber, and the more learned Casaubon, had their sons early instructed in the Hebrew, that they might have a more perfect knowledge of the Greek tongue, the greatest part whereof is most evidently derived from the oriental dialects; inasmuch that it would be impossible to produce a perfect edition of that most useful lexicon by Hesychius, in which there are many words of rare occurrence, without a very good knowledge of the Hebrew.—Nor is excellency in the Greek the only proof of fertility in the Hebrew soil; it is also a necessary introduction to the Arabic, the most copious and entertaining of all eastern languages, a knowledge

knowledge whereof is said to be easily attained by him that is perfect in the Hebrew and Chaldee, but to be altogether as difficult without their assistance. When the learned Postellus was at Constantinople, the Turks astonished at the rapidity wherewith he mastered their language, took him for a demon; which was owing to his skill in the Hebrew: for otherwise five or six years are ordinarily employed in acquiring a perfect knowledge of the Turkish grammar.—But to say that the Hebrew is the key to all the oriental languages, and the source of the Greek, is not to say enough in its favour; it is also so simple in itself, and so easy to learn, that one may be forgiven for calling it the language of nature, or the first language of the world. Sure I am, that it ought to be the first we are taught, after we have learned to use our own; and were I worthy to advise, the oriental dialects should follow the Hebrew, the Greek should follow the Arabic, and the Latin be acquired by conversation and reading, in the same manner as the modern languages of Europe are acquired. Let me have leave to add, that all this may be accomplished in less time than is usually employed in one or two languages at school.—And surely such a natural and easy course of initiation would at least enable our young gentlemen to mispend their time with more ingenuity and innocency, as well as less expence than at present.—Moreover the Hebrew is not only of use for attaining perfection in the Greek, and a more speedy acquisition of the Arabic; it is also of the highest importance to a thorough understanding of the Sacred Scriptures, and, consequently, to the continuance and promoting of true religion. And this I should have first and chiefly insisted upon in this proem, if it had not made a great part of the first dissertation.

From which I shall no longer detain the reader, than to assure him, in case he chuses to favour the Masorets with his company, that the method of learning Hebrew, contained in the following letters, will be no hindrance to his learning the Masoretic language, but rather facilitate it. For if he first learns the Hebrew without vowel-points, which, by this new method, may be done in less time than can be easily imagined, he will find it much easier to add to his knowledge the application of the vowel-points, pauses, and accents, than to learn them all together.

The study of the Scriptures in the original languages should be cultivated by all men of letters. They, who, like the applauded Bereans, search the Scriptures every day, and are desirous of knowing whether things are so as they are

represented to be, can never satisfy themselves with translations: and whoever shall read the scriptures of the Old Testament in the original, having first divested himself of prejudices, contracted by reading the commentaries of men, who either did not understand, or have not, with fair simplicity, given the plain sense of the words, he will find full and satisfactory evidence from the authority of these writings. They, whose objections against revelation arise only from certain passages in the book, if they are serious in their enquiry, will have recourse to the original; and are inexcusable, if they do not qualify themselves to consult it, or advise with such as are qualified to remove their difficulties; for it is not, I believe, to be doubted, but that a good degree of knowledge in the Hebrew will remove many objections. They, who delight in history, must find prodigious entertainment in the account of the origin of mankind, of nations, laws, religion, variety of customs, rise of many arts, and other subjects of history; a great part of which is not to be found in any other books: and of the rest, which it has in common with other writers, we have sufficient authority to support us in saying, that the more ancient and faithful they are in their relations, the more they agree with the historical part of the Bible.

They who are the friends of liberty, and admirers of the good and great legislators of old, cannot but be pleased with the account given of a form of government, which more carefully provided for the conservation of the liberties and properties of the people, and in some sense rendered their being deprived of them more impracticable than any other; and which, beyond all other schemes, and whatever happened to any other nation in the world, boasts the continuance of its power and influence, with many of its rites and ceremonies still practised by the same people, tho' they cease to be a nation, tho' their country has been destroyed for so many years, and they themselves are dispersed in exile all over the earth,

They, who are charmed with the Grecian orators and poets, will find the boasted *δεινον* of Demosthenes, the *μεγαλοπρεπον* of Thucydides, and all the *αμνον*, grace and power of rhetoric, imagery, elegance of style, and greatness of composition, in the best of the Greek writers, excelled by the Prophets.

It is impossible to conceive any thing more lively, exact or beautiful, than are the allegories, the similitudes, the metaphors, the descriptions, the ornaments, so profusely interspersed.

interspersed and scattered every where in the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

So that nothing can be more astonishing than that this book should be neglected by men, whose ancestors thought it glorious to give their bodies to be burned, to purchase for posterity the liberty to read it; or that it should, by any man, be treated with less regard than is due to writings that have stood the test of so many ages.

When the Romans were working their engines for casting stones, the Jews, seeing the engines gape, used to give warning to each other of the danger *τη πατριω γλωσση βοωντες ο υις ερχεται*, crying out in their own language, the son cometh. Dr. Hudson in his edition of Josephus, not aware of the Hebrew idiom, has changed *υις* in *ις*, which he renders missile: and he seems to think it was a great oversight in all the former editors to suffer *υις* to remain. See Josephus, in the fifth book of the Jewish wars, chap 6. sect. 3. This specimen of the advantage of Hebrew to men of learning was communicated to me by my learned friend Dr. Thomas Sharp, Archdeacon of Durham. *Works, passim.*

39. STENNETT.

—IT is an unquestionable proposition or concession, that (as a mean) nothing can more conduce towards the knowledge of the Scriptures, than the understanding of their original languages; and how much more profoundly would Christians see into the mysteries of Scripture, were they skilled to draw (*ex ipso fonte*) from the very fountain wherein antichristian shepherds have not with puddling feet stept and defiled. How many the spreading branches, how much variety of fruit, does arise from one Hebrew root? And how pleasant as well as profitable a labour is it, to be digging amongst those roots, whose excellency duly to commend is a work surpassing my skill?—The Hebrew is a language worthy to be wrote in capitals of gold, and highly merits the industry of all reaching after it, but especially those who are devoted to Scriptural study.

40. REV. JOHN TAYLOR, D. D.

1. THE Holy Scriptures are admirably calculated to be understood in those things in which we are most concerned to understand them; seeing the same language runs through the whole, and is set in such a variety of lights, that one part is well adapted to illustrate another. Which I reckon

an advantage peculiar to the Sacred Writings above all others in the world. 2. That to understand the sense and spirit of the New, it is essentially necessary, that we understand its sense in the Old Testament. But the sense of the Spirit cannot be understood, unless we understand the language in which it is conveyed. For which purpose the Hebrew concordance is the best exposition, for there you have in one view presented all the places in the sacred code, where any word is used; and by carefully collating those places, one may judge what sense it will or will not bear. Which being once settled there lieth no appeal to any other writings in the world. Because there are no other books in all the world in the pure original Hebrew, but the books of the Old Testament. A judgment therefore, formed from them must be decisive. This is an advantage which no concordance in any other language can afford. For in our English translation we shall find the same Hebrew word rendered by very different English words. On the contrary, the words in the original which are different are often translated by the same word in English. Therefore from an English, or any other modern concordance, it is impossible we should find those words which are similar, or the same in the original. This only can be done by a concordance of the original Hebrew.—The Hebrew concordance must be allowed to be the most authentic interpreter of Scripture, not only of the Old but also of the New Testament, it being but the words and phrases of the Old Testament translated into Greek. For the subject matter, viz. the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, are in both the same, indited by the same Spirit, and wrote by men of the same nation.

Advertisement.

41. BISHOP WALTON.

THE pre-eminence or excellency of the Hebrew language is demonstrated by its antiquity, divine origin, sanctity, perfection, under which is comprehended its purity, elegance, energy, and apt significancy of words, and lastly by its usefulness and easiness to learn.—That it is the most ancient of all languages, we have already proved at large, coeval with the world, inspired into our first parents. Its sanctity appears from hence, that the ever blessed God was its first author, who immediately infused it into the minds of the first parents of the human race; for neither was it invented by men, nor did it arise, as most of our modern tongues, from a mixture of

of others, but it was formed together with the first pair, by the Fountain of all good, the Father of lights; that the most sacred and divine mysteries concerning the true knowledge of God, his true worship, and the eternal happiness of men, were first revealed in this language, and therein laid up, as in a faithful depository of so great a treasure; and that in this was expressed that sacred and venerable name of God, which denotes his essence, and which no other language can explain, much less imitate.

Its perfection is shewn, by the purity, energy, and elegance of its words.—Which it derives not from the roots of other languages, but all or most of them from its own verbs, which regularly consist of three letters, and which have one simple and primary signification, from which all others are with great elegance derived. It expresses things themselves properly, and descriptively, so that no language can be compared with the Hebrew in this respect, as Erpenius testifies in his oration on the Hebrew tongue.—It hath its peculiar beauties (*veneres suas*) which no other language can express.

Its exceeding usefulness is seen from hence, that no one can so fully and perfectly attain to the explanation of divine mysteries as from the inspection of the original records. Whence also some knowledge, at least, of this language, is necessary to those whose duty it is to explain the Divine Oracles to others. For how absurd is it that an ambassador should not himself understand the commands of his prince, but need an interpreter? It is reported of Themistocles, that being desirous to ask something of the king of Persia, and to have some conversation with him, he spent a whole year in learning the Persian language, that so he might have no occasion to address the king by an interpreter. What then ought to be done by those who are bound not once only, but every day, to converse with the king of kings, to convey his commands to the people, and to offer their prayers to God? For, to use the words of a learned man, they who are acquainted with the versions only, see with the eyes of others, and standing among the people, without, in the courts, view holy things at a distance: but he who understands the original text is admitted with the priests into the sanctuary, and thus becomes an eye witness of all that is transacted in the holy place. Wherefore, saith Luther, though my knowledge of the Hebrew language be but slender, yet I would not exchange it for all the riches in the world.

Finally,

Finally, if to this great dignity, perfection, elegance and usefulness of this language, we moreover add the ease with which it may be learnt, what further can be wanting to recommend it? but such is the nature thereof, that it does not require a tenth part of the time that the Greek and Latin do, as the more eminent masters of it assert. For if any one apply a few months upon it, months, not years, saith Erpenius, he will easily make a good progress therein. The application of two or three months, saith Amama, will be sufficient for any one to learn it tolerable well; and it does not require above a year to overcome all the difficulties of it. But he who will not spare so small a time from his other employments or studies, yea from his diversions, plainly renders himself unworthy of so great a treasure: and he that will make a trial, will shortly reap such fruit of his labour, as he will have no cause to repent. *Prolegomena.*

42. WILSON, D. M.

THE Hebrew language by the perfection of its composition, fully adapted to convey divine discoveries, and disclose the relations between material operations, and the divine procedure in a superior analogous dispensation, appears framed by infinite skill, and fathers itself upon the author of both worlds.

The words in that language may be divided into two classes, namely, primary ones, and derivatives. From the connection of these two divisions with one another, resembling the communication between the trunk or root of a tree and its branches, grammarians have given the name of roots to the primary words from which the rest are derived.

As all the species of matter are known and distinguished by their actions and properties, so these primary words always express some natural action or property; so that such roots convey to us just ideas of all natural actions.

The derivatives are formed, by converting these primary words into nouns, by the addition of some certain servile letters unto the primary word; by which means these words become appellatives, denominating things. This relation between the appellative and the action or virtue expressed by the primary words, discovers some predominant quality in that thing, relative unto the idea which the root conveys. By this means, while a person is acquiring the language, he is, at the same time, discovering the true natures and virtues of things, and the connection they have with, or the resemblance

resemblance they have unto the primary actions or virtues in nature. Again, when spiritual things come to be expressed by these words, one discovers the proper similitude between natural things and spiritual ones; and the reason appears, why such natural things and actions are made symbolical. So that though all the words in this language are derived from natural ideas, yet their ultimate force and intention penetrates into invisible powers; because whatever natural power is expressed, that epithet applied to God must express an action or virtue infinitely stronger or more noble in him. By this it will appear plain, how this language, besides giving distinguishing appellatives for things and actions in common with other languages, at the same time, conveys some necessary and just instructions relative to their natures; their use in discovering the true character, and importance in spiritual things.

How just all these discoveries must be, we may easily perceive; seeing the language claims an infallible author, who was thoroughly acquainted with the powers of this world, and also of the world to come.

Viewing the Hebrew language thus in its own nature and proper light it renders it of the greatest importance, and opens a new door for real learning and new discovery.

Therefore none can fully see the corresponding beauties of the Old and New Testament revelation, unless they understand, or have fully explained to them the meaning of the language in which the former was delivered.

So much does the Hebrew language agree with the figurative nature of the Old Testament dispensation, that it is impossible to explain the meaning of most of the types without the assistance of the language; because the names for those things which are assumed as types, express their natures or these qualities in them or relating unto them, which made them proper symbols of analogous spiritual discoveries to be manifest of the divine perfections; and the same words are applied to these spiritual things which denominate the material hieroglyphics of them.

For instance, if the Hebrew words which denominate a bullock or a ram, &c. in their literal signification, express some of those principal actions, or material powers by which the course of nature is supported; and if the same words are also used for the agencies of divine power exerting itself in the spiritual world, and supporting it: it is obvious, these creatures are not designed by such a name, without some reference to the principal virtues or properties expressed by the

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the same word, first in the material and ultimately in the spiritual world.

The king of the locust who is represented as arising out of the bottomless pit, had a name given him, which signified, both in Hebrew and in Greek, that destruction which he displays in his character, and is himself to go into. So we find the New Testament writers shew abundance of regard unto the interpretation of Hebrew proper names, and authorise our inquiry into their exactest significations in order to understand the Old Testament writings.

The rules of the Hebrew grammar are the most compendious that can be; the primary words are few, not above a thousand; the ideas they convey are natural; the connections between those and the derivatives are obvious and simple; the style of the writings is natural and plain; the periods short and unperplexed; the similitudes used are all either taken from nature, or from some transactions recorded in the writings themselves; and the subject of the whole is interesting in the highest degree, and of the last consequence.

I rejoice that this age has the prospect of seeing this language revive and flourish. Men of both learning and rank are honourably engaged in the study and advancement of it: and many noble discoveries have already been made by the knowledge of it.

Creation.

43. WITSIUS.

AS 'tis by words, especially the words of those languages, in which it pleased God to reveal his sacred mysteries to men, that we can with hopes of success come to the knowledge of things, it will be worth while more accurately to inquire into the import both of the Hebrew and Greek.

Oeconomy of the Covenants.

44. REV. JOSEPH WHITE, M. A.

THE earliest declarations of God's will, contain matter that will edify the devout Christian in the remotest times, and upon whom the ends of the world may come. It is in the old Testament that great part of the evidence of the gospel is to be looked for; it is there that the argument of prophecy, one of the main pillars of the Christian system, is to be found; and it is in the continued narrative of God's dealings with his people, that we are to observe the gradual unfolding of that plan of universal mercy, which Jesus Christ at length completed, when he acted and suffered what Moses and

and the prophets had foretold. Intimately connected with the gospel by the same divinity of origin, and by the same gracious tendency of purpose, it requires to be treated with similar reverence, and to be studied with equal accuracy. And if equal accuracy is to be attempted it will be difficult to assign a reason, why that knowledge of the ancient language should be regarded as unnecessary in the one case, which is insisted upon as indispensably requisite in the other,

*Sermon on a Revision of the English
Translation of the Old Testament.*

45. P E T R A R C H.

I LOVE truth and not sects. I am sometimes a Peripatetician, a Stoic, or an Academician, and often none of them; but—always a Christian. To philosophize, is to love wisdom; and the true wisdom is Jesus Christ. Let us read the historians, the poets, and the philosophers; but let us have in our hearts the Gospel of Jesus Christ; in which alone, is perfect wisdom, and perfect happiness. It were to be wished, that those who have devoted themselves to letters, had always followed this rule.

Life.

46. REV. SAMUEL HORSLEY, L.L.D.

IN the present state of religious learning in this country, it should seem that the cultivation of that branch of it, which is called Sacred Criticism, and particularly the elucidation of the text of the Old Testament, is the study in which, of all others, our talents and our industry might be best employed.

Charge.

47. REV. JOHN OWEN, D. D.

THERE is in the originals of the Scripture a peculiar emphasis of words and expressions, and in them an especial energy to intimate and insinuate the sense of the Holy Ghost unto the minds of men, which cannot be traduced into other languages by translations, so as to obtain the same power and efficacy.

Συνοψις Πνευματικῆς.

48. MR. JOSHUA KETTLBY.

I AM confident, that whoever shall undertake the study of the sacred Hebrew Scriptures, will soon be brought to acknowledge, that that language, and the writings transmitted to us in it, are stored with all the beauties and allurements,

ments, above fenfuality, which in other writings and languages, have attracted the ftudy and attention of the curious and wife in polite literature.

Excellency of the Hebrew demonftrated.

49. MODERN JEWS.

WHAT principally contributes to make the Hebrew language appear poor and obfcure, is, that we have at prefent but one book, of no confiderable bulk, in it. What language would not appear in the fame light, if we had as few remains of it? How would even the Greek tongue appear, if out of all the Greek books, none had come down to us but Herodotus, Æfchilus, and Pindar?

This, Sir, is the true reafon of the difficulty and actual poverty of the Hebrew. Hence a multitude of words relative to the arts and fciences are abfolutely unknown to us at prefent, although they formerly made up part of this language. For inftance, how many words, of which we have not any idea now, would have been found in the works of Solomon, on botany and natural hiftory, if thefe works had been preferved! Hence too it happens, that we have not the fame advantage in Hebrew as in other languages, of comparing a number of texts with one another, in order to clear up the meaning of words. Therefore, in fpeaking of the poverty of the Hebrew tongue, you ought to have inftituted principally on this reafon; and this is precifely the one which you do not mention.

Although this difadvantage is the neceffary caufe of obfcurity in various paffages of our Sacred Writings, yet it prevents us not from underftanding very clearly the largeft and moft ufeful part of them. And what remains of our writers, is infufficient to convince an impartial man of letters, that their language, fo far from being poor and dry, as you fay, was on the contrary copious and rich. Let a man read Jeremiah and Ifaiah, and tell us whether they are deficient in purity, elegance, fublimity, and pomp of expreffion. Does David want thefe in his Pfalms, or Mofes in his Canticles? Does the author of the Book of Job, our Homer, the moft ancient and perfect of our poets, want them? You are a poor Hebræan indeed, Sir, if in their divine writings you have found the Hebrew language dry and poor!

Where could you find in all antiquity, Sir, religious inftitutions more pure, and moral precepts more conformable to the feelings of nature, the light of reafon, and the facred rules

rules of decency and virtue? Recal to your mind the laws of the most celebrated ancient nations: what false and whimsical ideas of the divinity! What objects of worship! What extravagant, impure, cruel rites! What impious opinions, scandalous excesses, barbarous customs, as authorized or tolerated by these boasted legislators! From the heavenly bodies which give us light, down to the onions which grow in our gardens; from the man celebrated for his talents or his crimes, down to the venomous reptile which creeps under the grass, every thing had its worshippers. Here behold a sacrifice of female modesty, there human blood flows upon the altars, and the dearest victims expire in those flames which superstition has lighted up. A little farther violence is offered to nature by brutal love, and humanity debased by unworthy and barbarous treatment. Every where the people live in shocking ignorance, and the philosophers in error and uncertainty. Let us draw a veil over this mortifying picture of human blindness, which many others before us have traced out. But whilst we are turning our eyes from these dismal objects, permit us to ask you, why so many mistakes among nations so wise, and so much wisdom among the ignorant and barbarous Hebrews? Does it not proceed from this, that all other nations had only the weak and glimmering light of human reason for a guide, and that among the Hebrews a superior reason had enlightened its darkness and fixed its uncertainties?

We shall insist no longer, Sir, on our religious and moral laws: they are too well known, and their superiority over all ancient legislatures is too remarkable to require any further discussion.

To conclude, Sir, every part of the Jewish legislature displays the high and divine wisdom of the legislator. Its doctrines are rational and sublime; its religious and moral precepts, holy and pure; its political, military, and civil laws are wise, equitable and mild; even its ritual laws are founded in reason; all of them, in short, are admirably suited to the designs and views of the legislator, to the circumstances of time, place, climate, to the inclinations of the Hebrews, and to the manners of the neighbouring nations, &c. There is nothing in this legislature that contradicts the laws of nature or of virtue. Every thing here breathes justice, piety, honesty, benevolence. Its object, its antiquity, its origin, its duration, the talents and virtues of the legislator, the respect of so many nations, all these things conspire to prove the excellence of it. Your greatest men have admired it,
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and looked upon it as the primary source of divine and human law, and you, Sir, can see nothing in it but absurdity and barbarism. When you spoke of it in such opprobrious terms, did impartiality guide your criticism?

We have thought fit, Sir, to say thus much in defence of our laws. This indeed is but a poor sketch of an apology, if compared with those of so many learned Christians and well instructed Jews, Abravanel, Jarchi, Maimonides, and before them, Josephus, and the eloquent Philo. Read their writings, Sir; do still a better thing, read the text of our laws, and your prejudices will soon vanish. You will soon be struck with the excellence of these statutes, and will say to yourself, perhaps not without confusion. These statutes however are noble, and this people, whom I have so often abused, is a wise and intelligent nation.

As for our parts, Sir, when we consider the just censures that have been passed on ancient and modern governments; when we reflect on the baneful systems set up in ages past, and in this one too by philosophers; when we see the providence of God, his justice, even his existence contested; fatality introduced, liberty destroyed, the land-marks of right and wrong daringly torn up, or placed with uncertainty by these pretenders to wisdom; man degraded, all the bonds of society dissolved, vain imaginations and racking doubts substituted in the place of the most comfortable and salutary truths, &c. when we see these things, our spirit is stirred up at all these errors, and we cannot help thinking ourselves happy in having been preserved from them by such reasonable and holy laws. O Israel, happy are we, for the things that are pleasing to God are made known unto us. "He hath not dealt so with any nation."

Letters of certain Jews to M. Voltaire.

50. JOHN HUTCHINSON, ESQ.

THE Hebrew words are short and few, placed in the natural order of speech; the nouns and pronouns admit no inflections into cases; two simple kinds of additions express the plural masculine and feminine, and the usage of a word is determined by a sign prefixed, interposed, or put to the end. The same simplicity runs through the verbs, which are all ideal, and taken from true objects in nature; and the same invariable idea is transferred, with the same letters, to constitute the name of the object. Each particle preserves the same identical idea wherever it occurs; but, to make the modern tongues coincide, several of our particles must be used

used for one in Hebrew, as the context require, so as to vary but not change the idea. *Covenant of the Cherubim.*

51. REV. DAVID JENNINGS, D. D.

THE Hebrew language is said to abound in the aptest etymologies and roots of the names both of men and things; that in it the names of brutes express their nature and properties, more significantly and accurately than in any other known language in the world; that its words are concise and expressive, derived from a small number of roots, yet without the studied and artificial composition of the Greek and Roman languages; that its words follow each other in an easy and natural order, without intricacy or transposition; and above all, that it hath the happiest and richest fecundity in its verbs, of any known tongue either ancient or modern; which arises from the variety and sufficiency of its conjugations; by means of which, as Bellarmine observes in his Hebrew grammar, all the variety of significations, into which it is possible for a verb to be branched out, are expressed, with a very small variation either of the points, or of a letter or two; which in any other language cannot be done without circumlocution. In a word, this language is said to be so concise, yet significant; so pathetic, yet free from lightness or bombast, as of all others to approach nearest to the language of spirits, who need no words to convey their ideas to each other.

Jewish Antiquities.

52. DR. DODDRIDGE.

THE Old Testament is an invaluable treasure, which demands our daily delightful and thankful perusal, and is capable of being defended in a manner, which, I am persuaded, its subtlest enemies will never be able to answer.—Let the discourses of Christ in the Evangelists, of Peter and Paul in the Acts, as well as many passages in the Epistles, be perused; and I will venture to say, he who is not charmed with them, must be a stranger to all the justest rules of polite criticism.—The book of the Holy Scriptures is written with the most consummate knowledge of human nature, so that there are a thousand latent beauties in it, which is the business and glory of true criticism to point out in a strong point of light.

Works, passim.

53. REV. ANSELM BAYLY, L.L. D.

A FREE and liberal study of the Hebrew language, in which the first and leading revelation was made from God to man,

man, seems to be the surest method of ascertaining the perfection of the Sacred Writings, and of throwing such new light upon them, as may clear their sense from many ancient objections, and subject it less to new.

It may appear a new and inconceivable truth to some—that the Hebrew, for its facility, expressiveness, the rules of syntax, and figures of speech, to say nothing of its important contents, would be the first language to be learned, were it possible to explain a language not understood otherwise than by one that is. This makes it necessary, that every learner should begin, as well in grammar as in speech, with his native tongue: but then he might very usefully go from the Hebrew to the Greek and Latin, drinking at the fountain head, and not wholly at the less pure streams.—

The first Word of God comes to us through the Hebrew; in which language every thing carries marks of priority and originality; and of course this language stands at the head of letters for nature, elegance, stability, uniformity, and precision.

The Hebrew is more natural and elegant than any other language, because more descriptive and figurative; it is more stable and uniform, because more radical; and it is more determinate and precise, because more ideal.

Hebrew Grammar.

54. REV. JOHN BROWN.

TO be capable of perusing the Oracles of God, in their originals, with humility of mind, will open to ones view, especially in the Old Testament, a scene of emphasis and glory, in thousands of instances, which cannot be exhibited in any translation whatsoever, and which no commentator observes.

Introduction to the Self-Interpreting Bible.

55. RAVY BERLINAS.

THE Hebrew language is of such simplicity and singleness, and of such little composition, as that my tongue is not able, neither my pen sufficient, nor my understanding capable to admire enough the plainness and uncompoundedness of that one holy oriental tongue.

Annotations on the Grammar of Martinus.

56. REV. DR. BAYLEY.

ANY person capable of understanding the English grammar, though ignorant of every word of Latin or Greek, may
make

make as speedy a proficiency in Hebrew, as if he had studied both languages for seven years. Yea, children, nine or ten years old, of either sex, may learn the Hebrew, and make a more speedy progress in one year, than is usually made in learning Latin seven years together. For Latin and Greek have no more dependance upon Hebrew, than Hebrew has upon any other vulgar language. But if it has affinity with any western language, it is the English; many of our words being derived from thence.—Let me recommend, therefore, the learning this delightful language to every man, woman, and child, who has opportunity, and wishes to attend to the exhortation of our Saviour—“Search the Scriptures.”

Entrance into the Sacred Language.

57. MR. WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

ALTHOUGH hitherto the Latin hath been in a manner the only door, by which men were let into the knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek, the tongues which the Holy Spirit hath sanctified in the Old and New Testaments; yet there is no reason why these tongues should be made only the appendages, as it were, of the Latin; or why such as are not acquainted with the Latin should be counted unfit to learn them; since they are tongues which have their peculiar properties, far different from the Latin; especially the Hebrew, which hath no more dependance upon, or nearness or connexion with either Latin or Greek, than with either English or Spanish, or any other tongue or language vulgarly spoken in Europe; and whose usefulness is infinitely to be valued above any thing which is attainable by the Latin; because in these the Oracles of God are delivered to us in their original purity.—

Whosoever, man or woman, hath but capacity or apprehension to understand the terms of grammar, though they never knew a word of Latin or Greek in their days, they may go on, and make as speedy a progress in the Hebrew, as if they had studied Latin and Greek for seven full years before. Nay, let but children, male or female, of nine or ten years of age, or sooner, if their apprehension be quicker than ordinary, be taught to understand the common terms of all languages, and they may be instructed in the Hebrew, and learn till they be perfect in the study, although they should never learn a word of Latin all their life after: yea, they may make a more speedy and profitable progress for understanding the language in one year, than is usually made in learning of Latin for seven years together.—There is no

other language in the world so simple, and so easy to be learned, by many degrees, for all the necessary grounds thereof, as the Hebrew.

Gate to the Hebrew, passim.

58. ORIGEN.

ST. JEROM informs us, that Origen was so sensible of the necessity of an acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue, that, contrary to the nature of his years and the customs of his countrymen, he learnt Hebrew when he was grown old.

Catalog. Script. Eccles.

59. ARCHBISHOP SECKER.

IT is quite necessary that we make the original language, at least of the New Testament, familiar to us; and were that of the Old more commonly studied, the advantages would be very considerable.

Charges.

60. POCOCK, D. D. ROYAL PROFESSOR.

THE language and writings of the Jews are peculiarly to be regarded, if we would have a true and genuine idea of the writings of the Old Testament.—It has been thought by most learned men, that the help which might be had from the writings of the Jewish grammarians will be very conducive to the true, literal, and genuine meaning of the text of the Holy Scriptures.

Preface to Com. on Hosea.

61. REV. JOHN MASON, M. A.

IF divinity be your peculiar study, endeavour to be critically expert in the original Scriptures of the Bible, and read a chapter in Hebrew, and another in Greek every day.

Student and Pastor.

62. REV. COTTON MATHER, D. D.

—HOW useful an acquaintance with the Hebrew learning and Rabbinical authors is to the understanding of the Lively Oracles, is evident to any who read Selden, Lightfoot, Pocock, Bochart, Ainsworth; not to mention others whose books are valued by men of the greatest genius.

Preface to his Vindication of the Bible.

THE glorious oracles of the New Testament are as pure Greek as ever was written in the world; and so correct, so noble, so sublime in their style, that never any thing under the cope of heaven, but the Old Testament, has equalled it.

Student and Preacher.

63. EUGENS

63. EUGENE ARAM.

—HAVING made myself master of the mathematics, I engaged in a school at Netherdale, where I married. Perceiving the deficiencies of my education, sensible of my want of the learned languages, and prompted by an irresistible covetousness of knowledge, I commenced a series of studies in that way, and undertook the tediousness, the intricacies, and the labour of Grammar. I selected Lilly from the rest; all which I got and repeated by heart. Next I became acquainted with Cambden's Greek grammar, which I also repeated in the same manner. Thus instructed, I entered upon the Latin classics, whose allurements repaid my assiduities and my labours. I remember to have at first hung over five lines for a whole day; and never, in all the painful course of my reading, left any one passage, but I did, or thought I did, perfectly comprehend it.

After I had accurately perused every one of the Latin classics, historians, and poets, I went through the Greek Testament; first, parsing every word as I proceeded; next, I ventured upon Hesiod, Homer, Theocritus, Herodotus, Thucydides, and all the Greek tragedians.—

Not satisfied with my former acquisitions, I prosecuted the attainment of the Hebrew, and with indefatigable diligence. I had Buxtorf's grammar; but that being perplexed, or not explicit enough, at least, in my opinion at that time, I collected no less than eight or ten different Hebrew grammars; and here one very often supplied the omissions of the others; and this was, I found, of extraordinary advantage. Then I bought the Bible in the original, and read the whole Pentateuch, with an intention to go through the whole, which I attempted, but wanted time.—The next two years I became a tolerable master of French.—After spending several years in the study of history and antiquities, heraldry and botany; in the last of which I became a considerable proficient, and was very agreeably entertained, I ventured upon the Chaldee and Arabic; and with a design to understand them, supplied myself with Erpenius and Chapelhow, and others. But I had not time to obtain any great knowledge of the Arabic; the Chaldee I found easy enough, because of its connection with the Hebrew.

I then investigated the Celtic, as far as possible, in all its dialects; begun collections, and made comparisons between that, the English, the Latin, the Greek, and even the Hebrew. I had made notes, and compared above three thou-

found of these together, and found such a surprising affinity, even beyond any expectation or conception, that I was determined to proceed through the whole of all these languages, and form a comparative lexicon. *Collier's Dictionary.*

64. MR. ROBERT HILL,

A FEW years ago, was living at Buckingham. Without the assistance of a master he attained the learned languages. He was born at Tring, in Hertfordshire, where an old relation having taught him his letters, he learned to read by himself alone, which was thought so remarkable in a child, that he was for the first time sent to school, but was by some accident prevented from going there longer than seven weeks, during which time, however, he learned to write. When he was about 14 years of age, he was put apprentice to a taylor and staymaker at Buckingham; but his desire of knowledge being still predominant, he gratified it under every possible disadvantage. With the first money he could scrape together he purchased a Latin grammar and Beza's Latin Testament. He then applied to the boys at the free-school, and endeavoured to do them any little service in his power, on condition of their telling him the English of the Latin words in some rule of his grammar. In proportion to the knowledge he acquired, he became more sensible of what he wanted, and as soon as he was able, purchased a *Gradus*, by which he was assisted in his pronunciation. As there are few difficulties unsurmountable by persevering labour, he, at the expiration of his apprenticeship, had not only learned his trade, but could understand several Latin authors tolerably well. Being now known to the neighbouring gentlemen, one of them upon the death of his son, gave him some of his books, among which was a Greek testament. This was a new object of curiosity; and not being able to rest while he had a book in his possession which he could not read, he immediately applied himself to learn Greek. In this arduous task he received some assistance from a young gentleman at Buckingham; and, in about three years, he began to read Greek authors with some pleasure. The same restless curiosity and desire of knowledge, which thus attached him to books, induced him not to follow his business at home, but to travel as an itinerant mender of clothes and stays; but in this state of poverty and dissipation, he was still an hard student, and at thirty-four years of age began to learn Hebrew. The first book he read for this purpose happened to be *Shindler's grammar*, in which finding several
 several

several deficiencies which he was at a loss to supply, after much labour and contrivance, he thought, if he could associate himself with some Jew, who was also travelling the country for subsistence, he might accompany him, and be able to get the instruction he wanted; and therefore finding an itinerary Jew at Oakingham, he communicated his scheme, and stated his difficulties. The Jew was ready to assist him; but Hill found him unable to do it, and therefore applied himself to many others, but to all with as little success. However, being very unwilling to relinquish his purpose, he had recourse to other Hebrew grammars, of which he read eleven, some of which answered his purpose but in one particular, and some in another, and by their means he became well acquainted with the Hebrew tongue. After he had thus acquired the knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and made himself acquainted with whatever such travels as his could produce to his observation, almost constantly studying half the night, that he might pursue his journey and business in the day, he returned to Buckingham, where he continued buried in obscurity, and scarce subsisting by his labour, but perfectly contented with his condition, behaving with the utmost modesty and diffidence.

Collier's Dictionary.

65. ARCHBISHOP USHER.

THE Hebrew is the first tongue of the world, and the most orderly speech; in comparison of which, all other languages may be condemned for barbarous confusion.

66. MR. THOMAS WALSH.

DECEMBER 20th, 1756, I spent the forenoon in my studies, in which God has, and does greatly assist me. About this time twelve months I could not read a sentence of Hebrew with any certainty, or construe a verse with readiness: but now I can read my Bible through, and understand it, almost as well as Latin or English. This hath God done, enabling me to read his blessed word in the first and best of languages. O may all my studies and talents be devoted to his glory!

Morgan's Life.

67. MUSCULUS

WAS a man of great application and deep learning, and a considerable master of the Greek and Hebrew languages, although he was at the least 32 years of age when he began

to study the latter, and 40 when he first applied to the former.

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.

68. DR. GILL

LEARNED the Hebrew language, suo Marte, without any living assistance, by the help of Buxtorf's grammar and lexicon. With only these, he surmounted the chief difficulties of that language; and could soon read the Hebrew Bible with great ease and pleasure.

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.

69. REV. DR. SPENCER

APPLIED himself so closely to the study of the Hebrew language, that he was able to dispute privately in it in three quarters of a year.

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.

70. BISHOP BEVERIDGE

APPLIED with such assiduity to the study of the oriental languages, and made such proficiency in this part of learning, that at eighteen years of age he wrote a treatise of the excellency and use of the oriental tongues, especially the Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic and Samaritan, with a Syriac Grammar.

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.

71. REV. CONRADE PELLICAN.

MELCHIOR ADAM relates very prolixly the most uncommon pains which Pellican took to acquire the knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, and the great proficiency he attained in it without any instruction from others. His own and his parents circumstances were but low; so that he got all his erudition in a manner out of the fire. While he was at Tubingen, the bookseller there had purchased an Hebrew bible, in a very small type, which no body seemed to care for. Pellican, after examining it well for a few days, wrote to his uncle for money, and bought it for a florence and a half, then believing himself to be a richer man than Cræsus. He immediately applied himself to the diligent reading of it, which was then the middle of July, and with such zeal, that by the end of the October following, he finished it; selecting the roots, and ranging the words in the form of a concordance. This was shewn to the famous Capnio, who declared himself astonished, not only at the work, but at the very short time in which it had been performed.

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.

72. REV.

72. REV. THOMAS BOSTON.

I BLESS my God in Jesus Christ, that ever he made me a Christian, and took an early dealing with my soul; that ever he made me a minister of the gospel, and gave me some insight into the doctrine of his grace, and that ever he gave me the blessed Bible, and brought me acquainted with the originals, and especially with the Hebrew text. The world hath all along been a stepdame to me; and wheresoever I would have attempted to nestle in it, there was a thorn of uneasiness laid for me. Man is born crying, lives complaining, and dies disappointed from that quarter. All is vanity and vexation of spirit.—I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.

Memoirs.

73. BISHOP BEDELL.

WAS always at work in his study, when the affairs of his function did not lead him out of it; in which his chief employment was the study of the text of Scripture. He read the Hebrew and the Septuagint so much, that they were as familiar to him as the English translation. He read every morning the Psalms appointed by the Common Prayer for the day in Hebrew.—Every day after dinner and supper, there was a chapter of the bible read at his table, whosoever were present, protestants or papists, and Bibles were laid down before every one of the company, and before himself either the Hebrew or Greek. *Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.*

74. REV. GEORGE TROSSE, M. A.

WAS as great a reader as most. He was mighty in the Scriptures, and had them ready in his memory; having read over the Bible, in English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and French, a hundred and a hundred times.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

75. REV. SAMUEL TAPPER

WAS a very hard student, and acquired a considerable stock of learning. He perfectly understood the French and Welsh languages. He got a great exactness in the Latin: but his beloved language was the Greek, in which he was so ready, that he read the poets and philosophers in their originals as familiarly as if he had been reading English. He had the Greek Testament by heart, and would suddenly,

upon

upon any occasion that offered, repeat the text, and criticize upon it, as if the book lay open before him.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

76. SIR JOHN HARTOPP

HAD a taste for universal learning, and ingenious arts were his delights from his youth. He pursued knowledge in various forms, and was acquainted with many parts of human science. Mathematical speculations and practices were a favourite study with him in younger years, and even to his old age he maintained his acquaintance with the heavenly bodies, and light and shade whereby time is measured. But the Book of God was his chief study, and his divinest delight. His Bible lay before him night and day, and he was well acquainted with the writers who explained it best. He was desirous of seeing what the Spirit of God said to men in the original languages; for this end he commenced some acquaintance with the Hebrew when he was more than fifty years old; and, that he might be capable of judging of any text in the New Testament he kept his youthful knowledge of the Greek language in some measure to the last period of life.

Dr. Watts' Happiness of separate Spirits made perfect.

77. REV. NATHANAEL BALL, M. A.

THIS gentleman was noted for his accuracy in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French languages. In the Hebrew and Oriental tongues, there were few that equalled, and scarce any that exceeded him. With the greatest ease would he, at first sight, render any part of the Hebrew Bible into proper English.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

78. REV. JOSEPH TRUMAN, B. D.

WAS well skilled in the learned languages, and a very good critic in the Greek. His head supplied the place of a lexicon; for he was able to give all the senses of any Greek word, where any thing of moment depended upon it, and to produce authorities both out of sacred and profane authors. It was surprising to many, what proficiency he made in the Hebrew tongue, from the time he began to apply himself to it.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

79. REV. JOSEPH COOPER.

HIS childhood and youth were vanity. At the 20th year of his age he began to live the life of a man and of a Christian.

Christian. He applied to his studies with unwearied diligence, and in ten or twelve years acquired much useful learning. By familiar converse with the best Roman authors, he attained a good Latin style. He became well skilled in Greek also, but his chief excellency lay in the Hebrew. He took great pains to compare oriental versions and the Septuagint with the Hebrew text. He read the Masorah, and other Jewish and Rabbinical commentaries, as if they had been in Latin.

Nonconformity's Memorial.

80. MR. JOHN BIDDLE,

WAS altogether taken up with the things of God, revealed in the Holy Scriptures; wherein his study, diligence, and attainments, have been so great, that his knowledge therein is of as ready use as a concordance, no part thereof being named, but he presently cites the book, chapter, and verse, especially throughout the books of the New Testament, where all the epistles he can say by heart out of the Greek tongue, and withal can read the Greek in English, and the English in Greek, so readily as a man can do the mere English; so careful hath he been rightly to understand them.

Life.

81. SIR HENRY WOTTON,

AFTER his customary public devotions, used to retire into his study, and there to spend some hours in reading the Bible and authors in divinity, closing up his meditations with private prayer. This was, for the most part, his employment in the forenoon.

Iz. Walton's Life.

82. SIR JOHN BARNARD,

WAS justly ranked amongst the most illustrious persons of his age, and was beloved and revered wherever he was known. He was not only blameless, but eminently exemplary in every relation of life; and to the faithful and active discharge of the personal and social duties, he added a most devout sense of religion. The first hour, at least, of every day was employed in prayer, and in the study of the Holy Scriptures, for which he always expressed the deepest veneration. He likewise attended public worship twice on a Sunday, and was constant in partaking of the Lord's Supper.

British Biography.

83. WILLIAM

83. WILLIAM PULTNEY, EARL OF BATH.

THIS celebrated nobleman was a firm friend to the established religion of his country, and free from all the vices of the age, even in his youth. He constantly attended the public worship of God, and all the offices of it in his parish church, while his health permitted it; and when his great age and infirmities prevented him from so doing, he supplied that defect, by daily reading over the morning service of the church before he came out of his bed-chamber.

British Biography.

84. REV. WILLIAM GOUGE, M. A.

THIS pious man was a lover of learning, and a very close student. His custom was to sit up late at night, and rise early in the morning. He lived in college nine years, and in all that time, except when he went out of town to his friends, he was never absent from morning prayers in the chapel, which used to be half an hour before six. He used to rise so long before he went to the chapel, as to gain time for his secret devotions, and for reading his morning task of scripture; for he tied himself to read every day fifteen chapters in English of the Scriptures, five in the morning, five after dinner before he fell upon his ordinary studies, and five before he went to bed. *Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.*

85. DR. BOERHAAVE.

IT is well known to have been the daily practice of this celebrated physician, throughout the principal part of his life, as soon as he arose in the morning, which was generally very early, to retire for an hour to private prayer, and meditating on some part of the Word of God.

Dodd's Sermons to Young Men.

86. JAMES BONNELL, ESQ.

THE Holy Scriptures were his constant and daily study. He read them, he thought them, nay, he prayed them over too, abundance of his meditations taking their rise from those passages of Scripture he then read. *Hamilton's Life.*

87. REV. GEORGE HERBERT,

YOUNGER brother to the lord Herbert of Cherbury, was a person of great wit and learning, and turned his noble faculty

faculty of poetry to the most divine uses. In his poem called the Pearl, he professes, that though he had taken a view of all human learning, honour, pleasure, and the other enjoyments of this world, yet he resolutely bid farewell to them all, for the pleasures and advantages of the love of God, and the sweet and happy entertainments of religion; and he would solemnly profess, that he would not part with one leaf of the Bible for all the world, if it were offered in exchange.

Woodward's Fair Warnings.

88. MONSIEUR PASCAL.

THIS great man, during some of the latter years of his life, spent his whole time in prayer, and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in this he took incredible delight. He used to say that the knowledge of the Sacred Writings was not a science of the head, but of the heart; that it was not so much as barely intelligible, but only to those who had an upright heart; and that all others could not meet with any thing there but darkness and obscurity. To these heavenly lectures he so closely applied himself, that he had them all by heart; so that it was impossible to put a false quotation upon him; for if you spoke but a syllable to him in that way, he would positively aver, This is not, or that is in the Holy Scriptures, and then immediately would denote precisely the very place where the words were to be found.

Jesup's Life of Pascal.

89. REV. JOHN TRAPP, M. A.

IT is the command of our dear Lord, "Search the Scriptures:" and it was the practice of his virgin mother, as is manifest by her Magnificat, mostly made up of other Holy Scriptures; in the reading whereof, she is storied by Sabelius to have spent a third part of her precious time.

That Roman lady, and noble martyr, Cecilia, had, by much reading, made her bosom the library of Jesus Christ. And Gorgonia is much commended by her brother Nazianzen for her assiduity in this holy exercise.

Julian, indeed, that odious apostate, and professed enemy of the truth, twits the Christians of those primitive times with this, that their women also were medlers with the Scriptures. And cardinal Hosius blusheth not to affirm, that a distaff were a far deal fitter for a woman's hand than a Bible: but St. Jerom very highly commendeth, for their Scripture skill, those

those noble ladies of his time, Eustochium, Salvina, Celsantia, Paula, exhorting them not to lay down their Bibles, until, being overcome with sleep, they bowed down their heads, as it were to salute those holy leaves with a kiss.

Our renowned queen Elizabeth was excellently well versed in God's blessed book; and so was that incomparable young princess, lady Elizabeth, sister to king Charles the Second, as being trained up of a child in the word of truth: as was also lady Packington, of Westwood in Worcesterhire; of whom I find this rare testimony given by Mr. Durham in his Family Instructor, that by the strictness of her education, and happiness of her memory, she had a great part of the Old Testament, and all the New, so perfectly by heart, that she could repeat almost any chapter of either, backward or forward; tell any particular verse or words, where they are what goes before, and what follows after. Something like this also we read of Cranmer and Latimer; and of Olympia, Fulvia, and Morata, an Italian lady.

Annotations upon the Bible.

90. REV. JONATHAN HANMER, M. A.

MY son, strive to be a good logician.—Daily ply the Greek.—Neglect not the Hebrew.—Converse much with the Greek Testament.

Surge, precare, stude, meditator, currito, prande;

Lude, stude, cana, meditare, precare, quiesce.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

91. REV. JOHN MORTIMER, B. A.

WAS very studious and serious; and so conversant with the Holy Scripture, that if any one mentioned a passage of it, he would readily tell the chapter and verse.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

92. HUGO GROTIUS.

WHAT we cannot sufficiently admire in a man of so great learning, and so much business as Grotius, is, that he should make the Holy Scriptures his favourite study in every period of his life. They were his consolation in prison; he always devoted a part of the day to them: and they were his principal study during a great part of his embassy.

Life by M. De Burigny.

93. REV.

93. REV. THOMAS VINCENT, M. A.

HAD the whole New Testament and Psalms by heart. He took this pains, as he often said, not knowing but they who took from him his pulpit, might in time demand his Bible also. *Nonconformist's Memorial.*

94. REV. HENRY JESSEY, M. A.

WAS so great a Scripturist, that if one began to rehearse any passage, he would go on with it, and name the book, chapter, and verse where it might be found. The original languages of the Old and New Testament were as familiar to him as his mother tongue. *Nonconformist's Memorial.*

95. JOHN SMITH, M. D.

THE Word of God doth upon many subjects of natural things, though but briefly and incidentally mentioned, give a clearer and more sure light, than all the voluminous writings of the whole shoal of Heathenish philosophers.—

We are so far from flighting or contemning the Scripture, that we are the great admirers of it, and do endeavour to advance it above all other writings whatsoever, and that even in natural things, though never so accidentally or cursorily handled; and we had rather that all our other books, though very curious, and greatly valuable, should be burnt, than that one line, nay one letter, one jot, or tittle of it should in any wise pass away. *Portrait of Old Age.*

96. MONSIEUR RACINE.

WHATEVER company I kept, God gave me grace never to be ashamed of—the Gospel.

Letter to Madam de Maintenon.

97. COUNT ZINZENDORF

DID not bind himself to the trammels of scholastic divinity; but the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were his standard of truth, and from thence he sought for knowledge: and indeed he was so conversant with them, that the Bible was written in his memory, and on the table of his heart. *Preface to the Doctrine of the United Brethren.*

98. BOSSUET, BISHOP OF MEAUX.

ALL our consolation ought to be in reading the Holy Scriptures; we ought to kiss the sacred characters a thousand
and

and a thousand times; and above all things we ought to meditate upon the sense of them by night and by day.

Sermons.

99. SAMUEL JOHNSON, L. L. D.

MY purpose is to read the Scriptures, to let no week pass without reading some part, and to write down my observations.—

I hope to read the whole Bible once a year, as long as I live.

Strahan's Prayers and Meditations of Dr. Johnson.

100. SIR THOMAS MORE.

WOULD God we had the like reverence to the Scripture of God that the Jews have. For I assure you, I have heard very worshipful folks say, who have been in their houses, that a man could not hire a Jew to sit down upon his Bible of the Old Testament; but he taketh it with great reverence in hand when he will read, and reverently layeth it up again when he hath done.

Works.

101. KING EDWARD, THE SIXTH.

UPON a certain occasion, a paper that was called for in his council chamber, happened to lie out of reach; the person concerned to produce it, took a Bible that lay by, and standing upon it reached down the paper. The king, observing what was done, ran himself to the place, and taking the Bible in his hands, kissed it, and laid it up again.

History of England.

102. THE REV. JOHN BUGHENAGIUS,

WAS one of the learned men who assisted Luther in the translation of the Bible into German. All his life-time afterwards he kept the day, on which it was finished, annually a festival with his friends, calling it, The feast of the translation of the Bible.

Middleton's Biog. Evangelica.

103. REV. THOMAS VENTRESS, M. A.

WHEN upwards of seventy years of age, this pious man, laid himself down upon his bed, dressed as he was, and taking his Greek Testament in his hand, he kissed it, and laid it on his heart, and soon fell asleep in the Lord.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

104. REV.

104. REV. JOHN RICHARDSON,

WAS a powerful preacher, whatever subject he handled ; and was well furnished for his office, particularly by his skill in the Scriptures, for which he was very eminent. He had read the Bible above thirty times over, that is about once a year, and always with some comment or other, besides his occasional and extraordinary reading.

Nonconformist's Memorial.

105. FATHER PAUL.

THIS learned Catholic had read over the Greek Testament with so much exactness, that having used to mark every word when he had fully weighed the importance of it, as he went through it ; he had by going often over it, and observing what he past over in a former reading, grown up to that at last, that every word was marked of the whole New Testament : and when Bishop Bedell suggested to him critical explanations of some passages that he had not understood before, he received them with transports of one that leapt for joy, and that valued the discoveries of divine truth beyond all other things.

Gillies' Historical Collections.

106. BISHOP LATIMER.

IT was customary in the days of king Henry the eighth for the bishops to make presents to the king on new-year's-day, and many of them would present very liberally, proportioning their gifts to their expectancies. Among the rest, the bishop of Worcester, being at this time in town, waited upon the king with his offering ; but, instead of a purse of gold, which was the common oblation, he presented a New Testament, as a gift far more precious than gold and silver, with a leaf doubled down, in a very conspicuous manner, to this passage : " Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge."

Fox's Acts and Monuments.

107. GREGORY LOPEZ.

THOUGH this extraordinary man never much applied himself to the study of learning, yet he had by heart all the historical part of Scripture ; and word for word the gospels of St. Matthew and St. John ; and those things of the two other evangelists, which these omitted ; as likewise St. Paul's epistles, and the Apocalypse. In fine, he had so perfect a knowledge of all the Sacred Writ, that being asked of any text,

text, or sentence there, he always recited it with a marvelous readiness and certainty.

Life of Lopez.

108. BISHOP RIDLEY.

FAREWELL, Pembroke Hall! In thy orchard; the walls, buts, and trees, if they could speak, would bear me witness; I learned without book almost all St. Paul's epistles, yea, and I ween all the canonical epistles, save only the Apocalypse. Of which study, although in time a great part did depart from me, yet the sweet smell thereof, I trust, I shall carry with me into heaven; for the profit thereof I think I have felt in all my life time ever after.

Fox's A&M and Monuments.

109. REV. LAURENCE SAUNDERS, M. A. AND MARTYR.

I HOLD no heresies, but the doctrine of God, the blessed Gospel of Christ. It is that I hold, it is that I believe, it is that I have taught, and it is that I will never revoke.

Fox's A&M and Monuments.

110. REV. THOMAS BILNEY, L. L. B. AND MARTYR.

THIS pious and excellent man, in a letter to Tonstal, bishop of London, gives the following account of his conversion; comparing the priests and friars to the physicians, upon whom the woman, vexed twelve years with a bloody issue, spent all that she had, and found no help, but was still worse and worse; till at last she came to Christ, and was healed by him:—

O (said he) the mighty power of the Most High! which I also, a miserable sinner, have often tasted and felt; whereas before, I spent all I had upon those ignorant physicians, in-somuch, that I had little strength left in me. But, at last, I heard of Jesus; and that was when the New Testament was translated by Erasmus; for at that time I knew not what it meant. But looking into the New Testament, by God's special providence, I met with those words of the apostle St. Paul: "This is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, whereof I am chief." O most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul! This one sentence, through God's instruction and inward working, did so exhilarate my heart,

which

which before was wounded with the guilt of my sins, and almost in despair, that immediately I found wonderful comfort and quietness in my soul; so that my bruised bones leaped for joy. After this, the Scriptures became sweeter to me than the honey and the honey-comb: for by them I learned that all my travels, fastings, watchings, redemption of masses, and pardons, without faith in Christ, were but, as St. Augustine calls them, A hasty running out of the right way; and as fig-leaves which could not cover Adam's nakedness.—For as Adam could find no rest to his guilty soul, till he believed in the promise of God, that Christ, the seed of the woman, should tread upon the serpent's head, so neither could I find deliverance from the sharp stings and bitings of my sins, till I was taught of God that lesson which Christ spake of in the third chapter of John: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.

III. REV. WILLIAM TINDALE, M. A. AND MARTYR.

I CALL God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that (in my translation of the Bible) I never altered one syllable of God's Word against my conscience, nor would this day, if all that is in the earth, whether it be pleasure, honour, or riches, might be given me.

Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.

II2. MARTIN CHEMNITS.

I HAVE loved the history of salvation concerning the life and actions of my dearest Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ from my tenderest years.

Harmony of the Gospels.

II3. GREGORY CROW.

ON June 26th, 1556, this poor man, who lived at Malden in Essex, went to sea, intending to have gone into Kent for fuller's earth, but by the way was driven upon a sand, where the boat presently sunk, and was filled with water, so that the men were forced to hold by the mast of the boat, and all things that would swim, did swim out of her: among which Crow saw his Testament in the water, and caught it, and put it into his bosom.

Within an hour after this, it being ebbing water, the boat was dry, but so broken, that they could not save her.

They went however upon the sand, being at least ten miles from land, and there made their prayers together, that God would send some snip to their assistance, being in all two men and one boy; for they could stay there but one half hour longer, before it would be flood. In this time they found their chest, wherein were five pounds, six shillings, and eight pence, belonging to the said Crow; which money the other man took up and gave to the owner, who cast it into the sea, saying, If the Lord will save our lives, he will provide us a living. When the water returned they got upon the mast, and there hung by the arms and legs for the space of ten hours; in which time the poor boy was so weary and beaten with the sea, that he fell off, and was drowned.

When the water was gone again Crow and his companion took down the mast, and committed themselves to the sea. At ten o'clock that night the water bore up the mast. In this situation they continued till next day at night, when the man died with hunger, and fatigue, and watching. Crow continued alone in this dreadful posture all night again, and till six o'clock next evening, when he was taken up by a vessel laden to Antwerp. All this time, though he had cast away his money, he retained the New Testament in his bosom. The ship's crew and the people of Antwerp were so struck with the man's wonderful deliverance, and especially with the account of the money and the book, that they flocked from all quarters to see him; gave him clothes, and collected for him among the English merchants six pounds, ten shillings, marvelling at the wonderful works of God.

Book of Martyrs.

114. REV. JOHN ELIOT, THE INDIAN APOSTLE.

THIS holy man, the first preacher of the gospel among the American Indians, was a mighty student of the sacred Bible; and it was unto him as his necessary food. He made the Bible his companion, and his counsellor, and the holy lines of Scripture more enamoured him, than the profane ones of Tully ever did the famous Italian cardinal.

Life of Eliot.

115. MR. EDWARD GOLDNEY.

IF I were this moment in possession of an hundred thousand guineas, and could not purchase the Holy Bible, unless I paid

I paid ninety nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine guineas, twenty shillings, and eleven pence three farthings, for that book of books, though it were but badly bound, and printed in the smallest brevier letter, I would actually give that money for it.

Scriptural Counsel.

116. LORD CROMWELL, EARL OF ESSEX.

IN his time the writings of Erasmus made so much noise in the world, that they drew the attention of this nobleman; and it is a remarkable instance of his memory and industry, that in a journey to and from Rome, he learned by heart the whole New Testament of that writer's translation.

Christian's Magazine.

117. KING ALFRED THE GREAT.

THAT part of this monarch's time which he dedicated to sacred uses, he spent in hearing the public offices of the church, reading the scriptures, and books of devotion, in meditation, and in writing. He always carried about him the Psalms and the office of the day, with many blank leaves bound together with them, in which he daily made collections of such divine sentences, and portions of scripture, as served best to excite his devotion. And so much pleasure did he take in this practice, that he called the little book, in which he wrote, his Hand-Book, because he had it day and night at hand with him.

Christian's Magazine.

118. MR. NICHOLAS FERRAR.

THE genius of this gentleman at six years old began to discover itself much addicted to history, that of the Holy Bible especially, which he compassed in two or three years, and got all the Psalms without book.

Life by Bishop Turner.

119. MR. ARCHDEACON BLACKBURNE.

AT the time of the reformation the Scriptures had for a long time been locked up from the common people in an unknown tongue; and when, by the care of their reformed pastors, the Bible was translated into English, it is almost incredible with what avidity the poor people applied themselves to the reading of it. Readers indeed in those days were but scarce; and happy was the company who could meet with a person with an audible voice, and a distinct pronunciation, that would read the Scriptures to them. Our

histories give us accounts of the vast crouds of people who attended such meetings in Paul's church, and other places, where English Bibles were provided for that purpose.

Considerations on Popery.

120. MR. R. GOADBY.

THE Holy Scriptures are a treasure of more worth than thousands of gold and silver, and whose value is above every thing we can possess.

Illustration of the Holy Scriptures.

121. PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

ARCHBISHOP CRANMER, from the day of his promotion to the see of Canterbury, had continually employed his thoughts on getting the Scriptures translated into English. He had often solicited his Majesty about it, and, at length, obtained a grant that they might be translated and printed.—As soon as some of the copies came to the Archbishop's hands, he sent one to the lord Cromwell, desiring him to present it in his name to the king, importuning him to intercede with his majesty, that by his authority all his subjects might have the liberty of using it without constraint; which lord Cromwell accordingly did, and the king readily assented. Injunctions were forthwith published, requiring an English Bible of the largest size to be procured for the use of every parish-church, at the expence of the minister and church-wardens; and prohibited all discouraging the people from reading or hearing the Scriptures. The book was received with inexpressible joy; every one, that was able, purchased the same; and the poor greedily flocked to hear it read. Some persons in years learned to read on purpose that they might peruse it; and even little children crouded with eagernels to hear it, *Middleton's Biographia Evangelica.*

122. MONSIEUR FLEURY.

THE faithful studied the Word of God in private, every one by himself, meditating upon it both day and night. They used to read over again in their houses what they had heard read at the church, to fix in their memories the expositions of the pastors, and to discourse them over among themselves. Above all, the fathers of families took care to make these repetitions to their domestics: for every master of a family was within the walls of his own house as it were a private pastor, keeping up there a regular course of praying and reading; instructing his wife, children, and servants; and

and in a plain and familiar way administering proper exhortations to them; and thus preserving all that belonged to him in the unity of the church, by the entire submission he himself paid to his pastor. What I have said of fathers is also to be understood of mothers, who took the same religious care of their children. St. Basil, and his brother St. Gregory Nyssene, glory in their having kept the faith, which they received from their grandmother Macrina, and she from St. Gregory Thaumaturgus. And it seems to be upon this account that St. Paul gives so particular a character of the faith of the mother and grandmother of St. Timothy. One proof of the special care that parents took in the well instructing their families, is, that we do not find in all antiquity any such thing as a catechism for little children, nor any public provision made for the instruction of those that were baptized before they came to years of discretion. Every private house was then, saith St. Chryostom, as a church to itself.

There were even many lay christians that had the Holy Scripture by heart; so constant were they in the reading of it. They generally carried a Bible about them, making it their companion wherever they went; and many saints have been found buried with the gospel laying on their breasts. St. Chryostom tells us, that in his time many women wore it hanging at their necks; that they washed their hands when they received those holy books; that every one expressed his inward regard for them, by the tokens of external reverence, at the reading and hearing of them, the men uncovering their heads, and the women covering theirs: for women read the Scriptures no less than men. We find some of those holy female martyrs, who in the Diocletion persecution having been forced to quit all they had, and hide themselves in caves, regretted nothing else but the loss of their Bibles, and their being thereby deprived of those blessed consolations which they before enjoyed in exercising themselves day and night in those Sacred Writings.

Primitive Christianity.

123. DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

THIS illustrious general's behaviour is greatly worthy our observation. No indecent expression ever dropped from his lips; and herein he was imitated by the genteel part of the army. His camps were like a quiet and well-governed city, and, perhaps, much more mannerly. Cursing, swearing,

ing, and blustering, were never heard among those who were reckoned good officers; and his army was, beyond all contradiction the best academy in the world, to teach a young gentleman wit and breeding; a sot and a drunkard being what they scorned. The poor soldiers, who were, too many of them, the refuse and dregs of the nation, became, after one or two campaigns, by the care of their officers, and by good order and discipline, tractable, civil, orderly, sensible, and clean, and had an air and a spirit above the vulgar. The service of God, according to the order of the established church, was strictly enjoined by the Duke's special care. In all fixed camps, every morning and evening were prayers; and on Sundays were sermons both in the field and in garisons. He was so great a discourager of vice, as to give particular directions to the Provost Marshal, to chase away all lewd women from about his quarters; and before a battle, the chaplains of the several regiments, by his special order, performed divine service; as also after a victory obtained, solemn thanksgiving was observed throughout the whole army.

Lediard's Life.

124. JAMES DUKE OF ORMONDE.

THIS nobleman, throughout the whole course of his life, was remarkable for his hospitality and beneficence. His doors were open to all; but to an Englishman his heart also, without distinction of parties. His charity was so extensive, that he would have himself wanted, had not his servants concealed from his knowledge numbers who continually applied to him for relief. Though he was unalterable in his religion, yet he did not think the difference of tenets ought to make him distinguished in his charities. He had divine service performed in his house, according to the Liturgy of the church of England, twice every Sunday, and on every Wednesday and Friday morning throughout the year, at which all his Protestant servants were obliged to be present. The sacrament was administered to the family once a quarter, and, for a week before he received, the Duke would see nobody, his chaplain excepted, who was his constant attendant for that space of time. He never prepared for bed, or went abroad in a morning, till he had withdrawn for an hour to his closet.

Life.

125. DUKE OF BERWICK.

WHILE this nobleman was at Vienna, there happened an affair to him, which, however inconsiderable, I relate, because

because

because it is an instance of his great devotion and attention in prayer. He had been visiting Count Stratman, the Emperor's minister, who sent a gentleman next day to invite him to dinner. This gentleman went to the English ambassador's, where the Duke lodged; and not finding him there, he was informed that the Duke was at the church of the Capuchine Friars, where he went every morning to offer up his devotion. The gentleman went thither, and accordingly found the Duke of Berwick prostrate at the altar, and in so deep a meditation, that he mistook him for a candidate who desired to be admitted among the Capuchines; and this gave Count Stratman an occasion of rallying the Duke of Berwick.

Life.

126. THE EMPEROR THEODOSIUS, JUNIOR,

ACCUSTOMED himself to fast frequently, especially on Wednesdays and Fridays. This he did out of an earnest endeavour of observing the rites of the Christian religion with accuracy. He governed his palace so, that it differed not much from a monastery. Wherefore he, together with his sisters, rose early in the morning, and recited alternate hymns in praise of God. Moreover, he could say the Sacred Scriptures by heart.

Socrates Scholasticus.

127. REV. JOSEPH BINGHAM, M. A.

THE monks of Palestine had six or seven canonical hours of prayer, and so had those in Mesopotamia and other parts of the East. There was morning prayer at the first hour of the day, then the third, sixth, and ninth hours, and after that the eleventh hour. Besides which, they had their constant vigils, or nocturnal meetings. But the monks of Egypt were not tied to all these canonical hours, but only met twice a day for public devotion: but then the whole day was spent in devotion notwithstanding: for in their private cells, whilst they were at work, they were always repeating the psalms and other parts of the Holy Scripture, and intermixing prayers and supplications continually with their labour.—They daily learned some portion of Scripture, and more especially made it their meditation on the Lord's-day; insomuch that many of them became so expert and well versed in the Holy Scripture, that they could repeat it by heart: which is particularly noted of Hilarion, Ammonius, Marcus Junior, Eros, Serapion, Solomon, and others. And by this means they were qualified to entertain their souls with

with

with spiritual exercises, finging of David's psalms, and repeating other parts of Scripture, even at their bodily labours.—At Christ's little village of Bethlehem there was nothing to be heard but psalms: one could not go into the field, but he should hear the plowman finging his hallelujahs, the sweating mower solacing himself with hymns, and the vine-dresser tuning David's psalms. Thus the ancient Monks joined their bodily and spiritual exercise together, and made their common labour become acts of devotion to God. Their times of eating and refreshment, were managed after the same manner. In some places they had the Scriptures read at table. At other places, when supper was ended, they sung an hymn and so returned to their cells. Thus their ordinary refreshments were sanctified with the Word of God and prayer.—It is very observable, that in the primitive church not only men and women, but children were encouraged and trained up from their infancy to the reading of the Holy Scriptures. Of this we have undoubted evidence from many eminent instances of their practice. Eusebius remarks of the great care of Leonides the Martyr, and father of Origen, in the education of his son, that he made him learn the Scriptures, before he set him to the study of the liberal arts and polite learning. And Socrates makes the like observation upon the education of Eusebius surnamed Emisenus, who was born of noble parentage at Edeffa, a city of Osroene in Mesopotamia, that he was first taught the Holy Scriptures from his infancy, and then human learning. And Sozomen in relating the same story, says, this was done according to the custom of the country; which shews, that it was no singular instance, but a general practice to bring children up from their infancy to the use of the Holy Scriptures. Gregory Nyffene notes it in the life of his sister Marcrina, that the first part of her instruction in her infancy was to be taught the easy portions of Scripture, that were most suitable to her age: and he says also, she did the same for her younger brother Peter, taking him from his mother's breasts, and instructing him in the Scriptures, that he might have no time to spend upon vain studies. 'Tis noted by Sozomen and Palladius, of Marcus the Hermit, that he was so expert in the Scriptures when he was but a youth, that he could repeat all the Old and New Testament without book.—Such was the advantage which some hearers in those days reaped from the benefit of having the Scriptures read, that it is very remarkable what is related of one or two of them; that being men of good memories, they got the
Scriptures

Scriptures by heart, without any knowledge of letters, only by hearing them constantly read in the church or elsewhere. St. Austin remarks this of St. Antony the famous Egyptian Monk, that without being able to read himself, he made such a proficiency in the knowledge of the Scriptures, as both by hearing them read, to be able to repeat them, and by his own prudent meditation to understand them. And Gregory the Great gives a like instance in one Servulus, a poor man at Rome. who though he knew not a letter in the book, yet purchasing a Bible, and entertaining religious men, he prevailed with them to read it continually to him, by which means he perfectly learned the Holy Scriptures. 'Tis yet a more astonishing instance, which Eusebius gives in one of the Martyrs of Palestine, a blind man, called John, who had so happy a memory, that he could repeat any part of the Bible as readily as others could read it. And he sometimes supplied the office of reader in the church; and he did this to so great perfection, that Eusebius says, when he first heard him, he was perfectly amazed, and thought he had heard one reading out of a book, till he came a little more curiously to examine him, and found that he did it only by the eyes of his understanding, having the Scriptures written not in books or tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of his heart. There are many such like instances in ancient story.

Antiquities of the Christian Church.

128. CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS.

THE whole life of a Christian is a holy solemnity; his sacrifices are prayers and praises; before every meal he has the reading of the Holy Scriptures; and psalms and hymns at the time of his meals.

Stromates.

129. REV. JOSHUA BARNES, B. D.

IT is mentioned on the monument of this learned man, that he read a small English Bible, that he usually carried about him, one hundred and twenty times over, at leisure hours.

British Biography.

130. SIR PHILIP SKIPPON.

SIR,

I BELIEVE I shall somewhat surprize you with what myself and many others have observed in a little boy, William Wotton, five years old this month, the son of Mr. Wotton, minister of this parish, who hath instructed this child

child

child within the last three quarters of a year in the knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, which he can now read almost as well as English; and that he could read at four years and three months old, as well as most lads twice his age. He can render several chapters in the Gospels out of Latin and Greek, and many psalms in Hebrew into his mother tongue; and such as are good Hebricians assure me he can, where he is acquainted in the Hebrew-psalter, read that tongue without pricks. He is not yet able to parse any language, but what he performs in turning the three learned tongues into English is done by strength of memory, so that he is ready to mistake, when some words of different signification have near the same sound. And though he reads English indifferently well in any book, yet take him out of the Latin and Greek Testament, and the Hebrew psalter, he is not so able to read or tell the English of the words, which he usually gives without much regard to the mood, tense, number, case, &c. I have heard him read the beginning of Virgil, and where he hath been taught Latin verses, which he can English, he accents the words, and observes the cadences very well. He can do the like in Homer. His father informed me, that perceiving his child's inclination to books, he first taught him words by rote, then got him to read St. John's Gospel in Latin, which in a month's time he made great proficiency in, so that he was able to construe the first chapter very tolerably. After that he tried him with the Greek, which he learnt with the same facility as he had done the Latin; both which languages the child was exercised in every day, the Latin in the morning, and the Greek in the afternoon. The like improvement was made in the Hebrew. It is much delight to the child the learning of these languages, and he is as forward to play as other children. His father does also say, that if there be any difference of his pleasure in the tongues, it is more in the Hebrew than in the other two. He truly observes the accents of the Greek, and knows the force of the Hebrew pricks, and understands the potestas of every letter in both, which his father says, he taught him without the names of letters; and he questions not, if his own life be continued five years longer with that of his child's, that the boy will be truly understanding in those three languages. He hath taught him by no rules, but only uses the child's memory in remembering words. Some other children of his age seem to have as good a fancy and quick apprehension; but, if afterwards this child answers the parents hopes, and others expectations,

expectations, and makes as great a proficiency in the exercise of judgment, in the understanding of sense, and the knowledge of things, he will prove a person eminently qualified. His father, 'tis hoped, will give a better account.

Wrentham, Sept. 18, 1671.

Letter to Mr. Ray.

131. REV. AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, B. A.

IF we have had a spiritual view of Christ, we shall love and study his Holy Word. Christ crucified is the central point, wherein the lines of both Testaments coincide. They testify of me, said the Son of God. They testify the greatness of his person, the greatness of his love, and the unspeakable greatness of his condescending humility. They bear witness to the glory of his covenant, the necessity and perfection of his righteousness, the merit of his propitiation, and the prevalency of his intercession; the efficacy of his grace, and the freeness of his salvation. And yet, though the Scriptures were dictated by his Spirit, and hold the lamp to knowledge and happiness, how many cast the precious charter behind their backs, or even trample it under their feet! Though, as one expresses it, God himself has vouchsafed to commence author, how few will so much as give his works the reading!—The renowned Scipio Africanus hardly ever had Xenophon's writings out of his hand. Alexander the Great made Homer's poems his constant companion. St. Chrysostom was so fond of Aristophanes' comedies, that he even laid them under his pillow when he slept. Our matchless Alfred constantly carried Boetius on the consolation of philosophy in a fold of his robe. Tamerlane, if I rightly remember, always carried about with him the history of Cyrus. Bishop Jewel could recite all Horace; and bishop Sanderfon all Tully's Offices. The Italians are said to be such admirers of Tasso, that the very peasants sing him by heart, as they pursue their country labours. The famous Leibnitz could repeat, even in extreme old age, the greatest part of Virgil; and one of the late Popes is said to have learned English, purely for the sake of reading the Spectator in its original language. How warmly does Horace recommend the study of the Greek-writers to the Roman youth! *Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.*—How, then, ought Christians to study the Book of God! Beza, at upwards of eighty years of age, could repeat the whole of St. Paul's epistles, in the original Greek, and all the Psalms in Hebrew: and, more lately, the learned Wit-

fius,

fius, even at a very advanced period of life, could recite almost any passage of Scripture, in its proper Hebrew or Greek, together with the context, and the criticisms of the best commentators. How will such persons rise in judgment against the negligent professors, the many superficial divines, and the flimsy infidels of the present day! Time has been, when the Word of the Lord was precious in this land: so precious, that, in the reign of Henry 8th, if I mistake not, an honest farmer once gave a cart load of hay for one leaf of St. James's epistle in English. Now, indeed, through the goodness of God, the manna of his Word lies in abundance round our tents. But, what is the consequence? Most of us are for reading any book, except that which can make us wise to salvation. We disdain even the bread of life: I had almost said, we spurn it away with our feet. Hence our spiritual declensions.—The Bible is God's epistle to mankind; and what greater affront can be shewn even to an earthly friend, than to throw by his letters unopened and unread?—May we not address the generality of Christians, so called, in the words of Mr. Boston? The dust, on one hand, or the finery, on the other, about your Bibles, is a witness now, and will, at the last day, be a witness, of the enmity of your hearts against Christ as a prophet.

Jesus seen of Angels.

132. ABEILLARD.

A GREAT part of the time of this celebrated person must have been given to writing, which was chiefly dedicated to the nuns of the Paraclet. He exhorts them to the study of the Holy Scriptures. He speaks much of the learning, of the conduct, and of the example of St. Jerom, who had deemed it no unworthy office to attend to the education of women. The old man had sketched out the first elementary lines for his favourite Paula, and he promises to become her master and her play-fellow, if necessary; that he will carry her on his shoulders, that he will help her to form her first words, and that he will take more glory in it, than did Aristotle in the tutorage of Alexander. Abeillard could not be ashamed to tread in the steps of this great man.—He strongly recommends the study of the Greek and Hebrew languages, as essentially necessary to the due understanding of the sacred writers, and he talks much of the great imperfection of all translations. You, says he to the nuns, are inexcusable, if you neglect to acquire this important learning:

ing: you have no long journeys to make in quest of it, no expences to incur. In Heloisa you have a mistress, who can suffice for all: virtue she will teach you by example, and literature by precept. Versed in Latin, and not unskilled in the Hebrew and Greek languages, she alone, at this time, seems to possess that knowledge, which in the blessed Jerom was so much extolled.—Happy, he says, is that person, who, turning over the divine volumes, can draw their sense from the purest source, and who is not necessitated to recur to muddy streams, which are so ill qualified to allay his thirst. But he laments, that with the study of the ancient languages, all knowledge of them had long been lost, excepting what, to the shame of the other sex, still remained with the abbesses of the Paraclet.—The nuns were animated by this address: they took the advice of their master; Heloisa shewed the way; and they entered on the new career which was opened to them. They studied the learned languages, and they read the Scriptures. Envidable would be the conventual life, were it always so employed!

Berington's History of the Lives of Abeillard and Heloisa.

133. BISHOP JEWEL,

HAD naturally a very strong memory, which he is said to have greatly improved by art; so that he could exactly repeat whatever he wrote after once reading. And we are told, that while the bell was ringing, he committed to his memory a repetition sermon, and pronounced it without hesitation. Indeed, his general method in his sermons was, to write down only the heads, and meditate upon the rest while the bell was ringing to church. Yet so firm was his memory, that he used to say, if he were to deliver a premeditated speech before a thousand auditors, shouting or fighting all the while, they would not put him out. In order to try him, Dr. Parkhurst having proposed many barbarous words out of a calendar, and Bishop Hooper forty Welsh, Irish, and foreign terms, he, after once or twice reading at the most, repeated them all by heart, backward and forward. Another time, in 1563, Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, having read to him, out of Erasmus's paraphrase, the last clauses of ten lines, confused and imperfect on purpose, he, sitting silent a while, and covering his face with his hand, immediately repeated all those broken parcels of sentences the right way, and the contrary, without any hesitation. He professed himself able to teach others this art; and is said to

have

have actually taught it to his tutor, Dr. Parkhurst, at Zurich; who, in the space of twenty-eight days, and only by spending an hour a day, learned all the twenty-eight chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel so perfectly, that he could readily repeat the whole, or any particular verse; knowing at the same time what went before, and what followed after, any verse that was mentioned to him. *British Biography.*

133. SIR JOHN CHEKE,

WAS one of the most learned men of the age in which he lived, and one of the greatest promoters and encouragers of true and solid learning. The authors he chiefly admired and recommended, were, Cicero, Demosthenes, Isocrates, Xenophon, Aristotle, and Plato. These, together with the Bible, and a few more, were sufficient, in his judgment, to render a man substantially learned, and truly wise and good. *British Biography.*

134. MONSIEUR LE CLERC.

WHILE I was compiling my harmony I was so struck with admiration of the excellent discourses of Jesus, so inflamed with love of his most holy doctrine, that methought I but just then began to be acquainted with what I scarce ever laid out of my hands from my infancy. The works of men, however exquisite and perfect in their kind, have their faults and blemishes, which are easily discernible upon a strict examination, although they are wont to escape a transient view; whereas it is the peculiar privilege of these Divine Writings, that the more they are examined, and the better light they are placed in, the more admirable they appear to all sincere lovers of truth. *Harmony of the Gospels.*

135. REV. WILLIAM CHILLINGWORTH, M. A.

THE Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants. I, for my part, after a long, and, as I verily believe and hope, impartial search of the true way to eternal happiness, do profess plainly, that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but upon this rock only. There is no sufficient certainty but of Scripture only, for any considering man to build upon. This therefore, and this only, I have reason to believe: this I will profess: according to this I will live; and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly lose my life. Propose to me any

any thing out of this Book, and require whether I believe it or no, and seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe it with hand and heart; as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this; God hath said so, therefore it is true. *Works.*

137. ALPHONSUS,

KING OF NAPLES, used to say, He had rather suffer the loss of his kingdom, than the least part of his learning. He set up universities, and erected libraries, up and down in his kingdoms: and a choice book was to him the most acceptable present of all others. On his ensigns he caused to be drawn an open book, importing that knowledge drawn from thence became princes. When he heard the king of Spain should say, that learning was below princes, he said, It was the voice of an ox, and not of a man. He translated the epistles of Seneca into Spanish, and was so conversant in the Sacred Writings, that he said he had read over the Old and New Testament, with their glosses, fourteen times. All this he did being stricken in years; for he was fifty, before he intermeddled with studies: his improvement therein having been neglected in his younger time. And yet we may say of this prince, a greater, both in virtue and fortune, Europe hath not seen. *Arminian Magazine.*

138. JAMES HARRIS, ESQ.

THE Grecian Commonwealths, while they maintained their liberty, were the most heroic confederacy that ever existed. They were the politeſt, the braveſt, and the wiſeſt of men. In the ſhort ſpace of little more than a century, they became ſuch ſtatemen, warriors, orators, hiſtorians, phyſicians, poets, critics, painters, ſculptors, architects, and, laſt of all, philoſophers, that one can hardly help conſidering that golden period, as a providential event in honour of human nature, to ſhew to what perfection the ſpecies might aſcend.

Now the language of theſe Greeks was truly like themſelves, it was conformable to their tranſcendent and univerſal genius. Where matter ſo abounded, words followed of courſe, and thoſe exquisite in every kind, as the ideas for which they ſtood. And hence it followed, there was not a ſubject to be found, which could not with propriety be expreſſed in Greek.—

The

The Greek tongue, from its propriety and universality, is made for all that is great, and all that is beautiful, in every subject, and under every form of writing.

Graius ingenium, Graius dedit ore rotundo
Musa loqui.

It were to be wished, that those amongst us, who either write or read, with a view to employ their liberal leisure, would inspect the finished models of Grecian literature; that they would not waste those hours, which they cannot recall, upon the meaner productions of the French and English press; upon that fungous growth of Novels and of Pamphlets, where, it is to be feared, they rarely find any rational pleasure, and more rarely still, any solid improvement.

To be competently skilled in ancient learning, is by no means a work of such insuperable pains. The very progress itself is attended with delight, and resembles a journey through some pleasant country, where every mile we advance new charms arise. It is certainly as easy to be a scholar, as a gamester, or many other characters equally illiberal and low. The same application, the same quantity of habit will fit us for one, as completely as for the other. And as to those who tell us, with an air of seeming wisdom, that it is men, and not books, we must study to become knowing; this I have always remarked, from repeated experience, to be the common consolation and language of dunces. They shelter their ignorance under a few bright examples, whose transcendent abilities, without the common helps, have been sufficient of themselves to great and important ends. But alas;

Decepit exemplar vitii imitabile.

— *Hermes.*

139. ANONYMOUS.

A Calculation of the number of Books, Chapters, Verses, Words, Letters, &c. in the Old and New Testament, and the Apocrypha.

	Books in the OLD	39	In the NEW	27	Total	66
Chapters	-	929	-	260	-	1,189
Verses	-	23,214	-	7,959	-	31,173
Words	-	592,439	-	181,253	-	773,692
Letters	-	2,728,100	-	833,330	-	3,566,430

A P O C R Y P H A.

Chapters,	—	—	183
Verses	—	—	6,081
Words	—	—	152,185

The middle Chapter, and the least in the Bible is Psalm 117.
The middle Verse is the 3th of the 118th Psalm.

The

The middle time is the 2d of Chronicles, 4th Chap. 16th Verse.
 The Word AND occurs in the Old Testament 35,543 times.
 The same in the New Testament occurs 10,684 times.
 The word JEHOVAH occurs 6,855 times.

OLD TESTAMENT.

The middle book is Proverbs.
 The middle chapter is Job 29th.
 The middle verse is 2d Chronicles, 20th chapter, between
 the 17th and 18th Verses.
 The least Verse is 1st Chronicles, 1st Chapter and 1st Verse.

NEW TESTAMENT.

The middle book is Theſſalonians 2d.
 The middle Chapter is between the 13th and 14th of Romans.
 The middle Verse is 17th Chapter Acts 17th Verse.
 The least Verse is 11th Chapter John, Verse 35.
 The 21st Verse of the 7th Chapter of Ezra has all the let-
 ters of the alphabet.
 The 19th Chapter of 2d of Kings, and 37th of Iſaiah are alike.
 N. B. The above took three years in caſting up.

140. EPISCOPIUS.

CERTE' Judæi hac in parte Chriſtianiſ ruborem ſuffun-
 dunt; quippe qui infantem ſuos, a primis annis, in Hebrææ
 linguæ cognitione, ſive Hebræâ legis divinæ aliorumque
 ſacrorum rituum cognitione, erudiunt, adeo ſolicitè, ut
 nullus puer reperiatur, qui non Hebræa omnia cum punctis
 & ſine punctis, primâ ſtatim ætate legat, canat, et intel-
 ligat. *Apud Opera.*

141. SEXTINUS AMAMA.

MAXIMO damno ſit juvenibus, qui hocce ſtudium differ-
 unt; quo enim citius fundamenta hujus linguæ poſita ſint,
 eo melius: Valde itaque errant, qui, abſoluto ſerè curſu
 academico, ſtudio linguæ Hebrææ tandem operam navant.
 Novi ſcholas, ubi fundamenta linguæ Hebrææ magno eccle-
 ſiæ et juventutis bono jaciuntur: quotquot enim ex illis veſ
 minimam Hebræarum literarum notitiam in academiam
 inferunt, feliciffimè videas progredi, dum cæteros ad elementa
 illa alphabetica pudet deſcendere. *Apud Clavem Pentateuchi.*

142. PERIZONIUS.

QUI non navant operam linguis Hebrææ, Græcæ, et
 Latinæ, cæteriſque ſcientiis, quæ neceſſariæ ſunt ad pleni-
 Vol. II. E e orem

orem sacrarum literarum cognitionem, non theologi, sed mataiologi, et vaniloqui, scioli, qui de rebus sacris garrere possint, sine intelligentiâ.

Apud Clavem Pentateuchi.

143. MELANCTON.

SCIO, me vix primis labris degustâsse literas Latinas, Græcas, et Hebræas; sed tamen hoc ipsum quod didici, quantulumcunque est propter iudicium de religione, omnibus mundi regnis, omniumque opibus, longè antepono.— Idem Melancton de Luthero sic tradit: Lutherus, reverendus ille vir, quam graviter nos sæpe ad linguarum studia hortatus est, et negligentiam studiosorum castigavit!—Addit Melancton: Lutherum vidisse ad veterem barbariem reducendam magis compendiarium viam non esse, quam si studia linguarum interirent.

Apud Clavem Pentateuchi.

144. ALPHONSUS MENDOZA.

DICO non posse, meo iudicio, verè dici theologum, qui in Hebraicis literis non mediocriter fuerit institutus.

In Quest. positivis.

145. ERASMUS.

ILLOTIS manibus vel pedibus proverbium rectè interpretatur in eos, qui vel audacius, vel parùm instructi rebus his, quibus oportuit, negotium invadunt; veluti si quis divinas literas interpretari conetur, Græcæ, Latinæ, et Hebrææ linguæ. denique et omnis antiquitatis rudis et imperitus, sine quibus non stultum modo, verò etiam impium est, theologiæ mysteria tractanda suscipere. Quod tamen, heu nefas! jam passim plerique faciunt, qui frigidis aliquot instructi syllogismis, et puerilibus sophismatis, Deum immortalem! quid non audent! quid non præcipiunt! quid non decernunt! Qui, si possint cernere quos risus, vel potius quem dolorem, moveant linguarum et antiquitatis peritis, quæ portenta proferunt, in quam pudendos errores subinde prolabantur. nimirum puderet illos tantæ temeritatis, et vel fenes ad prima literarum elementa redirent. Proinde divus Hieronymus; quum constituisset arcanas interpretare literas, ne illotis, ut aiunt, pedibus, rem tantam aggrediretur, quæso, num sophisticis nugis instruxit ingenium? num Aristotelicis decretis? num his etiam nugacioribus nugis? Minimè. Quid igitur? Inestimabili sudore trium linguarum peritiam sibi comparavit, quarum qui ignarus, non theologus est, sed sacræ

facræ theologiæ violator, ac verè, manibus ac pedibus illotis, rem omnium maximè facram non tractat, sed profanat, confpurcat, violat. *Apud Clavem Pentateuchi.*

146. GENEBRARDUS.

NAM sine Hebræâ eruditione necesse est multa in Scripturis ignorare et multa plura nescirentur ab ejus ignaris nisi adessent præsto divus ipse Hieronymus, Lyranus, aliique ea instructi. Quorum tamen interpretationes jucundius, intelligentius, fidelius sæpe in ipsâ veritate Hebraicâ percipiuntur. *De fontis Hebræi puritate Testimonium.*

147. M. LAURENTIUS FABRICIUS, PROF.

PROINDE interpres, carens gemino hoc instrumento, Hebrææ et Græcæ Linguæ, infelicissimè in Scripturis versabitur, pessimèque eas interpretabitur, sæpius adulterinum ac pravum sensum pro vero ac genuino Scripturæ, auditori obtrudet. *Præfatio ad Gymnasium Syriacum.*

148. LEUSDEN.

TEXTUS Hebraicus Veteris Testamenti est authenticus, quapropter major fides est adhibenda textui Hebraico, quam omnibus aliis versionibus et interpretationibus: prophetæ enim et viri sancti hac linguâ Vetus Testamentum exararunt, quum omnes versiones tantummodo sint translatae ab hominibus errori obnoxiiis, et propterea absoluta fides versionibus tribui non debet.—Lingua V. T. Hebræa est omnium linguarum prima, ante Hebræam linguam nulla alia lingua unquam in mundo fuit, hac Deus Adamum alloquutus est, et vicissim Adamus Deum: hoc clarè apparet ex nominibus Hebraicis patriarcharum, quæ illis in principio sunt data, sic nomina Adami, Eve, Sethi, aliorumque; sunt tantum Hebraica, et a radicibus Hebraicis descendunt, ergo illa lingua fuit tum usitata et per consequens prima: nam serè per mille et septingentos annos usque ad destructionem terris Babylonicæ unica tantum lingua in mundo fuit, uti statim probabimus. *Dissertatio de Textu Hebraico et ejus Lingua.*

149. LUTHER.

SCIO quantum mihi cognitio Hebrææ linguæ profuerit contra hostes meos; quare hac quantulacunque cognitione infinitis aureorum carere nolim. *Com. in 45 Psal.*

150. MARTINIUS.

ATQUI verus Dei timor est, quem Deus ipse suâ voce præscripsit fecus quicumque ab hominibus opinionis errore fingitur metus, nihil, nisi vana superstitio est. Perspicuum est igitur, veram sapientiam divinis literis contineri. Tales autem sunt in primis Hebrææ literæ, quibus mandata sunt divina oracula, unde tanquam ex purissimis fontibus cœlestis sapientiæ flumina emanarunt: ex quo etiam Hebrææ lingua *לשון הקודש* lingua sanctitatis, jure optimo nominata est. Itaque harum literarum studium debet nobis esse charissimum, ut dies noctesque divinam sapientiam meditemur, ei nos totos tradamus ex eâque pendeamus.

Sit igitur sancta apud nos hæc lingua, quam Deus ipse suo ore sanctissimo consecravit, sit honore atque dignitate prima, propter quam cæteris honos et dignitas accessit. Sed enim Hebrææ non solum initio fuere literæ verum artes etiam omnes atque disciplinæ.

Facilitas vero istarum literarum rectè atque ordine perceptarum tanta erit, ut verè possim confirmare, plus uno aut altero mense in iis, quam in Græcis aut Latinis toto ferè anno profici posse. Quapropter cum hæc ita sint non solum omnes ad hæc studia cohortabor, verùm etiam si quid votis effici posset, libenter optarem, ut eis locus non modo publicè in uno aliquo auditorio, sed privatim in singulis scholis tribuatur: atque ut Latinæ et Græcæ literæ jam pueris familiares ac tritæ sunt, sic Hebrææ vulgo cognoscantur, tandemque incipiant Græcæ et Latinæ musæ, sicut ille ait,

— Rifu cognoscere matrem,

Hebræam, inquam, linguam agnoscere atque amplecti incipiant. harumque triam linguarum quæ solæ eruditæ habentur, uno quasi concentu Deus eruditiones ac sapientiæ omnis auctor laudetur, celebretur, et sempiterno honore afficiatur.

Prefatio.

151. MONTANUS.

NEMO Hebraicè doctus est, qui inficias ire possit, Hebraicam linguam in simplicibus etiam verbis multiplicem significationem continere, non illam quidem pugnantem, tamen multiplicem, idque, cum omnibus aliis linguis non ignotum aut novum sit: huic tamen est notissimum et frequentissimum. Ideo vero videtur Deus veteres libros hac potissimum linguâ conscriptos a principio voluisse, qui cum simplicissima illa immensaque sapientia omnia noverit, ut multa etiam consilii sui mysteria unica ac simplici oratione declararet,

ret, eam auctor ipse linguam adoptavit, quæ prima omnium fuerit; quæque omnium significantissima laudatur. Cæteras namque linguas idem præstare non posse, manifestius est, quam ut nostris documentis egeat. Ne tamen grave quicquam sine argumento ponere videamur, unum satis fuerit adnotare magnæ in sacrâ lectione auctoritatis locum, at eum ita præmunire; Græcam linguam verborum splendore et ubertate, et multiplici compositione ac significatione Latinæ præexcellere, nemo vel qui utramque leviter degustarit, est qui ambigat. Atqui sacrorum verborum majestatem, pondus, numerum, et significationis vim Græcè reddi exprimi-que posse ecclesiasticis libri concinnator negat.

Prefatio ad Bib.

152. KENNICOTT, D. D.

THE reader will now give me leave to animate him to the study of the Hebrew language, in the words of our illustrious countryman Roger Bacon, who flourished about 500 years ago, the ornament of his own age, and the admiration of the ages succeeding; and however unclassical his style, there is justness in his sentiments, and cogency in his reasons:—

ROGER BACON.

SI nesciamus aliquam rationem linguarum, quibus usi sunt sancti, philosophiæ, poetæ, et omnes sapientes in scripturis suis; pro certo erimus vacui sapientia sanctorum, philosophorum, poetarum, et sapientum omnium, quia nec legere nec intelligere poterimus ea quæ tractant. Hoc probo per exempla sanctorum manifesta, et magni errores apud vulgus theologorum propter ignorantiam linguarum. Nam nec textum possunt intelligere nec concipere; nec expositiones auctorum scire, quæ mixtæ sunt omnes Græco, Hebræo et Arabico, propter hoc quod auctores et omnes sapientes antiqui studuerunt rationem linguarum. Et præterea, translationes habent magnas et multas falsitates probavi diligenter de facilitate textus exempla multa dedi secundum quæ corrumpitur textus, et addidi quædam exempla de numerorum falsitate.—Nos sumus successores sanctorum, et philosophorum, et sapientum antiquorum. Ergo debemus scire de linguis quod necesse est sicut ipsi: aut illi fuerunt stulti, et nos sapientes; quod non est fatendum.

Dissertations.

153. HUNT, D. D.

SCIUNT docti Hebraica Hebraici Testamenti non magis intelligi posse sine cognitione linguæ Hebrææ, quàm Græca Græci Testamenti sine cognitione linguæ Græcæ; ac propterea sui esse officii, accuratam utriusque peritiam sibi comparare. Quod eo diligentius etiam faciunt, quoniam denique sciunt, duos hos codicis, etsi duobus diversis sermonibus conscripti sint, non nisi unum tamen salutis humanæ opus (qui amborum est finis) continere; et proinde, qui non Hebraicis literis æquè studet, ac Græcis næ ille de unâ solummodo venerandæ hujus institutionis parte sollicitus esse videtur, dum alteram aut plane negligit, aut tantillam ejus portionem scire cupit, quantilla ei, quasi peregrino, aut aliud agenti, opera alicujus interpretis, ejusque non fatis interdum nec periti, nec fidi, innotescere potest. Qualis quidem incuriæ, in hoc tanti momenti negotio rerum argui, viri vix est eruditi, nedum theologi Christiani.

De usu Dialectorum Orientalium.

154. HUTTER, D. D.

CUM ardentibus votis precor, ut in fluctibus hujus senescentis mundi tranquilla nobis et tuta halcyonia largiatur, ad ea studia excolenda, quibus Deus sui notitia omnibus nationibus, gentibus & linguis innotescat. *Prefatio ad Bib.*

155. HULSIUS.

EQUIDEM novi genium nostri seculi, quo problema agitari incipit patribus nostris incognitum, an linguæ Hebrææ notitiæ ad eruditionem theologicam necessaria sit? Cujus pars negativa multorum ignavis animis (qui tamen sibi ipsis non parum sapere videntur) usque adeo infixa est, ut istiusmodi hominibus contradicere velle, obstrepere potius sit, quàm erudire: nec mirum: istæ enim aquæ quæ ex Israelis fonte fluunt, quo plus sunt potæ, plus sitiuntur: ne ergo litiant, consultius judicant non bibere. *Prefatio ad Lib. Psal.*

156. JOHN CONRAD DIETERIC.

EST delicatum genus hominum, quorum aures occidentalibus linguis assuetæ Hebræam ferre nequeunt; et etiam si hujus omnino rudes, censuram, cum in linguam tum in sacros scriptores exercere haud erubescunt. Amelius vero, Platonicus philosophus, a religione Mosis et prophetarum alienus, emphasin in Hebræâ linguâ permagnam esse, brevitatem,

tatem, perspicuitatem, fatetur, minus quidem varietatis quam in Græcis, sed minus ambiguitatis. *Apud Antiquit. V. T.*

157. PETER CUNAEUS.

DICENDUM apertè est, valdè supinè atque oscitantèr vivimus. Hispanorum, Gallorumque, et Itolorum verba atque voces discimus; et postquam classes nostræ alium orbem petivere, etiam cum Indis loquimur barbarè. Tam ingeniosi cum simus unam illam non intelligimus linguam, quam profectò unam didicisse operæ erat pretium.

De Repub. Hebræorum.

158. HENRY STEPHENS,

DE prophetâ regio Davide pronunciat, comparari eum posse cum Homero, aliisque illustrissimis poetis, ac ejusmodi ab eo proponi passim, ut nè Homerus quidem aut Pindarus quicquam adeo poeticè dixerint. *Dieteric. in Antiquit. V. T.*

159. GLASSIUS, SS. T. D.

ECCE quam solidè, quam nervosè, quam directè, et sine ullius exceptionum et tortionum anfractibus, ex unicâ Hebræâ adversariis os obturari veritas confirmari hæretica falsitates refutari et repelli potuisset? O! igitur sacrosanctæ linguæ hujus primigeniæ et Hebraicæ majestatem! O insignem ejus fructum et utilitatem! O mirandam quam in Scripturis Spiritus Sanctus solidè interpretandis habet auctoritatem! quis illam amare, admirari, ejusque conciliare sibi notitiam renuere auderet, qui θεοσοφίον scientiæ illius cælestis et augustissimæ splendorem καλοπριζέσθω, qua voce emphatica utitur apostolus, ejusque fieri particeps, toto mentis conamine exoptat.

Oratio de linguâ Hebraicâ.

160. JANE, COUNTESS OF WESTMORELAND.

THIS ingenious lady made such a surprizing progress in the Latin and Greek tongues, under the instruction of Mr. Fox, the martyrologist, that, her skill in those languages was such, that she might well stand in competition with the most learned men of that age.

161. MRS. CATHARINE PHILLIPS.

THIS celebrated lady was very apt to learn, and made verses when she was at school. She devoted herself to religious duties when she was very young: she would then pray
by

by herself an hour together: she read the Bible through before she was full four years old, and could say by heart many chapters and passages of Scripture: she would take sermons verbatim when she was but ten years old.

Biographium Famineum.

162. LADY FRANCES HOBART.

HOW much this lady valued the Word and ordinances of God was evident to all who knew her, and most so to such as had the advantage of her intimate acquaintance. Not only was she rarely to be found alone without her Bible before her, but she had drawn up for herself a method for reading the Scriptures, to which she very strictly adhered, so as that every year she read over the Psalms twelve times, the New Testament thrice, and the other part of the Old Testament once.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

163. LADY CATHARINE COURTEN.

HER delight was in the Sacred Oracles, and in them she read, and in them she meditated day and night.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

164. LADY MARGARET HOUGHTON.

THIS pious Lady had always some books for contemplation, others for an holy conversation, others for devotion, and of all these sorts she made some use; but of all books for constant use and practice she preferred the Bible, often telling me, that other books had their use and delight, till by frequent reading they became more ordinary, and that then they seemed to lose something of their former lustre and excellency, but that the Bible was in her frequent reading ever fresh and new. She found in it such perpetual streams of holy, heavenly, and spiritual delights, that, as Tertullian said, she could not but admire and adore the fullness of the Scriptures.

Gibbon's Memoirs of pious Ladies.

165. LADY CUTTS.

BOOKS she took pleasure in, and made good use of, and chiefly books of divinity and devotion, which she studied and relished above all others. But of all books the Book of God was that in which she was most delighted and employed, and which was never for any considerable time out of her hands.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

166. LADY ELIZABETH HASTINGS.

THE Word of God was “a lamp to her feet, and a light to her paths.” Her delight was in his law, and she made it her every day’s study. She held her Bible to her heart to receive its quickening virtue, and used it at the same time as she would a mirror to her face, to discover every spot and blemish.

Gibbon’s Memoirs.

167. MRS. JANE RATCLIFFE,

By her frequent and attentive hearing of sermons, and reading good books, the Bible especially, in which she took an incredible delight, and by moving questions to persons whom she thought best able to answer them, she became an excellent proficient in the great matters of religion.

Gibbon’s Memoirs.

168. MRS. CATHARINE BRETTERG.

FROM a child she was a student in the Holy Scriptures, and by reading them attained to such a knowledge of the Book of God, that she was able to make good use of it as occasion required.—Her daily exercise was to converse with God in reading, praying, singing, and meditating.—She enjoined herself the reading eight chapters at least every day in the Holy Scriptures.

Gibbon’s Memoirs, passim.

169. QUEEN CATHARINE PARR.

SHE always took great delight in conversing with the Sacred Writings, and the investigation of divine truth.

Gibbon’s Memoirs.

170. QUEEN MARY.

HER age and her rank had denied her opportunities for much study, yet she had made no inconsiderable advances in knowledge, having read the best books in the English, Dutch, and French languages, which were almost equally familiar to her. She gave the most of her hours to the study of the Scriptures, and of books relating to them.

Gibbon’s Memoirs.

171. LADY MARY ARMYNE.

SHE was always punctual in her retirements for reading the Scriptures, and other good books, and for closet prayer
at

at least twice a day; a practice which she continued till the end of her time.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

172. MRS. ANN BAYNARD.

THIS pious Lady took great pains to perfect her knowledge in the Greek tongue, that she might with the greater pleasure read that elegant Father St. Chrysostom, in his own pure and native style; and her good acquaintance with the Greek Testament, in which she was much conversant, was a great help to her improvement in that language. She was not satisfied with reading only, but she set herself to the composing of many things in the Latin tongue, which were uncommon and useful in their kind, and were written in a beautiful style. She had indeed a vast and comprehensive knowledge, a large and exalted mind, a strong and capacious memory, and was still coveting more and more knowledge, and in this particular alone she would often say, It was a sin to be contented with but a little.

But after all these acquisitions and endowments, with profound humility, and prostration of mind, she would cry out with the apostle Paul, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," in which knowledge she was no small proficient.

Gibbon's Memoirs of pious Ladies.

173. OLYMPIA FULVIA MORATA,

AN Italian lady, could both write and speak most elegant Latin and Greek in her very young years. After her conversion from Popery, she writes thus to a friend and companion: So soon as by the goodness of the Lord to me, I had got out from the Idolatry of my own country, and gone with my husband to Germany, it may seem incredible to you what a change the Lord then made upon my spirit; that the former aversion I had to read the Scripture, from which I had kept at so great a distance, was then turned to have this my greatest delight and pleasure in the world, and now my soul is most taken up therewith; and these I may say is my only comfort and pleasure, about which my study, work, and care I have placed; so as the world, the pleasure, and delights therein, which once I was wont to admire, and was too much taken with, are now become wholly contemptible to me.

Gillies' Historical Collections.

174. ANNA MARIA A' SCHURMAN.

THE Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages were so familiar to this extraordinary lady, that she not only wrote but spoke them fluently, to the surprize of the most learned men. She made a great progress also in the oriental languages, which have an affinity with the Hebrew, as the Syriac, Chaldee, Arabic, and Ethiopic, at the same time understanding the living languages perfectly well, and conversing readily in the French, English, and Italian. She was also competently skilled in geography, astronomy, philosophy, and the sciences, but, as her mind was of a religious cast, these learned amusements gave her but little satisfaction, and therefore she applied herself to divinity, and the study of the Holy Scriptures. *Gibbon's Memoirs of pious Ladies.*

175. LADY JANE GREY,

SPOKE and wrote her own language with peculiar accuracy, and it is said that the French, Italian, Latin, and especially the Greek tongues were as natural to her as her own, for she not only understood them perfectly, but wrote them with the utmost freedom. She was also versed in Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic; and all this when she was in a manner a child in age. *Gibbon's Memoirs.*

176. LADY ANN HALKET,

WAS a most diligent searcher of the Scriptures; with which she was so well acquainted, by long and frequent converse, as to be able readily to urge any point of faith, or duty of Christian practice of the most pertinent passages; and digested all her knowledge into a solid principle of true wisdom, for regulating her own life, and the edification of others.

177. HELOISA.

THIS lady, it is certain, deserves a place among the learned women; for she was skilled not only in the Latin tongue, but also in the Greek and Hebrew.

178. QUEEN ELIZABETH.

BEFORE she was seventeen years old, she very well understood the French, Latin, and Italian tongues, and the Greek indifferently.

I walk

I walk many times, says she, in the pleasant fields of the Holy Scriptures, where I pluck up the goodlifsome herbs of sentences by pruning; eat them by reading; chew them by musing; and lay them up at length in the high seat of memory by gathering them together; that so having tasted the sweetness, I may the less perceive the bitterness of this miserable life.—

When the Bible was presented to her at her coronation, she received it with both her hands, and kissing it, laid it to her breast, saying, That that book had ever been her chief delight. *Biographium Famineum, & Watson's Body of Divinity.*

179. MRS. ELIZABETH BLAND,

WAS instructed in the Hebrew language by the lord Van Helmont, which she understood to such a degree of perfection, that she taught it to her son and daughter.

Biographium Famineum.

180. MRS. CONSTANTIA GRIERSON.

WHEN she was about eighteen years of age she was mistress of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French, and understood the mathematics as well as most men; and what made these extraordinary talents yet more surprizing was, that her parents were poor illiterate country people.

Biographium Famineum.

181. MRS. ELIZABETH BURY.

HER genius led her to the study of almost every thing.—She often entertained herself with philology, philosophy, and ancient and modern history. Sometimes she diverted herself with music, vocal and instrumental; sometimes with heraldry, the globes, and mathematics; and sometimes with learning the French tongue, principally for the sake of conversing with French refugees, to whom she was an uncommon benefactrix; but she especially employed herself in perfecting her acquaintance with the Hebrew language, which by her long application and practice she had rendered so familiar and easy to her, as frequently to quote the original in common conversation, when the true meaning of some particular texts depended upon it.—Another study in which she took much pleasure was that of anatomy and medicine.—But however she diverted herself with these several parts of literature, yet her constant favourite and darling study was divinity,

nity, especially the Holy Scriptures, having from her very childhood taken God's testimonies for the men of her counsel.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

182. LADY LANGHAM.

SHE had an high esteem of every part of the Holy Bible, yet there was one part of it, the book of Psalms, with which she seemed to be most passionately affected.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

183. LADY ELIZABETH BROOKE.

SHE was an indefatigable reader of books, especially of the Scriptures, and various commentators upon them; the very best our language afforded.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

184. LADY MARY VERE.

TWICE every day she shut up herself for some hours in her closet, which was excellently furnished with pious books of practical divinity. Here she spent her precious time in reading the Sacred Scriptures, and other good books that might give her further light into the Oracles of God.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

185. SUSANNA, COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK.

SHE began the day with God, and as she opened the morning, so she shut up the evening with prayer. Most commonly as soon as she could disperse sleep from her eyes, she went into her closet, and perfumed it with prayer, at the same time reading her daily portion of the Bible, which were the Psalms of David usually observed for the day of the month, and six chapters besides, intending by that course to read the whole Bible over twice in the year, which she never failed to do for the last seven years of her life.

Gibbon's Memoirs

186. MRS. ELIZABETH BURNET.

THOUGH this lady had no skill in the learned languages, yet by making the understanding of the Scriptures her chief study—she attained to a great knowledge in the Divine Writings.—She was most constant in reading the Scriptures daily.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

187. MRS. ELIZABETH ROWE.

SHE had an inexpressible love and veneration for the Holy Scriptures, and was assiduous in reading them, particularly

particularly

cularly the New Testament, the Psalms, and those parts of the prophetic writings which relate to our blessed Saviour. For some time before her death she scarce read any thing besides these Sacred Books, and practical treatises on religious subjects.

Gibbon's Memoirs.

188. REV. JOHN STRYPE, M. A.

THE Lord Keeper Bacon's second wife, Anne, was a lady of great merit and learning, and deserves a more particular notice. She was daughter to Sir Anthony Cooke, one of the tutors to King Edward the sixth, who gave her a very learned education, instructing her in the Latin and Greek languages. She had also four sisters, who, as Mr. Strype informs us, were also educated by their father, as to be famous for their skill in the learned languages. As to Lady Bacon, she translated Bishop Jewell's apology for the church of England out of Latin into English, which was published in 1564, by the particular direction of Archbishop Parker, after it had been read and approved by him, and by the author of the Latin original: for she sent the copy of her translation to Jewell for his perusal, accompanied with an epistle in Greek, and the Bishop answered her in the same language. And Mr. Strype observes, that both that Prelate, and Archbishop Parker, declared, that Lady Bacon's translation was so correct, that it did not require the least amendment.

It is remarked by the same writer, that about the latter times of King Henry, many young ladies, daughters of men of nobility and quality, were bred up to skill in tongues, and other human learning; taking example, I suppose, (says he) from that King; who took special care for the education of his daughters, as well as son, in learning. And they were happy in learned instructors. His last wife Queen Catharine Parr, was a learned as well as a godly lady. And Lady Jane, the daughter of the Duke of Suffolk, that unhappy Queen, had excellent learning. Dr. Meridith Hammer read Eusebius in Greek to a certain honourable lady, as he tells us in his epistle before his translation of that book: which gave him occasion to publish the said translation. And before all these, Sir Thomas More had a daughter named Margaret, whom he bred up in ingenious literature. She composed a Latin oration, and some verses, which her father shewed to Voysey, Bishop of Exeter; whereat he was much moved with delight, and sent her a Portugee by her father, which

which he inclosed in a letter to her. And but little after the same time, viz. Ann. 1537, there was one Elizabeth Lucar, a citizen's wife, buried in St. Laurence Pountney's church, daughter of one Paul Withipol. By the inscription upon whose monument, it appeared, that she writ very fairly three several hands; that she understood Latin, Spanish, and Italian; writing, speaking, and reading it with perfect utterance, and readiness: that she sung in divers tongues, and played excellently upon the viol, lute, and virginals. And besides all this, she wrought all needle-work, that women used to exercise with pen, frame, or stool: understood well drawing of pictures, curious knots and trials, beasts, birds, and flowers, with a curious fancy. And to crown all, she was virtuous, read the Scriptures, and directed her faith to Christ, as her only mark. And all this she arrived to in her youth: for she died at twenty-seven years of age.

British Biography.

189. MR. NICHOLAS UDAL,

IN this gracious and blissful time of knowledge, in which it hath pleased God Almighty to reveal and shew abroad the light of his most holy Gospel, what a number is there of noble women, especially here in this realm of England; yea, and how many in the years of tender virginity, not only as well seen, and as familiarly traded in the Latin and Greek tongues, as in their own mother language; but also both in all kinds of profane literature, and liberal art, exacted, studied, and exercised; and in the Holy Scripture and theology so ripe, that they are able aptly, cunningly, and with much grace, either to indite or translate into the vulgar tongue, for the public instruction and edifying of the unlearned multitude? Neither is it now a strange thing to hear gentlewomen, instead of most vain communication about the moon shining in the water, to use grave and substantial talk in Latin or Greek with their husbands, of godly matters. It is now no news in England, for young damsels in noble houses, and in the Courts of Princes, instead of cards, and other instruments of idle trifling, to have continually in their hands either Psalms, Homilies, and other devout meditations, or else Paul's epistles, or some book of Holy Scripture matters; and as familiarly to read or reason thereof in Greek, Latin, French, or Italian, as in English. It is now a common thing to see young virgins so nursed and trained in the study of letters, that they willingly set all other vain pastimes

pastimes at nought for learning's sake. It is now no news at all, to see Queens and Ladies of most high state and progeny, instead of courtly dalliance, to embrace virtuous exercises of reading and writing, and with most earnest study both early and late, to apply themselves to the acquiring of knowledge, as well in all other liberal arts and disciplines, as also most especially, of God, and his most Holy Word.

Extract of a Letter to Queen Catharine.

190. REV. JAMES ARCHER.

THE most transcendent wisdom that ever enlightened the mind of man or angel, is but a faint ray issuing from that eternal wisdom which dictated the Holy Scriptures.

Sermons.

191. MRS. CHAPONE.

EVERY word that fell from the lips of our blessed Saviour is more precious than all the treasures of the earth.

Letters on the Improvement of the Mind.

192. OSTERVALD.

THE Scriptures are the most valuable blessing God ever bestowed upon us, except the sending his Son into the world. They are a treasure containing every thing that can make us truly rich and truly happy.

Directions for reading the Holy Scriptures.

193. VENERABLE BEDE,

IS said often to have shed tears when he read the Holy Scriptures.

Christian Oratory.

194. REV. JAMES ROBERTSON, S. T. D.

Exhortatio ad studium linguæ Hebrææ.

COMMUNIS hominum sensus, procul dubio, theologum, illam linguam, quâ primitus Deus homines alloqui dignatus est, intelligere et callere debere, planè docet dictatque: cum enim theologiæ cultura est assiduum verbi divini cum discendi tum docendi studium, hunc in finem instituta, uti cognitam ex eo vitæ viam et ingrediamur ipsi, et aliis commonstremus; certissimum est, nihil utilius, nihil æquè necessarium theologiæ feliciter auspiciandæ, nullam denique studiorum partem esse, quæ ad optimè intelligendas sacras literas plus momenti adferre possit, quam linguarum origina-

lium

lium notitiam. Quocirca, quicumque veram theologiam discere cupiunt, istos præcipuè linguarum studio probè instructos esse oportet, ut ex ipsis fontibus suam doctrinam hauriant.

Lingua vernaculam cuique studioso sedulo excolendam esse sana ratio docet; et præter hanc, Latinam, Græcam, et Hebræam, ejusque dialectos, ita prius requiri, ut in studio theologico, sine illarum cognitione, nihil magnum, nihil eximium, vel sperari vel expectari queat.—Planè patet enim, ex scripturâ docendum, ex scripturâ disputandum, ex illâ quæstiones solvendas, cæteraque munia pastoris fidelis perficienda esse. Denique, ut jurisconsulti sine lege loqui erubescunt, ita etiam, immo vero multo magis, theologos sine scripturâ vel os aperire nefas est: nam, sive in scholâ, sive in ecclesiâ Christi doceant, sive scripturam interpretentur; non alia quam *Θεσ λογια*, Dei oracula, seu eloquia, ipsos eloqui oportet. Et cum a Dei verbo, bene intellecto, tota veræ et puræ theologiæ cognitio pendeat, necessitas notitiæ linguæ Hebrææ tanta est, ut nemo hujus linguæ imperitus tuto et inoffenso pede in scripturæ sacræ interpretatione progredi possit. Tot enim emphases, totque loquendi modi, multaque alia in unaquâque linguâ, quæ in aliam transfusa (instar generosi vini ex uno in alterum cadum effusi) vim et vigorem suum amittunt. Multæ præterea observationes textum accuratè legenti sponte offerunt, quarum nec vola nec vestigium in versione apparent.—Cunque veteris Testamenti cognitio Christianis ad Novi Testamenti justiore et plenioris notitiam sit admodum necessaria, planè linguæ Hebrææ accuratam cognitionem necessariam esse patet; absque hoc enim fieri nequit, ut ejus sensus investigare possimus: quicumque enim versioni soli innititur, non tam suis videt oculis quam alienis. Interpretes enim sæpius in diversas abeunt sententias, quum linguæ Hebrææ inspectio et peritia litem facillimè dirimeret; nullusque textus Hebræi ignarus varias virorum doctorum sententias dijudicare possit. Hinc patres, exceptis ferè Origine et Hieronymo, linguæ Hebrææ rudes, etiam si viri in omni doctrinæ ac scripturæ genere versatissimi ingenii ac acumine et scientiâ theologica instructi, miras et ridiculas quasdam tamen interpretationes, ex Hebræarum literarum ignorantia, protulerunt.—Patres primitivæ ecclesiæ, Chrysostomus, Augustinus, et Hieronymus, tum utilitatem tum necessitatem notitiæ linguæ Hebrææ planè declararunt.

Doctissimi inter pontificios, in sacræ scripturæ interpretatione, cum utilitatem tum necessitatem cognitionis linguæ sanctæ agnoscunt. Frater Aloysius Cutaneus, Tridenti in

doncilio sententiam suam de Bibliis Latinis dicturus, addebat: Cardinalem Cajetanum dicere solitum, eum qui Latinum solummodo textum (addere liceat lectori, Anglicum, Gallicum, etiamque Germanicum) intelligit, dici non posse infallibile Dei verbum intelligere; talis enim, inquebat, solummodo intelligit vocem interpretis qui erroribus obnoxius est, referente Amama in *Antibarb. Bibl. lib. 1.*—Hinc veteres dixerunt, Hebræos bibere ex fontibus, Græcos ex rivulis, Latinos ex lacunis. Eruditissimi Erasmi iudicium gravissimum de hac re adscribi meretur, ad N. T. et ad 2 Cor. 8. ubi in Thomam Aquinatem invehitur, Præstabat, inquit, aliquando minus Aristotelicum esse, quam hoc carere (cognitione linguarum) adminiculo; additque, ne doctissimos quidem absque periculo lapsus interpretari posse divinas literas citra linguarum peritiam.—Idem celeberrimus Erasmus, in enucleatione illius adagii, Illotis manibus vel pedibus, audaciam eorum qui theologiæ studium, linguæ Hebrææ et Græcæ rudes, aggrediuntur, more suo acriter stringit.

Linguarum instauratoribus sanæ religionis instaurationem ipsam ex parte debemus; iis quippe ex atræ caliginis, ubi delituerant, vepribus erutis, mirum quantum luminis sacris quoque literis accefferit, unde deinceps purior theologia ex solo Dei verbo conscripta, in ecclesiis et scholis doceri cœpit.—Hinc Cimmeriæ tenebræ horrendæ superstitionis depullæ; hinc Judæorum fœmia et Rabbinicæ ineptiæ fugatæ; et tot præstantissimorum ingeniorum pertinaci studio et improbo labore, veritas, religio, et etiam ipsa scriptura sacra, antea oclusa, restituta, et restaurata a viro illo venerando Luthero, aliisque quorum memoria apud feros nepotes in magno pretio erit.

Etiamsi magnus Lutherus, aliique, omni suo nisu studium linguæ Hebrææ at Græcæ theologiæ consultis commendaverant, cum utilitatem, tum necessitatem harum iis inculcaverant; tamen ut ingeniosa est inertia et ignavia, etiam seculo elapso a variis objici solebat, non videri sibi operæ pretium, ut tantum temporis et laboris grammaticæ Hebrææ impendatur. Excipiunt vulgo (ait Opitius) quidam, versiones hodie extantes, quæ utique ex studio linguarum meliores expectandæ non sunt, facile sufficere posse, nec adeo superstitionis textum Hebræum et Græcum venerandum esse: siquidem in apicibus literarum, aut sono vocabulorum, reapte vis alicujus sermonis sita non sit, sed in eo cuius literæ et voces sunt signa.

Huic objectioni respondetur, sacrum codicem esse scripturam omniscii nullique errori obnoxii Dei; versiones vero esse

esse scripta hominum, qui labi facile ex errore possint. Qui vero nôsse cupit verbum Dei, ut ab auctore Deo fuit ortum, purum, putumque, is illud non leget aut intelliget, nisi in eâdem linguâ quâ a Deo primitus est promulgatum.

Multa versionibus deberi fatemur, ait Hottingerus, non tamen plura quam quibusdam aliis commentariis, humanâ industriâ elaboratis; habeant illa, et retineant laudem suam, salvis interim et illibatis fontibus, quorum examen V. D. ministro commendare debet: 1. Emphasis verborum, quæ major sæpè in originali textu, quam uno et altero interpretum vocabulo, quâcunque aliâ linguâ exprimi queat. 2. Versionum discrepantia, in quâ vel enucleandâ vel conciliandâ, una hæc omnibus præstat cynosura. Valde itaque errant, qui ex versionibus tantum sapere volunt, æquè ac si quis Livium, Ciceronem, aut Horatium, Latinæ linguæ ignarus, ex Anglicâ vel Gallicâ versione exponendos, et in rebus dubiis iudicium de mente auctoris ferendum fusciperet, nâ ille se ridiculum esse omnibus ostenderet. Et in scripturâ sacrâ, in Dei verbo, in rebus ad salutem hominum æternam pertinentibus, ubi gravius est erroris periculum et irreparabile damnum, ex versionibus sapere, alios docere et iudicare, sustinemus.

Sunt vero alii qui Hebrææ linguæ peritiam non cuivis pastori pagano, sed theologis academicis, aut majorum civitatum verbi ministris, necessariam esse contendunt, non Hebraicè rusticis, sed vernaculè prædicari verbum Dei. Verum, quæso, (ait doctiss. Schudt) an non eadem Dei voluntas rusticis, et minorum oppidorum incolis, quæ majorum urbium civibus, annuncianda? Unde vero certius Dei voluntatem hauries, quam ex ipsius Dei verbis? Nec Latina nec Græca auditoribus prædicantur, quæ nemo tamen sanus ob id negligenda iudicabit, nisi qui pastorem rusticis scientiâ et doctrinâ parem voluerit.

Porro, utilitas et necessitas cognitionis linguæ Hebrææ apparet, quia Novum Testamentum, nisi a linguæ Hebrææ perito, non bene intelligi possit; nam scriptores Novi Fœderis in Græco stilo quo usi sunt, multum hebraisunt. Et gravissimæ causæ sunt, cur aliter facere nec potuisse nec debuisse ostendant: Hebræi enim erant natione, unde fieri non poterat, quin illis vernaculæ linguæ idiotismi adhererent: Hebræamque scripturam, ejusque Græcam versionem, quæ Hebraïsmis referta est tota, læstitabant. Accedebat, quod eos ita scribere oportuerit, ut ipsorum læctores ad evolventa prophetarum oracula adducerentur, horumque dictioni paulatim assuescerent. Quid, quod talem stilum, quem et

Hebræi et Græci facilius intelligerent, promovendæ veritatis et evangelii ratio tum postulabat? Nam, ut rectè judicat eruditissimus Heinſius in Exercitat. Sacr. ad N. T. Lib. iii. c. 19. Stupenda Dei providentia linguâ uti voluit peculiari, quam et Græci intelligerent, qui voces proprias agnoscerent; orientales autem, propter phraſes ac idiotiſmos ſuos, facile addiſcerent. Denique, cum evangelii doctrinam, Hebræis literis proditam, Græco ſermonè exponerent, mirandum non eſt, hunc sæpiuſculè Hebræam phraſin redolere.

Ad antiquitatis autem Hebræicæ notiſiam, requiritur ante omnia accurata linguæ Hebrææ peritiâ, quæ digito indice sæpius monſtrat antiquitates, quas in verſionibus codicis ſacri nemo obſervat: peritiâ enim hujus tot antiqui ritus eruuntur, tot dicta ſolvuntur, tot difficultates enodantur, tanta ſcripturam legentibus lux linguâ hæc accenditur, ut, abſque eâ, nodi plerumque non ſolvuntur, ſed ſcindantur: cujus rei veſtigia in patribus ecclēſiæ primitivæ cætera doctiſſimis, ſed Hebrææ linguæ, paucis exceptis, ignaris, obſervantur: unde clariffimus Hottingerus pronunciat: Non ea Hebrææ, quæ reliquarum linguarum, eſt ratio. Illam qui novit, multas eo ipſo res obſtruſas novit et difficiles.— Neque in ſolâ ſcripturæ ſacræ interpretatione hujus linguæ neceſſitas apparet, ſed etiam in veritate defendendâ ac propagandâ, cum primis adverſus Judæos, hoſtes fidei Chriſtianæ inſenſiſſimos, quos nemo facilè hujus linguæ rudis aut errorem probe convicerit, nedum ad ſacra Chriſtiana converterit. Nullus enim linguarum rudis deſcendere cum docto Papiſtâ, nedum os obturare adverſario poſſit, quod tamen Apoſtolus in V. D. miniſtro deſiderat; ad Hebræicum Græcumque textum ubique admittenda eſt provocatio.

Denique, cum antiquitas, tum jucunda nitidaque ſimplicitas hujus linguæ, brevitatis amantiſſimæ, paucis multa dicentis, reſque maximi momenti generi humano complectentis, ſeculo decimo ſeptimo, multos viros doctos ad ſtudium harum literarum excitârunt: inter enim philoſophos, politicios, literatores, etiamque medicos et jurisconſultos, non deſuere hujus linguæ ſtudioſiſſimi, ut Scaliger, Caſaubonus, Ludolphus, Grotius, Buxtorfii, Seldenus, Boyle, Menochius, Sigonius, Bertramus, Conringius, et Cunæus, quibus linguæ Hebrææ ſtudioſum inter delicias reſpoſitum fuiſſe conſtat.

Enimvero quidam adhuc muſſitantes audiuntur, Hebrææ linguæ cognitionem, primis religionis inſtauratoribus, cum veritas in tenebris deliteſceret, fuiſſe neceſſariam; jam vero fontes omnes Hebræos uſque adeo eſſe exhaustos, ut nihil reliquum ſit, quod a doctiſſimis interpretibus in linguâ vernaculâ

culâ exactè non fit transfusum; adeoque studium hoc sacrum tale esse, cui nunc omnes facile, absque magno ecclesiæ et veritatis detrimento, superfedere possunt. Falsum vero est, superiorum ætatem criticos omnem adnotandi ansam præcepisse: non tantum spicilegium, sed amplissimam messim, reliquerunt. Pauci enim commentatorum in sacras literas accuratam satis peritiam, propter supellestem parcam, consecuti sunt: quod ad recentiores criticos attinet, propter linguæ Arabicæ et aliarum dialectorum ignorantiam, multas difficultates prætermittere coacti sunt. Hæcce vero objectio summam ignorantiam sapere quoque videtur; manifestum enim est, linguam Hebræam non adeo esse excultam et cognitam ac esse debuit.

Sub initium iustauratæ religionis purioris, plurimi viri docti maximam operam dederunt, uti literas Hebraicas callerent: sed magnis incommodis laborârunt; indoles enim linguæ Hebrææ tum parum perspecta, notitia grammaticæ Hebrææ manca et parca. Sed summa industria, improbusque labor horum virorum doctorum, nos pudefactos reddere deberent, nosque ignavos ad eorum vestigia premenda, qui haudquam passibus æquis illos secuti sumus, in perscrutandis oraculis divinis, uti sacre literæ magis illustrentur, excitasse debuissent. Doctissimi enim viri, quasdam radices in linguâ Hebræâ ab omnibus ferè lexicographis penitus omittas ac neglectas fuisse, planè ostenderunt, quæ postliminii jure in suas sedes vindicandæ sunt, ad plenioram intelligentiam multorum sacre scripturæ locorum, ubi eorum vestigia sese offerunt. Quædam porro sunt themata, quorum adhuc fluctuat, ac quasi sub iudice, primaria et vera significatio, pendet; alia sunt non genuina, sed alienâ notione donata. Alia porro sunt, quæ variis metaphoricis significationibus et ad speciem diversis prædita, quorum primaria significatio eruenda. Denique, ut alia omittamus, quædam sunt loquendi formulæ, cælo orientis propriæ, quas nemo, nisi ex cæteris linguis orientalibus, ubi hæ formulæ sæpissimè occurrunt, unquam enucleabit.

Denique vero linguæ Hebrææ cognitionis uberioris necessitas planè ex variis vitiis, quibus non tantum septuaginta interpretes, vulgata, cæteræque hodiernæ versiones scateant, unicuique rem serio perpendenti, patebit.

Denique, doctissimus Louth observat, vix ac nè vix quidem fieri posse, ut ulla interpretatio germanos sacrorum vatum sensus planè repræsentet, tenuemque eam, quæ plerumque obtinet imaginum cum Hebræorum rebus, connexionem ullo modo exprimat. Pendet hoc ex ipsis vocabulis, et sæpè ex consuetudine quâdam, ac veluti familiaritate, quam certæ voces cum certis rebus contraxerunt; quamque semper

tegit, frequenter discindit interpretatio. Hoc itaque ab ul-
lius vel accuratissimæ versionis fide postulandum, multo minus
de poesi sacrorum carminum interprete, seu potius, imita-
trice sperandum, quanquam in eâ multi, non sine laude, ver-
tati sunt. Ipsi sunt fontes adeundi, qui proprium etiam ac
suum saporem habent, cum nullis inde deductis rivulis, com-
municandum.

Ex supra dictis patet, cum utilitatem tum necessitatem
cognitionis linguæ Hebrææ, Græcæque, theologiæ candidatis
inculcandam, præjudicataeque opiniones tollendas esse, ut
studium sacrarum literarum in magno pretio habeant, et nè
earum linguarum animos suos odium vel addiscendarum
tædium occupaverit.

Dum vero Hebraicæ linguæ cognitio in omnibus theologiæ
deditis requiritur, in omnibus vero æqualis non exspectanda;
attamen in singulis aliqua, cujus beneficio ad textum origi-
nalem aditus pateat, ita ut veritatis cujusque versiones, in
variis ecclesiis receptæ, vivi, idonei, et præsentis testes ad-
sint, quorum testimonio fides versionis vernaculæ confirmetur,
et puritas incorrupti Dei sermonis per secula in ecclesiâ con-
servetur; grave nè ignorantia seculum rediret, omnibus
monstris refertum; et nè iterum horrenda illa caligo orbem
Christianum invaderet, quâ tota Europa per aliquot secula,
ante exortam cum linguarum tum scientiarum cognitionem,
seculo decimo sexto, obruta fuerat.—Maximique momenti
est, ut a teneris unguibus pectora theologiæ studiosorum pri-
mis elementis linguæ Hebrææ imbuantur; si enim adolever-
int juvenes, studium linguarum iis non modo non jucundum,
sed etiam molestum fiet.

Utilitas, immo necessitas, notitiæ Hebræarum Græcarum-
que linguarum, sub initium decimi seculi septimi, ita per-
specta fuit, ut a variis protestantibus ecclesiis statutum sit,
ne in posterum quisquam ad sacrum ministerium studiosus
admitteretur, quin prius examen publicum etiam in Hebræâ
et Græcâ linguâ sustinuerit, et ad minimum integrum librum
Veteris Testamenti Hebraici optimè explicare potuerit. Ab
ecclesiâ etiam nostrâ statutum est, ut sancti ministerii candi-
dati, specimen aliquod notitiæ suæ, cum Græcæ tum He-
braicæ linguæ, antequam concionandi publicè facultatem
consecuti sint, exhibeant: laudabili quidem decreto!—sed
quam segnitè sit observatum, quotidiana experientia (ut
cedipo nullo opus sit) satis superque ostendit. Quod ad veri-
tatem hujus aaseverationis, vobis, Viri Reverendi, et conscien-
tiis vestris, quibus ordinariis confessibus interesse, et studio-
rum examini prodesse, contingit, judicandum relinquimus.

Summa

Summa planè necessitas esse videtur, uti ab iis, quorum fidei et curæ a divinâ providentiâ demandatum, ut sacræ theologiæ candidati idonei et instructi, atque ad sua munia capeffenda parati, accedant, statuator, ut quisque candidatorum, quendam librum historicum vertendum et interpretandum se paratum promptumque exhibeat: nisi enim tale decretum diligenter observatum fuerit, nihil boni in promovendis studiis sacrarum literarum exspectandum est.

Denique, Juvenes Præstantissimi, vosque præsertim Academicæ Edinburgenæ alumni, nobis jure carissimi, qui vosmet Deo et religioni addixistis, alloqui liceat. Quanta sit utilitas, quantaque necessitas linguæ Hebrææ ediscendæ, jam perspexistis: quantumque ut illud nomen quod ambiatis, ut cælestium oraculorum doctores, atque sinceræ religionis et pietatis statores veri et idonei propugnatores fiatis, satis nôstis.

Dolendum est omnino, Juvenes Dilectissimi, quod dum aliis literis tantoperè invigilatis, in orientalibus patiamini vobis focordiam exprobrati, sine quarum aliquali saltem peritiâ nemo unquam in theologiâ verè magnus evasit, immo nunquam evasurus est: cum enim omnis theologiæ cognitio in hoc cardine versetur, ut sacræ scripturæ verum sensum eruere possitis; fieri autem nequeat, ut sacrorum auctorum mentem exploratam habeatis, nisi aliquam ejus quâ hi scripserunt linguæ cognitionem adipiscamini. Difficultas quæ linguis orientalibus inesse visa est, multos a studio harum linguarum deterruit: res vero longè facilior est quam credi possit, modo voluntas adsit, et tempestiva diligentia adhibeatur.

Linguam Hebræam; Græcâ aut Latinâ linguâ faciliorem, præsertim si idoneus et peritus præceptor adfuerit, eruditi agnoscunt. Ignaviam igitur et languorem in studiis fugiatis. thesaurosque veræ utilisque doctrinæ recondatis: viget enim ætas vestra, animusque valet: tantummodo incepto opus est; cætera res expediet, mediocris etiam labor, modo assiduus, omnia vincet; ætisque labores jucundi erunt. Dum illi, qui copiam sacrarum literarum perdiscendarum neglexerint, occasionebusque adolescentiæ et academicæ vitæ abuti fuerint, nec fundamenta divinorum oraculorum intelligendorum sibi comparare fategerint, terâ tandem pœnitentiâ adacti, neglecta hæc studia sacra frustra deplorabunt. Novimus ipsi, quosdam viros optimos, qui magnoperè mœstitiâ afficiebantur, copiam ipsis in cursu academico linguæ Hebrææ discendæ defuisse, aliosque semet inertæ et ignaviæ, ob neglecta hæc studia sacra, serio condemnâsse. Miserum quidem est, quin hi, qui Regum Regis verba aliis proferre volunt, ipsi non intelli-

gant.

gant, sed quasi per alios, interpretes scilicet, cum sacris scriptoribus colloquia instituant, et qui interprete egent, ipsi interpretes agant.—Sit exemplum igitur illius summi Themistocles semper ob oculos positum, qui, quum apud Persas exsul esset, et colloquium Regis Artaxerxis expeteret, animi sui conceptus in Regis sinum per interpretem præcipitare detractavit; sed ut feliciter mutuo darentur et redderentur voces, integri anni spatium rogavit, ne Regem per interpretem adiret. Quid ergo illis agendum, qui non semel, sed quotidie, ex officio, cum summo omnium Rege colloqui tenentur, ejusque mandata ad populum deferendo, ipsorumque vota offerendo! Nam, uti viri docti verbis utar, Qui versiones tantum nōrunt, aliorum oculis vident, et cum plebe in atrio stantes e longinquo sacra contuentur. Qui vero ipsum textum originalum intelligit, cum sacerdotibus in sacellum admittitur, omnium, quæ in penetralibus aguntur, ipse testis et arbiter. Illi enim qui solis versionibus contenti sunt, aliorum manibus, credulâ simplicitate, gubernaculum mentis suæ committunt, ac si incerti essent in incerto mari. Themistocles igitur exemplum imitemini, si vestris oculis uti placuerit: nec contenti sitis primis tantum labris sacra hæc degustasse; sedulo sacra oracula quotidie legite, evolveite. Cavendum enim est, nè imitemini plerisque, qui Hebræam linguam audaciùs quam constantius aggressi, a primo vix limine salutatam deserunt. Est interim quod lætemur, religioni et eruditioni gratulemur, Musas Hebræas, quâdam dulcedine vobis, academicæ hujus alumnis, arridere cœpisse. Macti virtute estote; fontemque puros Hebraicos tandem adire, ex iisque haurire, gessistis, quamdiu vestri profectus non pœnituerit: et hæc faciendo eritis eruditi, regni cœlestis res edocti, similes homini patridanias, qui ex promptuario suo et recentia depromit et et vetera, Matth. xiii. 52.—Porro, vivus Dei sermo erit in vobis veræ sapientiæ salubrisque doctrinæ fons perennis; dum alii, hisce sacris literis neglectis, cuncta sua studia in suggestum propellant; aures incertum bibulus lepido salurro permulcere student, et fugatâ verâ eruditione, omni nisu tristitia revocare secula tentant.

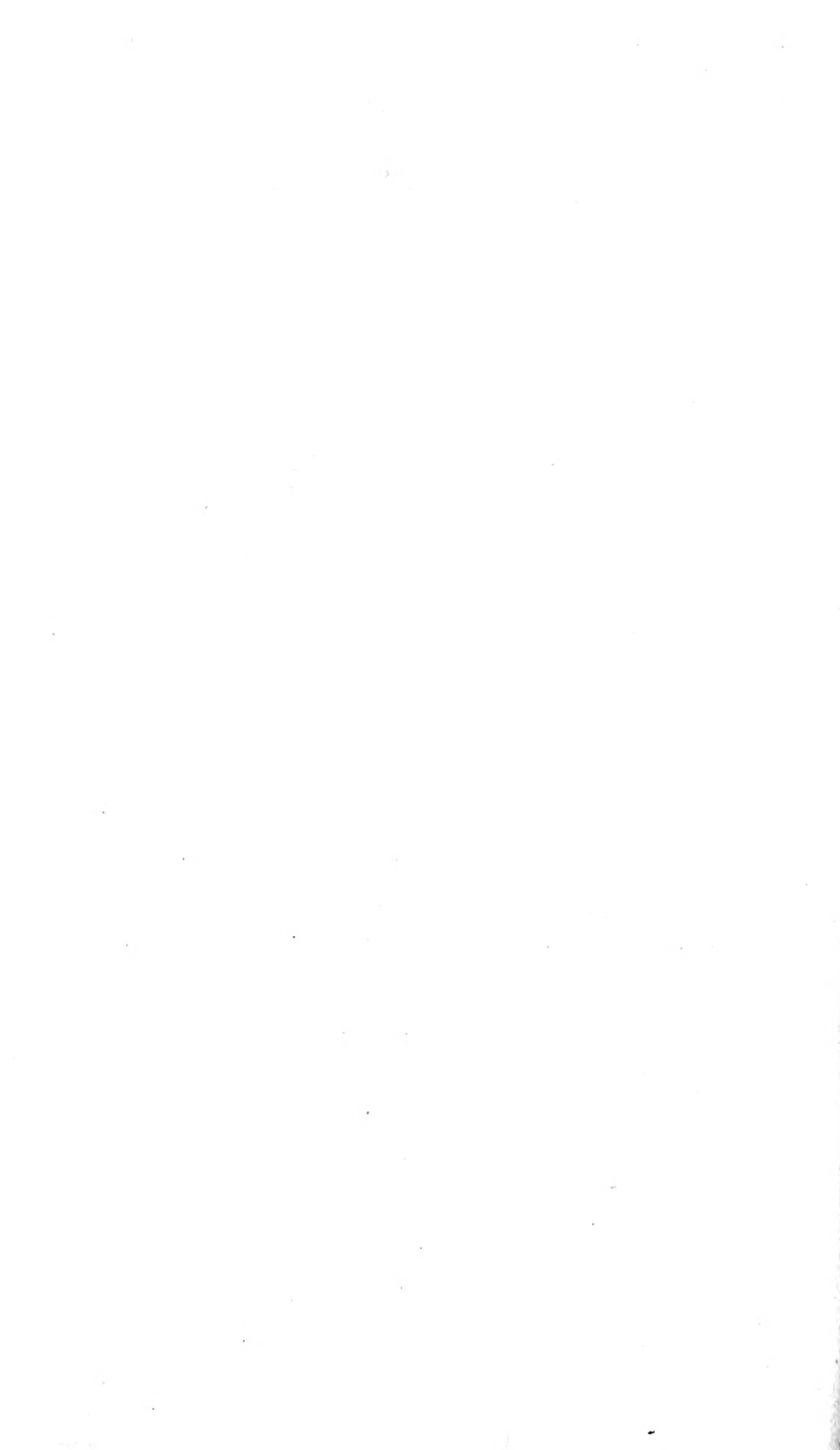
Nunc omnia vos ad studia sacrarum literarum hortantur: sancti ministerii candidati estis. Domini nostri mandatum nobis, *προσχετε τας γραφας*, perscrutamini scripturas. Exemplumque igitur magni illius Regis Israelitici sequimini, qui, cum legendo tum meditando in hisce sacris literis, antiquioribus et doctioribus suis doctior evaserat: sic reipublice utiles, sic ad varia in ecclesiâ munia capeffenda instrumenti et parati accedatis; et sic parentum desideria, præceptorumque

ceptorumque curas, ex voto compenfabit, patriæque ovanti decori futuri. Sic Deus conatibus nostris propitius annuat, tuoque Spiritu nos imbuat, ut necessariis literarum adminiculis, quæ divina providentia concessit, Revelationis suæ sanctissimæ mysteria feliciter eruamus!

Clavis Pentateuchi.

END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

BOOK



B O O K V.

EXHORTATIONS TO AND DIRECTIONS FOR
READING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

THE last book containing a variety of Testimonies in favour of the Bible in general, and particularly of the original languages in which it is written, with a considerable number of instances of persons whose knowledge of and attachment to it have been remarkable, it remains, that we continue the same plan, in exhorting to the diligent study of the Divine Writings, and in giving directions for a proper manner of performing it. And this will be applicable to the more ordinary and common reader, as well as to the most learned and profound scholar: for there are two ways in which we may read the Scriptures: the one critically, with a view to pleasure, entertainment, and improvement, merely as scholars, and men of taste and genius: and the other piously and devoutly, as Christians, and heirs of a glorious immortality. Various hints and directions having already been given respecting the former of these methods of reading the Bible, it is with the latter we are now more immediately concerned.

SACRED



SACRED LITERATURE.

B O O K V.

Exhortations to and Directions for reading the Holy Scriptures.

I. ST. CLEMENT.

THOU shalt not be as a wanderer and gadder abroad, rambling about the streets, without just cause, to spy out such as live wickedly. But by minding thy own trade and employment, endeavour to do what is acceptable to God. And keeping in mind the Oracles of Christ, meditate in the same continually. For so the Scripture says to thee: “Thou shalt meditate in his law day and night; “when thou walkest in the field, and when thou sittest in “thine house, and when thou liest down, and when thou “rifest up, that thou mayest have understanding in all “things.” Nay, although thou beest rich, and so dost not want a trade for thy maintenance, be not one that gads about, and walks abroad at random: but either go to some that are believers, and of the same religion, and confer and discourse with them about the Lively Oracles of God.

Or if thou stayest at home, read the books of the law, of the kings, with the prophets; sing the hymns of David, and peruse diligently the Gospel, which is the completion of the other.

Abstain from all the Heathen books. For what hast thou to do with such foreign discourses, or laws, or false prophets, which subvert the faith of the unstable? For what defect dost thou find in the law of God, that thou shouldest have recourse to those Heathenish fables? For if thou hast a mind
to

to read history, thou hast the books of the kings; if books of wisdom or poetry, thou hast those of the prophets, of Job, and the proverbs; in which thou wilt find greater depth of sagacity, than in all the Heathen poets and sophisters; because these are the words of the Lord, the only wife God. If thou desirest something to sing, thou hast the psalms; if the origin of things, thou hast Genesis; if laws and statutes, thou hast the glorious law of the Lord God. Do thou therefore utterly abstain from all strange and diabolical books.

Apojtical Constitutions.

2. ST. CYPRIAN.

YOU are already lifted a soldier of Christ; your care therefore must only be, to keep within the rules of that profession which you are engaged in, and to practise the virtues which it requires from you. Be diligent in prayer, and reading the Word of God. At sometimes you must speak with God, at other times he must speak with you. Let him instruct you with his precepts, and form your mind by the guidance of his counsel. The man who is thence enriched, no one can impoverish; he who is filled with the fulness of God, cannot be empty. All the gaudiness and pomp of life will become insipid and jejune to you, when once you are convinced, that your care should rather be employed upon yourself, and your soul be adorned with the graces of the Gospel.—Since this is a time of leisure and recreation, let us spend the remainder of the day in gladness and singleness of heart; nor let the hour of our repast go over us without some portion of that grace, which hath hitherto employed our minds and tongues. The mirth of a sober meal should be expressed in psalmody; and as you are blessed with an happy memory, and a tunable voice, do you undertake this office and enter upon it, according to received custom. Your friends will have the better entertainment by their intermixing it with spiritual discourse, and with religious harmony.

Works, passim.

3. ST. JEROME.

INSTEAD of jems and silk let your young daughter be enamoured with the Holy Scriptures; wherein not gold, or skins, or Babylonian embroideries, but a correct and beautiful variety producing faith, will recommend itself. Let her first learn the Psalter, and be entertained with those songs, then be instructed unto life by the Proverbs of Solomon,

mon. Let her learn from Ecclesiastes to despise worldly things; transcribe from Job the practice of patience and virtue. Let her pass then to the Gospels, and never let them be out of her hands; and then imbibe with all the faculties of her mind the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles. When she has enriched the store-house of her breast with these treasures, let her learn the Prophets, the Heptateuch, or books of Moses, Joshua and Judges, the books of Kings, and Chronicles, the volumes of Ezra and Esther, and lastly the Canticles.—

The book of Revelation has as many mysteries as words; I said too little; in every word there is a variety of senses, and the excellency of the book is above all praise.

Works, passim.

4. ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

WE often acquaint you many days beforehand with the subject of our discourse, that taking the Bible into your hands in the mean time, and running over the whole passage, you may have your minds better prepared to hear what is to be spoken. And this is the thing I have always advised, and shall still continue to exhort you to, that you should not only hear what is said in this place, but spend your time at home continually in reading the Holy Scriptures. And here let no one use those frigid and vain excuses, I am a man engaged in the business of the law, I am taken up with civil affairs, I am a tradesman, I have a wife, and children to breed up, I have the care of a family, I am a secular man: it belongs not to me to read the Scriptures, but to those who have bid adieu to the world, and are retired into the mountains, and have nothing else to do but to exercise themselves in such a way of living. What sayest thou, O man? Is it not thy business to read the Scriptures, because thou art distracted with a multitude of other cares? Yes, certainly, it belongs to thee more than them. For they have not so much need of the help of the Holy Scriptures, as you have, who are tossed in the waves of the multiplicity of business.—You have perpetual need of divine remedies, as well to cure the wounds you have already received, as to ward off those you are in danger of receiving: to quench the darts of the devil, whilst they are at a distance, and drive them away by continual reading of the Holy Scriptures. For it is impossible that a man should attain salvation without perpetual exercise in reading spiritual things. But
some

some again will say, What if we cannot understand the things that are contained therein? Why, even in that case, though you do not understand every thing that is contained therein, yet by reading you shall obtain much sanctification. For it is impossible that you should be equally ignorant of all things in those books: for the grace of the Spirit so ordered it, that they should originally be composed and written by publicans, and fishers, and tent-makers, and shepherds, and private and illiterate men, that none of the most ignorant and unlearned might have this excuse of difficulty to fly to; that the things there spoken, might be easy to be looked into by all men; that the handy-craftsman, the servant, the widow, the most illiterate and unlearned among men might reap benefit and advantage by hearing them read. The apostles and prophets wrote not like the philosophers of the Gentiles, in obscure terms, but made things plain to the understandings of all men, as being the common teachers of the world, that every man by himself might learn by reading alone the things that were spoken. To whom are not all things in the Gospel manifest and plain? Who is there, that hearing those sayings, "Blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart," and the like, would desire a teacher, to understand the meaning of them? Moreover, the signs, and miracles, and histories, are they not all intelligible and plain to any ordinary reader? This therefore is only a pretence, and excuse, and cloak for idleness. Thou dost not understand the things contained in the Scripture. How shouldst thou understand them, when thou wilt not so much as look at them? Take the Book into thy hands, read the whole history, and remember those things that are intelligible and easy; and those things that are more obscure and dark, read over and over again: and if thou canst not by frequent reading dive into the meaning of what is said, go to a wiser person, betake thyself to a teacher, and confer with him about any such passage; shew thy diligence and desire to be informed. And when God sees thy willingness and readiness of mind, he will not despise thy vigilance and care. But though man inform thee not in the things about which thou makest enquiry, he himself will certainly reveal it to thee. Remember the Eunuch of the Ethiopian queen, who though he was a barbarian, and immersed in a multitude of cares and business, and understood not what he read, yet he read for all that, sitting in his chariot. And if he shewed so great diligence by the way, consider how he behaved himself at home.

home. If he would not omit reading in the time of a journey, much less would he omit it, when he sat quietly in his own house. If when he understood nothing of it, he still continued to read; much more would he do it, when he came to understand it. Wherefore because he read when he had no guide, he quickly found a guide. God knew the willingness of his mind, and accepted his diligence, and presently sent him a teacher. But Philip, you will say, does not now stand by us: no; but the Spirit that moved Philip is still by us. Let us not neglect our own salvation, beloved. These things were written for our salvation, upon whom the ends of the world are come. The reading of the Scriptures is our great guard against sin. Our ignorance of them is a dangerous precipice, and deep gulph. It is an absolute betraying of our salvation, to know nothing of the divine law. It is this that has brought forth so many heresies; this that has brought so much corruption into our lives; this, that has turned all things into confusion. *Works, passim.*

5. GREGORY THE GREAT.

DIVINAS scripturas sæpius lege; imo nunquam de manibus tuis sacra lectio deponatur.—Dicitis obscurioribus fortes exercet, et parvulis humili sermone blanditur. *Works.*

6. ST. BERNARD.

BY prayer we are cleansed from sin; by reading we are taught what we ought to do. Both of them are good, when they can be practised. But if they cannot both be practised, it is better to pray than to read: for when we pray we speak with God: when we read God speaks with us. If you would always abide with God, always pray, and always read. To read the Scriptures is exceedingly necessary for us: for by reading we learn what we ought to do, what to avoid, and at what we ought to aim. Whence it is said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths." By reading, sense and understanding is encreased. Reading furnishes us for prayer, and for action. Reading qualifies both for an active and contemplative life; therefore it is said in the psalms, "The man is blessed who meditates in the law of the Lord day and night." Reading and prayer are the arms by which the devil is vanquished: these are the instruments by which eternal life is acquired. By prayer and reading our vices are destroyed, and virtues are nourished in the soul. The servant of the Lord ought always to pray and

read. Hence it is written in the Psalms, "Then shall I not be confounded, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Therefore be much in prayer, persevere in meditation upon the Scriptures, be constant in the law of God, let your study be in the divine laws, be frequent in reading, let your daily reading be a meditation on the law. Reading leaves less room for the follies of life, and draws us off from the vanity of the world. May God open your heart to understand his precepts! *Works.*

7. MONSIEUR DE RENTY.

I USUALLY rise at five o'clock. Between six and seven I read two chapters of the New Testament bare-headed and on my knees.

After dinner he took out his Testament, and read a chapter on his knees, bare-headed, with extraordinary reverence. *Life.*

8. FRANCIS HAVIER.

SEE here, my dear brother, the form of life which you are constantly to practise every day. In the morning, as soon as you are awakened, prepare yourself to meditate on some mystery of our Lord, beginning from his holy nativity, and continuing to his glorious ascension. Consider every day one mystery, in such manner, that if, for example, on Monday, the birth of our Saviour was the subject of your meditation, that of his circumcision should be for Tuesday; and so in course, till in a month's time, having run through all the actions of Jesus Christ, you come to contemplate him ascending into heaven in triumph! You are every month to begin these meditations again, in the same order.

After dinner you shall resume your morning prayer, and reflect on the same mystery half an hour. You are to employ yourself in this manner interiorly through all the variety of your outward business; giving an hour in every day, to the consideration of the most holy life of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whatsoever affair, or in whatsoever incumbrance you are engaged. *Life.*

9. THOMAS A KEMPIS.

VERITAS est in Scripturis Sanctis quærenda, non eloquentia. Omnis scriptura sacra eo spiritu debet legi, quo facta est. Quærere potius debemus utilitatem in Scripturis quam subtilitatem sermonis. Ita libenter devotos et simplices libros

libros legere debemus, sicut altos et profundos. Non te moveat auctoritas scribentis, five parvæ, five magnæ literaturæ fuerit; sed amor puræ veritatis te trahat ad legendum. Non quæras quis hoc dixerit; sed quid dicatur, attende. Homines transeunt, sed veritas Domini manet in æternum. Sine personarum acceptione, variis modis loquitur nobis Deus. Curiositas nostra sæpe nos impedit in lectione Scripturarum; cum volumus intelligere et discutere, ubi simpliciter est transeundum. Si vis profectum haurire, lege humiliater, simpliciter, et fideliter; nec unquam velis habere nomen scientiæ. Interroga libenter, et audi tacens verba sanctorum; nec displiceant tibi parabolæ seniorum; sine causa enim non proferuntur.—Doctrina Christi omnes doctrinas sanctorum præcellit; et qui spiritum ejus haberet, manna ibi absconditum inveniret. Qui vult plenè & sapidè Christi verba intelligere, oportet ut totam vitam suam illius studeat conformare.

De Imitatione Christi.

10. LADY JANE GREY.

THE night before she was executed, she wrote a letter of which the following is a part, on the blank leaves at the end of a Greek Testament, which she bequeathed as a legacy to her sister, the Lady Catharine Grey.

I have sent you, my dear sister Catharine, a book, which although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is more worth than all the precious mines which the vast world can boast of. It is the book, my only best and best beloved sister, of the law of the Lord: it is the testament and last will which he bequeathed unto us wretches and wretched sinners, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy: and if you with a good mind read it, and with an earnest desire follow it, no doubt it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life. It will teach you to live, and learn you to die. It shall win you more, and endow you with greater felicity, than you should have gained by the possession of our woeful father's lands. For, as if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his honours and manors; so if you apply yourself diligently to this book, seeking to direct your life according to the rule of the same, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither the thief shall steal, neither yet the moths corrupt. Desire with David, my best sister, to understand the law of the Lord your God. Live still to die, that you by death may purchase eternal life. And trust not

that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life; for unto God, when he calleth, all hours, times, and seasons, are alike. And blessed are they whose lamps are furnished when he cometh; for as soon will the Lord be glorified in the young as in the old.

Biographia Britannica.

II. REV. FRANCIS FOX, A. M.

WERE Christians more generally sensible of their great need of divine assistance, in order to their attaining to a saving knowledge of the Scriptures; did they by earnest prayer apply themselves to God through Jesus Christ, for the aids of his Holy Spirit, to enlighten their minds, to purify their hearts and affections, to sanctify their wills, to reprove them for their failings, to teach them, and to lead them into all truth, and to set home the Scriptures on their consciences, they would questionless become wise unto salvation, and ready to every good work. Did Christians spend more time in reading and comparing the sacred writings, than in searching after the different and disagreeing opinions of expositors, I am persuaded the way to divine knowledge would be both easier, and shorter, and more satisfactory, the disputes among Christians fewer, and those which should remain, would be managed with a spirit of meekness and love, the practice of religion would become more universal, and the world would feel the benefit of the religion our blessed Saviour taught men, and be convinced of its divine original.

Preface to his New Testament.

12. REV. FRANCIS BRAGGE, B. D.

THERE is in the Holy Scriptures such a vast variety of entertainment for a well disposed reader, that the Bible is not only the most excellent and useful, but really the most diverting book in the world. And would we but bestow as much time and application of mind upon it, as we do upon other considerable authors; we should soon discover such excellencies in it, as would even chain us to it, but with a most delightful captivity, and make us relish nothing like it.

What a noble account, for instance, does it give of the first formation of the world; the original of human race; the unhappy fall of our common ancestors from the favour of their creator; and the hopes that were graciously given them of a recovery!

How affecting is the history of the holy and venerable patriarchs; their intercourse with God and heavenly spirits;

rits; their great simplicity, piety, and generosity; the wonderful providences of God towards them and their posterity, and the admirable steps and advances that were made from age to age to the happy times of the Messias!

And how surprizing is the relation we have of his conception, and birth, and life, and death, who was the desire of all nations!

How mean was his outward appearance! And yet how did his divinity break through all the clouds and veils that he was pleased to put upon it to conceal it! He seemed to be no other than a poor, despised, afflicted man; and yet, the wondrous things he did, and heavenly doctrines he taught, bespoke him to be what he was, God manifest in the flesh to destroy the works of the devil.

All the books in the world cannot afford any thing comparable to what this divine book treats of; and that in the most moving manner too, without the least appearance of artifice or affectation, and with a natural majestic gracefulness in all its various turns.

But it is not every reader that will have this taste for the Scriptures; and 'tis not running through a single chapter now and then, without order and connection, and with all the haste that may be, and then laying the book aside, and thinking no more of the matter, that will do us any considerable good; for no book whatever of any value, that is huddled over at this heedless rate, would be read to any purpose, much less the Book of God.

No: we must dwell upon it, and, with holy David, make it our meditation day and night, comparing carefully one passage with another, and reading not scatteringly here and there a little, but perusing what is of the same nature and tendency together; and then, fixing it in our minds by serious meditation, and above all, endeavouring to improve it to what is the great end, as to us, of its being written, the increase of a true sense of religion in us, and sincere holiness of life, that we may grow wise by it to salvation. For, whoever reads the Scriptures out of curiosity only, or vain glory, or for any purpose or design, that does not tend to this in the conclusion, does highly profane and abuse them, and will sadly repent it at last.

But he that with due reverence, humility, and pious intention, takes the course I mentioned just now, in his sacred studies, will in a little time have a true relish for the Holy Writings, and the seeming dryness and obscurity of them at first, will soon wear off, and they will grow more pleasant

and beneficial every day than other; especially, and which should never be omitted, if we add prayer to our meditations, before we begin, while we are reading, and when we have done.

Sermons on the Miracles and Parables.

13. REV. HENRY OWEN, D. D.

THE Gospels are by no means to be looked upon as so many detached pieces, composed by persons totally ignorant of each other's intention; but rather as one complete, entire system of divinity, supported by the strongest proofs that the subject is capable of, and defended against all the objections which either Jews or Gentiles, or even its most dangerous heretical professors, could make to the truth and certainty of it. If we read them in proper order, we shall find them improving one upon another, and yet all conspiring to the same end—to a perfect representation of revealed religion.

Observations on the Gospels.

14. REV. HENRY VENN, M. A.

TO secret prayer, you will join devout study of the Bible; because it is our infallible guide, and the treasury of all truth necessary to salvation. But the riches laid up there, are not to be found by proud or careless minds: None possess them, till they dig for them as for silver, longing to know the will of God, that they may do it. To superficial readers of the Bible, it presents little more than a great number of duties, which must be performed; and sins, which must be renounced; with insupportable pains, in failure of obedience;—passages of excellent use, when believed; as they at once rouse the selfish soul of man to seek reconciliation with God, and help from heaven.—But earnest and devout readers of the Bible discover much more—they discover the tender heart of Christ; the efficacy of his blood to cleanse from all unrighteousness; and a variety of spiritual blessings, which are the present reward of being true-hearted in his service. I am at a loss for words to express how much solid knowledge, transforming your mind into the divine image, you will certainly gain by persevering in diligent prayer year after year, for the true interpretation of God's blessed Word, that you may be made wise and holy.

Letter to Mr. Scott.

15. REV. BENJAMIN JENKS, A. M.

O WHAT a sweet and spacious field is the Holy Scripture, my soul, in which thou mayest traverse about, and entertain thyself with the greatest variety of wonders and delights! This letter of love from heaven, thou canst not peruse too often; but mayest make some of the best employment of thy time, to meditate in it day and night. These thou shalt find the noblest histories, the greatest remarks, the wisest counsels, the sublimest truths, the most surprising passages, the most momentous concerns, the exactest rules, the holiest precepts, the weightiest warnings, the most precious promises, the highest of all encouragements. Away then with all the impertinent writings, the stained papers, that do but abuse, if not debauch the readers. O dear Book of all books! that has God himself for the blessed author, and eternal salvation for the subject matter! Nothing comes with such power upon the heart; nothing gives such satisfaction and assurance to the mind. When 'tis, Thus saith the Lord, 'tis beyond all the sayings, and confidence of the greatest men in the world. To this test I bring all that I hear or read elsewhere; and in this centre I fix, and find sure footing. Amidst all the uncertainty and contradiction of sentiments in the world, I am easy, that I have the Divine Oracles, by which I can safely abide.

Meditations.

16. REV. JOHN NORRIS.

PRAY take care, that the first thing you do in a morning as soon as you are up and conveniently habited, be to sanctify and hallow the day, by a solemn devotional address of yourselves to God in prayer. Let this be the first thing you do, I mean before you take any secular or worldly thing in hand. For there is one certain thing that I would advise you to do even before you say your prayers, and that is, to read as attentively and considerately as you can a chapter in the bible. This I would have you to do every morning before you go to your prayers, which you will find to be a most excellent and advantageous practice, not only as serving to inform your understandings, and bring you acquainted with the holy scriptures, but also to warm and quicken your wills and affections, and to tune your souls, and put them into a due composure for your following devotion.

Father's Advice to his Children.

17. REV.

17. REV. ROBERT FLEMING.

LET us learn—to value our Bibles more. Oh! my friends, what rich mines are still to be found in this divine depositum, this sacred treasure, which we justly call the Bible, i. e. The Book, or collection of books, by way of specialty and eminency.—It is not with the Sacred Writings, as it is with the writings of uninspired men, though never so acute, solid, and elaborate. For these we may see to the bottom of, if we duly attend to the scope and connection: and therefore they judge exceedingly amiss, who make their judgment of the sense of Scripture from the writings of men only: for every material hint given in the Bible kindles more, and these again more, and so on: and no wonder for the thoughts of God are infinite: and consequently, his expressions of things, though wrapt up in the words and language of men, must lead into proportionable views and ideas, were we able to grasp them. I grow daily more and more in love with this Sacred Book, and in admiration of it.

Chrytology, passim.

18. BISHOP RICHARDSON.

THOU canst not search the Scriptures too much, nor can the Word of God dwell too richly and plentifully in thee.

Observations on the Old Testament.

19. REV. D. BELLAMY.

IF the Scriptures, however, were recommended to us only as matters of the greatest curiosity and speculation; as a discovery only of the nature of the Supreme Being, and other heavenly Intelligences; as an hypothesis only that determined the rewards of virtue, and the immortality of our internal and more noble part; that accounted for all the dark and intricate ways of heaven, the seemingly severe dispensations of Divine Providence; and, in a word, proposed an infallible specific for healing the infirmities of our nature; our curiosity, one would imagine, if nothing else, would find such an innocent, such an agreeable amusement, as would be sufficient to prevail on us to take delight in fo noble and excellent a study: But when we come to reflect seriously within ourselves, that those Scriptures are the revealed will of God, the words of eternal life; when we consider, that virtue and vice are therein delineated in their strongest colours, in order to recommend the one, and discountenance

countenance the other; and that the salvation of our souls is the sure consequence of our observance of the former, and abhorrence of the latter; when we give ourselves time, I say, to ponder on these weighty matters; with what assiduity, with what unwearied diligence, should we apply ourselves to a study that is of such moment and importance? All other researches, how delightful soever, when set in competition with this noblest of studies, will appear as empty and idle amusements. Notwithstanding we may have been conversant with the best systems of philosophy that the Antients ever wrote, and have perused, with the utmost care and attention, the most authentic histories of all nations; notwithstanding we may have worldly wisdom enough to form a proper judgment of all the secret springs, by which whole kingdoms are governed and directed, by their respective prime-ministers of state; yet if we are strangers to this true wisdom, to this one thing needful, all such worldly wisdom will avail us nothing; we shall have studied to no manner of purpose; and all our learning, in short, will be but what Solomon calls it, vexation of spirit.

Family Preacher.

20. REV. WILLIAM ROMAINE, M. A.

—O SIR, what are you doing, that other books are so much read, and the Bible so much neglected? Will you learn from a poor penitent? Indeed I repent, and God forgive my mispent time in sciences and classics. I saw my folly two and twenty years ago; and have since studied nothing else but the Bible, and I assure you, Sir, I am got but a little way: I see such things before me, which I know but in part, that I am pressing on; and I wish for some of my lost time to spend in this blessed study.

Spiritual Magazine for August 1783.

21. SEBASTION CASTALIO.

AGITE, o vos omnes qui sacros libros in manus sumitis, abjicite profanos animos: credite Deo: renunciate voluntati vestræ, et vos summissio, sequair, obsequenti et plane puerili, hoc est docili animo, sic informandos Deo tradite, ut puer ludimagistro facit: atque eodem animo Deum assidue orate: nec prius desistite, quam optata fueritis consecuti: nam quisquis quærit, invenit, et qui petit, obtinet, et pulsanti aperitur. Hac una via Dei voluntatem percipietis, et secundum eam viventes, vestramque repudiantes, et contra
vos

vos ipsos pugnantes, per fidem in Jesu Christo servatore mundi collocatam, pervenietis ad vitam æternam.

Quæ via sit recta ad intelligendas Sacras Scripturas.

22. REV. JOHN CLAUDE.

TO what can we better apply ourselves than to read the Scripture, that heavenly book, which contains in it treasures of wisdom and knowledge? and to which we may say, as the disciples to our Lord, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." How can we employ ourselves better, when alone and free, than in conversing with the doctrines and precepts of religion, and endeavouring to know and comprehend them? We may truly say, when we apply to these things, We are satisfied with the marrow of God's house, and drink of the river of his delights.

Essay on the Composition of a Sermon.

23. SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

REST not in high-strained paradoxes of old philosophy, supported by naked reason, and the reward of mortal felicity; but labour in the ethics of faith, built upon heavenly assistance, and the happiness of both beings. Understand the rules, but swear not unto the doctrines of Zeno or Epicurus. Look beyond Antoninus, and terminate not thy morals in Seneca or Epictetus. Let not the twelve, but the two tables be thy law: let Pythagoras be thy remembrancer, not thy textuary and final instructor; and learn the vanity of the world, rather from Solomon than Phocylides. Sleep not in the dogmas of the Peripatus, Academy, or Porticus. Be a moralist of the mount, an Epictetus in the faith, and christianize thy notions.

Christian Morals.

24. BISHOP HERBERT.

THIS heavenly food, the Word of God, abideth for ever, and shall nourish up our souls unto everlasting life. This ought to be our daily bread. Herein we should read and meditate day and night, and say with David, "I have more delight in thy commandments, than in thousands of gold and silver." For here we find a heavenly treasure for our souls: here we learn all things profitable for our salvation: here great ones learn humility, rich men charity, poor contentedness, the oppressed patience, the afflicted comfort.—Other books may be helps to devotion, and give

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us some instruction for life ; but all come much short of this holy book.

Charge.

25. REV. WALTER HODGES, D. D.

IN the Bible are recorded the noblest exploits of real heroes transmitted down to posterity for their imitation, which we cannot but look upon with wonder and delight. At the same time we have the particular satisfaction of reflecting, that this our history is as true as it is full of wonders, without any mixture of falsehood or unfair colouring to recommend it. It is grand, though simple ; big with matters and events of the greatest importance, the weight of which fills the expressions with a suitable dignity, a dignity not to be met with in the historical accounts of profane writers. So that the Scripture considered only in this view would demand our attention before any composition merely human.—And if these Scriptures are divinely penned, are of such dignity in themselves, and of such infinite concern to us, if all other knowledge compared with what may be here known be no better than dung, and all other books with regard to their use and excellency—even the most curious or entertaining—be no more than a sounding brass or tinkling cymbal, what can be said or thought of such, who pay more regard to the flashy unsatisfying performances of Heathen writers, than to the fountains of truth and life? It is grievous to see rational beings, Christian men, nay sometimes Christian ministers, mispending their time and studies in such pursuits, and teaching others by the most forcible instruction, that of example, that many other authors deserve a more near and careful perusal than the inspired writers. What will be the consequence here and hereafter, of thus following shadows instead of the substance, of this contemptuous treatment of the book of life, is not matter of private judgment.—As the study of the Scriptures has been generally neglected, and a preference given to almost any other writer in the esteem of many, who would be thought persons of penetration and judgment, it will behove the Clergy more particularly to consider, whether they have any way countenanced this vicious false taste. If they have been more careful to set off and exemplify the beauties of the Grecian and Roman writers, than those of the sacred penmen : if they lay more stress upon the authority of philosophers and human wisdom, than upon the foundation and precepts of prophets and apostles : if they have been silent upon, or industriously careful to obscure,

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by spreading a false gloss over such doctrinal principal points as are entitled to a priority of order and dignity, what will they say to their Master, when they are summoned to give an account of their stewardships? *Elihu, passim.*

26. REV. WILLIAM LAW, M. A.

CLASSICUS is a man of learning, and well versed in all the best authors of antiquity. He has read them so much, that he has entered into their spirit, and can very ingeniously imitate the manner of any of them. All their thoughts are his thoughts, and he can express himself in their language. He is so great a friend to this improvement of the mind, that if he lights of a young scholar, he never fails to advise him concerning his studies.

Classicus tells his young man, he must not think that he has done enough, when he has only learned languages; but that he must be daily conversant with the best authors, read them again and again, catch their spirit by living with them, and that there is no other way of becoming like them, or making himself a man of taste and judgment.

How wise might Classicus have been, and how much good might he have done in the world, if he had but thought as justly of devotion, as he does of learning?

He never, indeed, says any thing shocking or offensive about devotion, because he never thinks, or talks about it. It suffers nothing from him, but neglect and disregard.

The two Testaments would not have had so much as a place amongst his books, but that they are both to be had in Greek.

Classicus thinks that he sufficiently shews his regard for the Holy Scripture; when he tells you, that he has no other books of piety besides them.

It is very well, Classicus, that you prefer the Bible to all other books of piety; he has no judgment, that is not thus far of your opinion.

But if you will have no other book of piety besides the Bible, because, it is the best, how comes it, Classicus, that you do not content yourself with one of the best books amongst the Greeks and Romans? How comes it that you are so greedy and eager after all of them? How comes it that you think the knowledge of one is a necessary help to the knowledge of the other? How comes it, that you are so earnest, so laborious, so expensive of your time and money, to restore broken periods and scraps of the ancients?

How

How comes it that you read so many commentators upon Cicero, Horace, and Homer, and not one upon the Gospel? How comes it that your love of Cicero, and Ovid, makes you to love to read an author that writes like them, and your esteem for the gospel gives you no desire, nay, prevents your reading such books, as breathe the very spirit of the gospel?

How comes it that you tell your young scholar, he must not content himself with barely understanding his authors, but must be continually reading them all, as the only means of entering into the spirit, and forming his own judgment according to them?

Why then must the Bible lie alone in your study? Is not the spirit of the saints, the piety of the holy followers of Jesus Christ as good and necessary a means of entering into the spirit and taste of the gospel, as the reading of the ancients is of entering into the spirit of antiquity?

Is the spirit of poetry only to be got by much reading of poets and orators? And is not the spirit of devotion to be got in the same way, by frequent reading the holy thoughts, and pious strains of devout men?

Is your young poet to search after every line, that may give new wings to his fancy, or direct his imagination? And is it not as reasonable for him, who desires to improve in the divine life, that is, in the love of heavenly things, to search after every strain of devotion, that may move, kindle, and inflame the holy ardour of his soul?

Do you advise your orator to translate the best orations, to commit much of them to memory, to be frequently exercising his talents in this manner, that habits of thinking and speaking justly may be formed in his mind? And is there not the same benefit and advantage to be made by books of devotion? Should not a man use them in the same way, that habits of devotion, and aspiring to God in holy thoughts, may be well formed in his soul?

Now the reason why Classicus does not think and judge thus reasonably of devotion, is owing to his never thinking of it in any other manner, than as the repeating of a form of words. It never in his life entered into his head, to think of devotion as a state of the heart, as an improveable talent of the mind, as a temper that is to grow and increase like our reason and judgment, and to be formed in us by such a regular diligent use of proper means, as are necessary to form any other wise habit of mind.

And

And it is for want of this, that he has been content all his life, with the bare letter of prayer, and eagerly bent upon entering into the spirit of Heathen poets and orators.

And it is much to be lamented that numbers of scholars are more or less chargeable with this excessive folly; so negligent of improving their devotion, and so desirous of other poor accomplishments, as if they thought it a nobler talent, to be able to write an epigram in the turn of Martial, than to live, and think, and pray to God, in the spirit of St. Austin.

And yet, to correct this temper, and fill a man with a quite contrary spirit, there seems to be no more required, than the bare belief of the truth of Christianity.

And if you was to ask Mundanus, and Classicus, or any man of business, or learning, whether piety is not the highest perfection of man, or devotion the greatest attainment in the world; they must both be forced to answer in the affirmative, or else give up the truth of the gospel.

For to set any accomplishment against devotion, or to think any thing, or all things in the world, can bear any proportion to its excellency; is the same absurdity in a Christian, as it would be in a philosopher to prefer a meal's meat, to the greatest improvement in knowledge.

For as philosophy professes purely the search and enquiry after knowledge; so Christianity supposes, intends, desires, and aims at nothing else, but the raising of fallen man to a divine life, to such habits of holiness, such degrees of devotion, as may fit him to enter among the holy inhabitants of the kingdom of heaven.

He that does not believe this of Christianity, may be reckoned an infidel: and he that believes thus much, has faith enough to give him a right judgment of the value of things, to support him in a sound mind, and enable him to conquer all the temptations which the world shall lay in his way.

Serious Call.

27. REV. SAMUEL HAYWARD.

I. READ the Word with prayer. Prayer is one of the great means of bringing down the divine blessing upon all ordinances and duties to our spiritual edification. It is a means of preparing our hearts for other duties, and of enabling us to get good from them. It would be well for prayer to go before reading. However, if circumstances will not permit you to spend some time in this duty before you read the word, do not absolutely neglect it; but send up a few

few petitions to God, that he would prepare your heart for the work that lies before you; open your eyes, that you may understand the Scriptures; and accompany reading with a divine blessing, that it may answer some valuable purpose in your soul, either to enlighten, quicken, or comfort, or in some way or other to promote your spiritual good. When you consider these things, you cannot but see the propriety of prayer before reading. But especially accompany reading with prayer. Do not think you have done all that is incumbent upon you, when you have read the Scripture either in the family or in the closet. Pray it over before God. Have you been reading any promises of spiritual blessings? Plead them with God. Has the chapter been representing the odiousness of sin, its dreadful consequences, the falls of God's people, and salvation to the chief of sinners? Beg that your eyes may be opened to see the malignity of sin, and the wickedness of your heart, and that you may be kept from those evils, which many have fallen into, and be enabled to admire the riches of free grace in the salvation of creatures so unworthy, and in your own in particular. Have you been reading of the privileges of God's children here, and the glory they shall have hereafter; or have you been taking a view of their various duties, of their respective relations and circumstances of life, or of their various experiences, and of the dealings of God with them? Beg that your heart may be suitably affected with such representations, that you may be encouraged in your Christian course, quickened to run your race, confirmed in your belief of the reality of religion, and be enabled to continue, till you receive the end of your faith, even your complete and everlasting salvation. Has the chapter been representing the Mediator, his glorious person, his important offices, his amazing love, the triumph of his cross, or his qualifications for the great work he has undertaken, and therefore his all-sufficiency to save? Be earnest with God, that you may be enabled to leave yourself with this Jesus, may be sprinkled with his blood, have a share in all the blessings he has purchased, and that his love may ever endear him to your souls, kindle the sacred fire in your breasts, and engage you to walk before him in holiness and righteousness all the days of your life. Thus let reading be accompanied with prayer. Remember, the Scripture is full of important mysteries, which we cannot see the beauty of, unless the spirit opens the eyes of our understandings. Our hearts are naturally full of prejudices against the glorious contents of
Scripture,

Scripture, and therefore we want the Spirit to remove these, and to give us a true relish for the great truths of revelation, and impress them powerfully upon our minds to our salvation. They that neglect prayer, and depend upon their own judgment and skill to guide them in matters of everlasting moment, have no reason to expect the Spirit's teachings, and are therefore liable to fall into error, even those that will prove eternally destructive to their highest interest. Pray therefore for divine direction, for divine quickenings, that what you read may be a means of bringing you nearer to God, and of promoting your everlasting advantage. Finally, earnestly pray, that whilst you are beholding the glory of the Lord in the glass of his word, you may be changed into his image, from glory to glory, and may find those truths you are reading, properly impressing, warming and establishing your hearts, that you may be growing in the image of your Redeemer, and be training up for a glorious and everlasting world above.

2. Observe some order in reading the Word, and make use of those helps that may be necessary to your understanding it. This man is at a loss to determine, whether he shall begin with the Bible, and go regularly through it, or not. This seems to be the best method to observe at your stated times of reading; and it will not prevent your looking into other parts of Scripture, when you have opportunity. This method will give you a view of the great events which the Scripture mentions, and of the various circumstances of the church from period to period, and of God's dealings with them. By this means you have a regular view of things, as they appeared, from the creation, down to Christ and his apostles. You will hereby have a greater insight into Scripture history and chronology, which will be both entertaining and useful, and keep your ideas of things relating to persons and facts distinct and clear. This person farther says, there is a great part of Scripture he does not understand. You should read the Scripture therefore with an exposition or paraphrase. This will open the text to you, shew you the connection, the design, the meaning, and furnish you with matter for serious meditation. What end will it answer for you to read this Sacred Volume, and not understand it? If it is a sealed book, it is like to be useless.—Upon the whole, though you may understand some parts, yet there are others, that will appear mysterious, and will remain so, to your great disadvantage in reading, unless you have some interpreter to help you to understand their meaning.

3. You

3. You should be concerned to read the Word of God with great seriousness and attention, and a real desire to have the contents of it impressed upon your mind, that you may be fitted more for glorifying God in every character and station. If you run through a chapter or two in a hasty, cursory manner, you cannot expect much advantage. You should be concerned to attend with the utmost care and diligence, as well as with the greatest seriousness. A sense of the glorious Author, and of the subject-matter of Scripture, should fill you with a peculiar awe, and command a reverence. It is the Word of God; it comes with a "Thus saith the Lord," has his image instamped upon it, and is his message to you concerning things of everlasting moment. It is not designed to amuse us with trifling and empty speculations, or divert us with romantic stories; it contains things of a far nobler and more sublime nature, even things that concern our everlasting peace. It reveals the transactions of eternity concerning the Salvation of man. It represents the fall, with all its melancholly consequences; our state by nature, how wretched and deplorable! It sets forth the riches of divine grace in appointing a Saviour, and in the method taken to bring about our redemption and salvation. It shews us the encouragements we have to apply to the Redeemer for all saving blessings, represents the nature, variety and excellency of them, the happiness of the saints in heaven, the triumphs and solemnity of the great day, the sentence that will pass upon the wicked, and the awful execution of it in hell. It is full of promises on the one hand, and threatenings on the other, and therefore calls for the greater seriousness and attention in those who read it. It is designed to be a means of our sanctification, and so to fit us for the heavenly world, and therefore we should seriously attend to it. And, lastly, it is that word by which we must be judged. This is the grand book that will be opened; according to this will the sentence be passed, and all the opportunities we have had of reading and hearing it, but not improved, will appear against us, if found strangers to Jesus, and aggravate our condemnation. How seriously, reverently, and attentively then should we read this Sacred Word! In fine, when we read the Scripture, it should be with views and desires of feeling its power; and tasting its sweetness; that our minds may be more enlightened by it, and our souls more established; that our corruptions may be more mortified, and our graces more quickened and strengthened; that our doubts may be more removed, and our souls be supported under all

the difficulties of life; that the promises may be more and more our joy, heaven be more in our eye, and we be set a longing more after the full and everlasting enjoyment of God above.

4. Reading the Word of God should be accompanied with meditation and self examination. Reading alone will be of little service. Food taken into the stomach will answer no valuable purpose, unless it is digested. Meditation is a digesting spiritual things, and turning them into nourishment to our souls. By this we extract honey from every truth, and so get some additions made to our knowledge and experience. It is a means of humbling, quickening, and establishing our souls, and of kindling a fire in our affections. Whilst the Psalmist was musing, the fire burned, Psalm xxxix.

3. How often, in meditation upon what the Christian has been reading, has he found his affections raised, and his soul in some measure brought near to God? How often, whilst musing, has he been filled with an indifference to this world, hatred of sin, self-abhorrence, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, admiration of his rich and infinite grace, warm desires after the enjoyments above, and satisfying views of an interest in them? By meditation the Word takes deeper root in us, makes a more powerful impression on our minds, and furnisheth us with matter for prayer. As often as you read, be concerned to meditate upon it.—Examine yourself too by it, and see what concern you have with it, what influence it has had upon you, and how you may improve it. Have you been reading any of the marks and the characters of the people of God, the graces of the Spirit? Inquire whether you have found any of them in your own soul. Has the chapter been representing some of the doctrines of Christianity? Examine what knowledge you have of them, how they suit your experience, and what use you make of them for humiliation, encouragement, &c. Have you been reading of the love of God in the various parts of redemption and salvation by Christ Jesus? Here is a theme for your meditation; here is a call for your examination. Inquire whether it has ever affected your heart, raised your admiration, and kindled a secret flame in your soul. Finally, Compare your heart with what you read; see whether it is not your case that is represented, and endeavour by meditation upon, and a self application of it, to get some spiritual advantage from it. To these directions I may add,

5. Read the Word of God frequently. The oftener you read the Scriptures, the more benefit you are like to receive.

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Let the Bible be your companion. Be much conversant with it. Consult it upon all occasions. In every difficulty, when you want quickening, direction, comfort, or establishment, look into the Sacred Word. Let it be your daily practice to read it, as by this means you will get a growing acquaintance with it, its various mysteries, the duties it represents, the encouragements and directions it gives you in every case; and so, by a divine blessing, will have your knowledge and experience increased, your graces confirmed and strengthened, and your way made easy and pleasant through this difficult wilderness. I shall now close with two reflections.

1. What reason have we to be thankful for the Scriptures, and the free use of them! When we consider the divine authority of this book, view its important discoveries, its peculiar usefulness, and how many are deprived of it, we have reason to admire infinite grace that we enjoy it, and should ever esteem it as the choicest of our treasures. We have great reason to be thankful, that God is delivering us from time to time from Popery, as by this means our sacred privileges are continued to us, and we have the free use of the Bible, have it in our own houses, as well as in the house of God, and can examine it upon all occasions, and try every doctrine by this divine standard. These must not be ranked amongst the least of our mercies; they are of great importance, and call for our highest and our united praises.

2. What matter of lamentation is it, that this Sacred Book is so much neglected, and how inexcusable must such for ever be! There are many families, it is to be feared, in this land, who have not so much as a Bible in their houses; nor do they desire it. There are others who have it, but let it lie neglected, as an unfashionable book. Romances, plays, history, and various sorts of human compositions, are in constant use: but this most excellent volume, this book that is the foundation of all our knowledge of divine things, our holiness and our comfort, is thrown aside; or when it is ever opened, it is with reluctance. What amazing ingratitude and stupidity is this! Oh, may we all be humbled for our own and others negligence, and be concerned in our respective stations to esteem, use and improve the Scriptures ourselves, and do all we can to excite others to do the same; that we may see peace and righteousness again flourish, ignorance and superstition banished, and a knowledge of the gospel spreading throughout the land. So, Lord, let it be. Amen and Amen.

Cases of Conscience.

28. REV. THOMAS WATSON.

I. IN reading the Word of God, if you would profit by it, then look to God for his blessing upon it when you begin, pray that he may bless it to you, and open your ears and hearts to hear and comply with it, as the voice of God.

II. Read it with reverence, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed the Word of the great God.

Endeavour to get your hearts impressed by his blessed word. The doctrines, laws, and very spirit of our Bibles, should be transcribed into our very souls. Let then God's Word stand not only in your Bibles, but dwell in your hearts.

III. Have an eye to Christ in every thing you read; for he is the end, scope, and substance of the whole Bible; and every thing in it is reducible to him.

IV. Mark the special passages of the Word, either those that are most important in themselves, or most applicable to you. Mark the duties enjoined, and sins forbidden, with the promises to the one, and threatenings against the other: fasten these upon your memories, and hide them in your hearts. Meditate on them, and pray that God may keep them in your minds, ready for use against the time of need. There are sundry evangelical laws and precepts in the Word of God, which you should observe; as believing in Christ, doing all religious exercises in his name, depending upon his merits, grace and intercession; looking only for acceptance in him; a persuasion of the necessity and usefulness of his offices, as Mediator; prophet, priest and king: an apprehension of our own ignorance, guilt, weakness, misery, and nothingness without Christ; a relying on him in all his offices. We also should remark concerning the Spirit, that he is a spirit of conviction, illumination, prayer, holiness, conduct, comfort, and sealing: so we should accept of his help, cherish his motions, and influences.

V. Consider the worth and excellency of the Word; and how suitable it is to any case and condition we may be in. It is a rich mine of heavenly treasures, a store-house of all spiritual consolation: a common shop of medicines for the soul, full of rich privileges, promises, and large legacies to the people of God: it is a staff and stay to the old, an ornament and guide to the young. In the Word of God, we read the love which God bears to his children from all eternity, and will continue to have for them, when time shall be no more. Here are found the leaves of the tree of life, which God hath ordained for the healing of the nations. In a word, here is the true judge of controversies, a hammer for

for heretics, a touch-stone for doctrine, a rule for our lives, a comforter and counsellor in this house of our pilgrimage: a sovereign cordial in all our soul's distresses. David found it so to his sweet experience, Psalm cxix. 50, "This is my comfort in my afflictions, for thy word hath quickened me." O! how excellent is the Word, and who can set forth all its excellency? It is a glass to discover our spots, a lamp to guide us in the dark, a fire to warm our cold affections, a magazine to supply us with armour against our spiritual enemies. Here are suitable cordials for all our various cases; be it desertion, temptation, poverty, sickness, reproach and persecution: here is the heavenly rain, for making soft and tender hearts, here is meat for strong men, and milk for babes; and through the divine blessing will be both food and physic to our souls.

It is surely the Christian's duty to read and meditate much on God's most excellent Word, and that with pleasure and delight; the child delights to read his father's will and testament, and see what is bequeathed to him; citizens delight to read their charters, to see their privileges; the malefactor acquitted, delights to read his pardon; and the prodigal that is received into favour, delights to read the affectionate letters of his father to him: then if ye are received into favour, and born of God, you cannot but be the lovers of this most excellent Word of God; and read and meditate on it both day and night.

VI. We are to contend for the Scriptures: this precious jewel is too good to be parted with, Prov. iv. 13. "Keep her, for she is thy life." It is our duty not only to love, read, and understand the Scriptures, but also to contend for the same. Heretics fight against it, we must therefore contend for it. Jude ver. 3. The Scriptures are our book of evidence for heaven, shall we part with our evidences? The faints of old were both advocates and martyrs for the truth, they held fast Scripture, though it was at the expence of their lives. David spends the whole cxix Psalm, to shew us his intimate affection to it; Moses esteems it above all the learning of other nations, Deut. iv. 5. 6. Solomon prefers it before pearls, Prov. iii. 15. Job prefers it before his food, Job xxiii. 12. Jeremy makes it his joy. Jer. xv. 16. In a word, all the children of God have been great lovers of God's Word, and could never be prevailed with to part with it, though persecuted for the same.

VII. Read this excellent Word with application to yourselves, as if God spoke to you by name and surname in every

line of it. Read it as a love-letter sent straight from Heaven to you, and to stir you up to faith and holiness. Let us accept of its reproofs and admonitions with thankfulness, and say, What a great mercy is it, that we may read our father's will in our mother tongue? And that God speaks his mind so plainly to us in his Word, shewing us what we are to believe, what we are to do, and what we are to pray for in order to God's glory, and our own happiness.

Godlyman's Picture.

29. ERASMUS.

PERADVENTURE it were most expedient, that the counsels of kings should be kept secret: but Christ would that his counsels and mysteries should be spread abroad as much as possible. I would desire that all women should read the Gospel and Epistles of St. Paul. And I would to God they were translated into the tongues of all men, so that they might not only be read and known of the Scots and Irish, but also of the Turks and Saracens. Truly it is one degree to good living, yea the first, I had almost said the chief, to have a little sight in the Scripture, though it be but a gross knowledge, and not yet consummate. I would to God, the plowman would sing a text of Scripture at his plow: and that the weaver at his loom with this would drive away the tediousness of time. I would the wayfaring man, with this pastime, would expel the weariness of his journey. And, in short, I would that all the communication of the Christian should be of the Scripture.

I believe that the very pure and natural philosophy of Christ can be gathered so fruitfully out of no place as out of the Gospels and Epistles of the apostles; in which if a man will study devoutly, attending more to prayer than arguing, desiring rather to be made a new man, than to be armed with Scriptures unto contention, he, without doubt, shall find, that there is nothing pertaining unto man's felicity, or unto any operation expedient for the present life, but it is therein declared, discussed, and absolutely touched upon.

If then we go about to learn any thing, wherefore shall any other master and instructor more please us than Christ himself? If we require a rule and form to live after, why do we rather embrace any other example, than the very first copy and pattern, which is Christ himself? If we desire an wholesome medicine against the grievous and noisome lusts or appetites of our minds, why seek we not here the most fruitful remedy? If we wish to quicken with reading our dull and fainting mind, I pray you where shall we find such enlivening and fiery sparkles?

sparkles? If we covet to withdraw our minds from the tedious cares of this life, why seek we any other delectable pastimes? Why had we rather learn the wisdom of Christ's doctrine out of men's books, than of Christ himself?

What a marvellous world is this? We keep the letters which are written from our friend: we kiss them and bear them about with us: we read them over twice or thrice: and how many thousands are there among Christians, who are esteemed persons of great learning, and who yet have not once in their lives read over the gospels and epistles of the apostles?

Why do we not all apply our diligent study to these great authors, I mean, Christ, Peter, Paul, and John? Why bear we not these about in our bosoms? Why have we not them ever in our hands? Why do we not haunt, seek, and search out these things with a curious diligence?

Blessed is he whom death assaileth, if his heart be wholly occupied in this wholesome doctrine.

Let us all therefore with fervent desire thirst after these spiritual springs. Let us embrace them. Let us be studiously conversant with them. Let us kiss these sweet words of Christ with a pure affection. Let us be new transformed into them: for such are our manners as our studies be.

The gospel doth represent and express the quick and living image of his most holy mind, yea, and Christ himself speaking, healing, dying, rising again, and, to conclude, all parts of him: insomuch that we could not so plainly and fruitfully see him, although he were present before our bodily eyes.

Exhortation to the Study of Scripture, passim.

30. REV. WILLIAM M'EWEN.

HAIL, sacred page! volumes of inspiration! in whose presence the compositions of mortal wit hide their ashamed countenances; as stars which shone brightly in the clear sky, disappear, when the morning sun purples the eastern clouds. Where shall we find such venerable antiquity as in this reverend code? Before Abraham was, was Christ, the great I AM. Before Orpheus, or Linus, or Hesiod, or Homer, were the Scriptures of the Hebrew Lawgiver.

It is true, the hoary head is not a crown of glory, except when found in the way of righteousness. There are trifling, there are immoral, there are inconsistent productions. If these should vie with the Sacred Oracles, in the earliness of their existence; yet they must not presume to claim an equal regard from men, with the Book of God, whose subject is a compound of the marvellous, the pious, the useful, and
the

the grand. The histories of past, the prophecies of future events, are neither trifling nor deceitful. The precepts, how pure! The doctrines and mysteries, how sublime! How worthy of God, to reveal them! of man, to believe them! Here both the natural and the moral world unfold to our view. Here, we behold this beauteous fabric, emerging out of nothing, and wrapped in a winding-sheet of flames. Here we are informed of the birth of evil, both natural and moral; and how they are again rooted out of the world. The miseries you are to avoid; the happiness you are to pursue; the method wherein you may attain the one, and avoid the other;—these are the important and interesting themes of the Bible. Peruse these holy records; and be acquainted with thyself, and with thy God, O mortal! To ransom thee from death, to render you blessed both here and hereafter; see here, thy great Creator, lying in the womb, groaning on a cross, and sleeping in a grave! Jesus! thou Saviour of the world, these Scriptures testify of thee. Thou art the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending of them. In the Old Testament, thou art concealed; in the New Testament, thou art revealed. Thou art the end of the law, and the sum of the gospel.

It is true indeed, not every place shines with an equal lustre. But is it any detraction from the beauty of the material world, the fair book of the creation, that here is a champagne country, and there a barren wilderness; here a craggy rock, and there a fruitful valley? We despise not the beauty of the firmament, though some parts of it are not sown so thick as others with starry lamps. But should we nearer view those seemingly barren places in the field of Revelation; should we dig into those rocky texts, with care and reverence; perhaps then we might find cause to alter our sentiments. Even the genealogies are not endless, nor the ceremonies insignificant. Even here we find rich veins of wisdom; and Christ, the pearl of great price.

But is there not something more than mortal breathing through every page? It is here the attentive mind is struck with awe, as under the impenetrable shade of some aspiring grove, or under the roof of some religious edifice. Thus, angels which appeared to holy men of old, struck the beholders with a dread for which they could not well account. There was something in their voice, in their air, in their gesture, which spoke them more than human. What loftiness of phrase in some! What majestic simplicity of expression in other passages! How unparalleled! how inimitable

table by mortal pen! Thus he whose name is called the Word of God, in his exalted state, is more glorious than the kings of the earth; and, even in his humiliation, there was something exceedingly majestic, which poured contempt upon princes.

Be not ashamed of the Scriptures. "They are the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth." O blessed Word! thou convertest the soul; thou enlightenest the eyes; thou rejoicest the heart; thou givest wisdom unto the simple; and light unto the blind; and life unto the dead! Peruse the Scriptures: your corruptions shall be mortified; your graces shall be vivified; your thoughts, your words, your actions, shall be sanctified, be purified, be rectified. These will alleviate your sorrows in adversity; and in prosperity, heighten your enjoyments. Here, multitudes have found life everlasting.

O ye who have received the truth in the love thereof! who have his blessed word sweeter than honey to your mouth! give glory to that God, who, when the human race were wandering in uncertainty and error, was pleased to make such a revelation of himself;—a revelation even dropt, where we have notices conveyed unto us, more true and certain than from the famed deadly oracles of Delphos or Dodona. Praise him, who has not committed the intimations of his will unto the leaves of uncertain tradition, which every breath of wind might puff away; which, in latter ages, might have been greatly corrupted, by passing through a multitude of hands. But he hath written that same word, which formerly was only verbal, in a book, the peculiar care of Providence; where the divine revelation is kept as in a garrison, and needs not fear from the injuries of time, from the cunning of Satan, nor from the evil designs of corrupt men. Adore him, who, by his Holy Spirit, informed the minds of holy men of old, with such concealed truths; and guided their pens in writing these holy originals. Acknowledge his goodness, who hath preserved these heavenly records from flames, and floods, and desolations; who hath cast your lot, not in those dusky corners of the world, where the Word of God sheds not its holy light, or is, by public authority, prohibited from being consulted.

Know thy privilege, O happy island! much are you advantaged every way beyond thy neighbouring states; but chiefly, that unto you are committed the Oracles of God. Turn not your blessing to a curse. Young men! search the Scriptures; they will make you wise unto salvation; you shall

shall have more understanding than the ancients. Old men! search the Scriptures; they will be the support of your old age, and make you to sing as in the days of your youth. Ye men of rank and station! who dwell in lofty palaces, and ride in gilded chariots; O make them your heritage for ever! Ye weaker Christians! here is much to satisfy your craving appetite. Ye men of genius! here is strong meat, to suit your nicer palates, and drive away disdain.

Meditate on the law of the Lord, both day and night. The more you draw from this refreshing fountain, the more will the waters abound. But, would you enter into the secret of the Lord, which is with them that fear him? Bring with you a pure, an humble, and a fervent mind. Whom shall he teach knowledge? Whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Those whose hearts are not haughty, nor their eyes lofty; but who are like the child weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts: those who are estranged from their lusts, who lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness: those whose souls do pant exceedingly, and long for God's commandments; like thee, O blessed David, whose eyes did timeously prevent the night watches, to meditate on the statutes of the Lord.

Take to yourselves, ye jealous papists! your fabulous traditions, and hide this holy lamp under the bushel of foreign languages; and by this confess the weakness of your cause.—Ye wild Enthusiasts! vaunt of the light within you; but take heed, lest that light you boast is in you be darkness.—Walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks of your kindling, ye unbelieving Deists.—But, O house of Israel! come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. Consult this heavenly guide, O thou my soul! and let your delight be in the law of the Lord. Let me often expatiate in these hallowed fields of Revelation, and, like the disciples, pluck the full ears of corn; and rub them from the husk, by ardent meditation and fervent prayer.

Shine upon my soul, O heavenly Spirit!—bear witness in my heart. Imprint the Bible there; make this the library of God. Then shall I be made wiser than my teachers, and in all my afflictions be comforted; and though I walk through death's dark shades, yet shall my steps be conducted unto those blissful regions, where “the sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw her shining; but the Lord shall be my everlasting light, and my God my glory.”

Select Essays.

FOR the sake of those, who are totally unacquainted with Hebrew, the Compiler hath subjoined to the end of this volume a short explication of the alphabet and grammar, not exact and full enough to enable them to read and understand the language critically, but as sufficient to convince them, how easily they may do it with a little assistance, and to provoke them to so pleasing and important a study, especially the Clergy; for whom it is a shame, if not a crime, to be unacquainted with this language. As to the controversy about Points, that is a matter which does not come within the design of this work to meddle in. The Reader will pursue the method he most approves. If he wishes to take the most natural and simple way of obtaining the language, let him provide himself with an Hebrew Bible (which he may do for a few shillings) and Parkhurst's Hebrew and English Lexicon, from which truly valuable and entertaining work the following short view of Grammar is taken, and a very moderate degree of application, even if he does not understand one word of Latin and Greek, will make him competently acquainted with this first, most simple and expressive of languages, in the course of a few months.

A SHORT HEBREW GRAMMAR.

I. Of the LETTERS and READING.

Name.	Form.	Frmts.	Sound.	
Aleph	א		a in <i>all</i>	<p>1. Hebrew is read from the right hand to the left.</p> <p>2. Of the Letters these five, א, ה, ו, י, ע, are Vowels, all the rest are Consonants.</p> <p>3. Where there is no vowel between two Consonants, supply in reading a short <i>e</i> or <i>a</i>, as דָּבַר pronounce <i>dëbër</i>, פֶּקֶד, <i>pëquëd</i>.</p> <p>4. Always pronounce the written vowels <i>long</i> and <i>strong</i>, the supplied ones <i>short</i> and <i>quick</i>.</p> <p>5. A <i>Root</i> or <i>Radix</i> is a word usually of three Letters, whence others are formed.</p> <p>6. The eleven letters forming the words אֵתֶן מֵשֶׁה וּבָלַק are <i>servile</i> or <i>serve</i> for the grammatical Inflections, Particles, &c.</p> <p>7. The other eleven are <i>radical</i>, or always make part of the root.</p> <p>8. <i>Servile</i> letters are often <i>radical</i> but <i>radical</i> ones never <i>servile</i>.</p> <p>9. Except ט when used for ת, see § IV. 9.</p>
Beth	ב		b	
Gimel	ג		g hard	
Daleth	ד		d	
He	ה		a, or e in <i>where</i>	
Vau	ו		u (as oo) or w	
Zain	ז		z	
Heth	ח		h aspirate	
Teth	ט		th	
Yod	י		ee or y	
Caph	כ	ך	k	
Lamed	ל		l	
Mem	מ	ם	m	
Nun	נ	ן	n	
Samech	ס		sh	
Oin	ע		o long	
Pe	פ	ף	p	
Jaddi	צ	ץ	j soft	
Koph	ק		q or qu	
Reh	ר		r	
Shin	ש		f	
Tau	ת		t	

II. Of

II. Of Nouns.

1. Nouns or Names are of two kinds, *Substantive*, which denote a *substance* or *thing*, as אִישׁ a Man, כֹּהֵן Purity; and *Adjective*, which denote some *Quality* of the *Substantive*, as טוֹב good, גָּדוֹל great.
2. Nouns in Hebrew have two Genders, masculine and feminine, and two Numbers, singular (denoting *one*) and plural (denoting *more than one*.)
3. Most feminine Nouns end in ה or ת *seville*, most others are masculine.
4. Feminine Nouns are formed by adding ה, and sometimes ת, to the masculine, as טוֹב good, טוֹבָה fem. מִצְרַיִם an Egyptian man, מִצְרַיִתָּה an Egyptian woman.
5. The plural masculine is formed by adding ים, and sometimes only י, to the singular; as מֶלֶךְ a king, מַלְכִים, or מַלְכֵי kings.
6. The plural feminine is formed by adding ות to the singular, as אֶרֶץ a land, אֶרֶצוֹת lands; or by changing ה or ו into וּת, as תּוֹרָה a law, תּוֹרוֹת laws; or ית into יוֹת, as מִצְוֵיִת, plur. מִצְוֵיִתוֹת; but in feminine plurals the ו is often dropt.
7. Feminine Nouns have another plural formed by changing ה into הַיִּם, as רֵמָה a damsel, plur. רֵמָהַיִם: This plural hath often a *dual* signification, or denotes *only two*.
8. Nouns feminine singular in *Regimine* change ה into ת, as תּוֹרָה a law, תּוֹרַת יְהוָה the law of Jehovah, אִשָּׁה a woman, אִשְׁתּוֹ his wife.
9. Nouns masculine plural in *Regimine* drop their ים, as מַלְכֵי kings, מַלְכֵי אֶרֶץ kings of the earth, מַלְכֵינוּ our kings. So Nouns fem. plur. in הַיִּם, when in *Regimine*, drop their ים.

III. Of Pronouns.

1. Pronouns stand instead of Nouns, and are of three Persons.
 - Ist. אֲנִי, אַתָּה, אֲנִי, sing. I, whence אֲ prefixed forms first person sing. fut. of verbs.
 הִי postfixed first perf. sing. preter.
 י or י postfixed me and mine.
 - אֲנִי plur. We, whence נִ prefixed forms first perf. plur. fut.
 נִ postfixed first perf. plur. preter.
 נו postfixed us and our.
- IId. אַתָּה, אַתָּה, sing. Thou, whence הִ prefixed forms 2d perf. sing. fut.
 הִ postfixed 2d perf. sing. preter.
 י postfixed to 2d perf. fem. sing. fut.
 י postfixed forms 2d perf. fem. sing. imper.
- אֲתָּךְ sing. Thee, whence ךֿ postfixed thee and thy.
- אֲתָּם m. plur. Ye, whence תֿ prefixed to 2d perf. masc. plu. fut.
 תֿ postfixed forms 2d perf. masc. plur. pret.
- אֲתָּם f. plur. ye, whence תֿ prefixed and נָה postfixed form 2d perf. fem. plur. fut.

הן postfixed 2d perf. fem. plur. pret.

אתכם m. plur. You, whence כם postfixed you and your masc.

אתכן f. plur. You, whence כן postfixed you and your fem.

III. הוּא, הִיא, הֵן, הֵן, sing. He, she, whence י prefixed forms 3d perf. masc. sing. fut.

וּ, הוּ, הִי, postfixed him and his.

ה postfixed forms 3d perf. fem. sing. preter.

הָ, הֵּ, postfixed her.

הֵם, הֵנּוּ m. plur. They, whence ו postfixed to 3d person plur. pret. and fut.

הֵם, הֵנּוּ, postfixed, them, their, masc.

הֵנּוּ, הֵן, f. plur. They, whence נָה postfixed to third person fem. plur. fut.

הֵן, הֵן or נָה postfixed them and their fem.

2. The parts of Pronouns postfixed to Nouns, and Verbs, and denoting my, me, thy, thee, his, him, and their plurals are called *Pronoun Suffixes*.

3. The Parts of Pronouns forming the Persons, &c. of Verbs are called *Personal Affixes*.

N. B. Compare this Table of the Pronouns with the following Example of a Regular Verb in *Kal*, § IV. 4.

IV. Of VERBS.

1. Verbs signify to do or to be.

2. In Hebrew they have three Conjugations, *Kal*, *Hiphil*, and *Hithpael*.

3. *Kal* denotes simply to do, as בָּקַר, he visited; its passive is *Niphal*, which prefixes נ in the Preter-tense, (see below 4.) and signifies to be done, as נִבְקַר, he was visited. *Hiphil* prefixes ה in the Preter, and inserts י before the last radical, and signifies, to cause another to do, as הִבְקִיר, he caused to visit; its passive *Huphal* generally drops the י. *Hithpael* is formed from *Kal* by prefixing הָה in the Preter, and signifies to act upon oneself, as הִתְבַּקֵּר, he visited himself; but is often passive.

4. Verbs in each Conjugation have three moods, two tenses or times, one participle, (*Kal* has two) two numbers, three persons, two genders, as in the following

EXAMPLE of the Regular Verb בָּקַר To visit, in *Kal*, with the Personal Affixes and other Serviles.

INDICATIVE MOOD.

Preter or Past Tense.

Flur.	בָּקְרוּ	They		בָּקַרְהָ	She	בָּקַרְהוּ	He	} Person.	
Fem.	בָּקַרְתֶּם—הֵן	Ye		בָּקַרְתָּ		בָּקַרְתִּי	Thou		3.
	בָּקִינוּ	We		בָּקַרְתִּי		בָּקַרְתִּי	I		1.

Future

Future Tense.

		<i>Plur.</i>				<i>Sing.</i>		
Fem.	יפקרו ת—נה	They	She—ת	יפקר	He	3.	} <i>Person.</i>	
Fem.	הפקרו ת—נה	Ye	Fem. י.	הפקר ת—י.	Thou	2.		
	נפקר	We		אפקר	I	1.		

IMPERATIVE MOOD.

		<i>Plur.</i>				<i>Sing.</i>	
Fem.	פקרו—נה	Ye		Fem. י.	פקר—י	Visit thou,	<i>2d. Perf.</i>

INFINITIVE MOOD.

פקור and פקר To visit.

Participle active, or Benoni.

		<i>Plur.</i>				<i>Sing.</i>	
Fem.	פוקרים—ות			Fem. ה—	and ה	פוקר—ה	Visiting.

Participle passive, or Paoul.

		<i>Plur.</i>				<i>Sing.</i>	
Fem.	פוקרים—ות			Fem. ה—	and ה	פוקר—ה	Visited.

5. Throughout all the Conjugations the Personal Affixes are added, and the Participles declined, as in *Kal*.
6. In *Niphal*. the נ is prefixed only to the Preter and to the Participle, but ה to the Imperative and Infinitive.
7. In *Hiph. Huph.* and *Hith.* the Formative ה is always dropt after another fervile, so throughout the future, and מ is prefixed to the Participles of each.
8. *Huph.* is the same as *Hiph.* the Formative י being dropped, as it also often is in *Hiph.*
9. In the *Hith.* of Verbs beginning with ש or ס, ה is transposed, as in *התשמר* for *הששמר*; and in those with ה צ is moreover changed into ט, as in *נתצוק* for *נצצוק*.

V. Of IRREGULAR VERBS.

1. *Irregular Verbs* are either *Defective*, which sometimes drop a radical Letter; or *Reduplicate*, which double one or more Radicals.
2. *Defectives* have either but two Radicals, or י or נ for their first Radical, or ה for their last.
3. Verbs of but two Radicals oftentimes take ו before the latter, as *הוקם* from *קם*, and in *Huph.* before the former, as *הוקם* from *קם*.
4. Verbs with י for the first Radical, often dropt it in the future, Imperative and Infinitive of *Kal*, (to which last they postfix ת, *לקה* to take, follows this form) and in *Niph.* and *Hiph.* they change their י into ו.
5. Verbs with נ for their first Radical, drop it in the future, Imperative and Infinitive of *Kal*, (to which last they postfix ת) and in the Preter of *Niph.* and throughout *Hiph.* and *Huph.*
6. In *Hith.* the two latter kinds of verbs are generally regular.

7. Verbs

7. Verbs with ה for their last Radical, often drop it, or change it into י, and before a ה fervile into ת, and generally form the Infinitive by changing ה into ות.
8. Verbs that have י or נ for the first Radical, and ה for the last, are *doubly defective*, i. e. *sometimes drop both the first and the last Radical.*
9. The verb נתן *to give*, often drops both its נ's.
10. In verbs א is often dropt after a fervile א; and נ and ת, before נ and ת fervile.
11. *Reduplicate Verbs* are declined regularly.
12. Except that those resembling גלל, in some Forms use ו instead of the last letter, as כבתי, for כבתי, and in *Hith.* and sometimes in other Conjugations, take ו after the first Radical, as in החזקתו from בנין, in עפף from יעופף.

VI. Of SYNTAX.

1. The Adjective generally agrees with its Substantive in gender and number, as אי טוב, *a good man*, מכות גדולות, *great strokes*.
2. A Verb generally agrees with its Noun in gender, number, and person, as הנהש היה, *the serpent was*.
3. ו *and*, prefixed to Verbs in the future, denotes *succession*.
4. ו *and*, prefixed to Verbs often supplies the signs of the grammatical Inflexions, as ויבכשה, *and subdue (ye) it*, Gen. i. 28.
5. Infinitive Verbs have sometimes the particles ב, ג, ל, מ, prefixed.

VII. Of the USE of the SERVILES.

1. א prefixed, forms first person singular future of verbs, also Nouns.
2. ב prefixed, *In*, &c.
3. ה prefixed, sign of Conjugation *Hiph.* or *Huph* :
also emphatical, pathetic, or interrogative.
postfixed, denotes a N. feminine; also third person feminine preter of verbs; likewise *her, to, towards*.
4. ו prefixed, *and*.
inserted after first radical forms participle active.
after second radical, participle passive.
postfixed, *him, his*; third person plural of verbs; also forms Nouns.
5. י prefixed, third person masculine future sing. and plur. of verbs; also forms Nouns.
inserted forms Conjugation *Hiph.* and Nouns.
postfixed, denotes names of people; mascul. plur. *in Regimine*; also *me, mine*.
6. כ prefixed, *like, as*.
postfixed, *thee, thine*.
7. ל prefixed, *To, for*.
8. מ prefixed, participle *Hiph.* and *Huph.* whence it forms Nouns; also *from*.

postfixed,

- postfixed, *them, their*, masculine.
9. ך prefixed, to preter and participle *Niph.* also forms first person future plural of verbs ; and Nouns.
- postfixed, *them, their*, feminine.
10. ם postfixed, *who, which*, also the particle, *that*.
11. ן prefixed, denotes second Persons future sing. and plur. of verbs ; also forms Nouns.
- postfixed, second Person sing. preter of verbs, also used in *Regim.* for ן ; (see § II. 8.) and forms Nouns.

VIII. *Of finding the* ROOT.

1. Reject all Affixes and formative Letters. If *three* Letters remain, that is the Root.
2. Except that ך and ם inserted, (unless before ן,) must also be rejected.
3. If after rejecting the affixes and formative Letters, only *two* Letters remain, that is *frequently* the Root.
4. But if you find it not in this two-lettered form, add ך or ם to the beginning, (and to the dextensions of ן לק *to take* ל) or ן to the end.
5. If only *one* Letter remain, add ך or ם to the beginning, and ן to the end.

This Epitome not only shews in how narrow a Compass the most necessary Rules of the Hebrew Language may be comprised, but also may well serve as a Grammar to be learned by heart (except § III. and VII. which however should be attentively perused, and continually consulted) by the younger Hebrews, and perhaps may not be unprofitable as a constant Companion to more advanced Students.

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