THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PLANTING OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

Taken from the


Together with the

Remarkable facts of the Jewish and Roman history; which affected the Christians, within this period.

In THREE VOLUMES.

Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci;
Letterem deletando, pariterque movendo.

VOLUME the FIRST.

The SECOND EDITION carefully corrected, and with large ADDITIONS.

By GEORGE BENSON, D.D.

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THERE is nothing more universally entertaining, than history.
And the sacred history, if rightly understood, would be the most
pleasing and useful. This method, of conveying down, from
age to age, the revelation of the divine will, has some advantages,
beyond that of systems, institutes, or apostolical canons. For what
is founded upon facts ought to be historically related. And no evi-
dence strikes the bulk of mankind, like public and undoubted facts.

The grateful variety of history keeps up the reader's attention.
The general scope and design of revelation, as well as the meaning of
particular passages, is fixed and determined, in the most perspicuous
and concise manner, by a narrative; which mentions times, places, per-
sons, and circumstances. It affords a greater variety of incidents, for
the improvement of our minds, and the right conduct of our lives;
than could be suggested, within the same compass, in the way of rea-
soning. And thus, even the common people are instructed, by a more
easier and agreeable method, than by a system of divinity; or a code
of apostolical canons, or constitutions.

As the scriptures are written, evidence is interwoven with doctrine,
promises with precept; advice with threatenings; history with noble
reflections, and weighty observations; parables with descriptions; and
the best morals illustrated, by the brightest and most distinguished ex-
amples. As, on the contrary, vice appears in all its deformity; when,
represented, in the character of a proud, hypocritical, immoral, and
ostentatious, pharisee; a debauched sensualist; or an apostate; and
treacherous, Judas.
And, if God has seen fit, in this way, to instruct mankind; we cannot, surely, study the scriptures, in a better method, than that, in which the divine wisdom saw fit they should be written.

All, who wish well to religion, will rejoice to see Christianity represented, in the most clear and just manner. But divines are, more especially, obliged to do what they can; not only to encourage others; but to cultivate the study of the scriptures, themselves. In order to show his inclination, to help forward so great and desirable a work; the author has endeavored to collect the history of the first planting of the christian religion, from the most faithful and authentic records, of the apostles, and evangelists; and to compare it with the jewish and roman history; as far as they affected christianity, within this period.

As the epistles make up a great, and a noble, part of the canon of the new testament, they are abridged; and reduced (as near as the author could do it) to their proper times, and places. The circumstances of the churches, or persons, to which they were written, are considered; as well as the more immediate occasion of writing them. And it is shown, how exactly they answer the end, for which they were written.

A dissertation, also, is added; to show that St. Luke was the author of the acts of the apostles: that he published that book, while many of the apostles, and primitive christians, who knew the facts, were alive, to attest the same. And (supposing that is an authentic history) christianity must, certainly, and of course, be a divine revelation, and worthy of the highest regard *.

In the grand divisions, and in many other things, the author has been much obliged to the late Lord Barrington's Miscellanea sacra. In the jewish and roman history, he has had the greatest assistance from Josephus, among the antients; and, among the moderns, from the Credibility of the gospel-history, part I. written by his much-esteemed friend, Dr. Lardner. In the dissertation, at the end of volume the second, the second part of the design of the last-mentioned judicious, and

* N. B. The reader may find an account of the additions and alterations, in this second edition, in the preface to the appendix, or to volume the third.
Preface.

And laborious author; together with Mr. Jones, on the canon of the new testament; have afforded him considerable assistance. But, besides these learned writers; to whom he is chiefly indebted, after the author had drawn up his own account of the christian history, from the new testament itself, he consulted the principal critics and commentators; and be gratefully acknowledges the assistance, which be has had from them. However; be has followed no author, implicitly; nor any farther, than their sentiments appeared to him to be just, and well-grounded.

This work has been the care and study of some years; as far as health, and other affairs, would permit. For, this appeared, to the author, of as much greater importance, than any other history whatever; as morality and religion are more excellent, than any temporal affairs; and the history of true religion, preferable to that of impostures and delusions.—— But, especially, as this is the most momentous part of the sacred history itself. For Moses, and the prophets, referred to the coming of the messiah. And the messiah, when he came, referred to the pouring out, and ministry, of the spirit; as the last, and the best, dispensation, which God would ever vouchsafe to grant unto the children of men.

Here, we may see, how the father of the universe condescended to interpose, in order to reform the fallen race of mankind; at a time, when idolatry, superstition, profound ignorance of religious truths, and the most amazing wickedness, did, almost universally, prevail: — as well as what was the success of so great and extraordinary an undertaking. — From the smallest beginnings; and, by the wisest, and most reasonable, methods; christianity arose, swiftly, to all its height and glory. Like a grain of mustard-seed; which, from a small seed, quickly shoots up, to a considerable stalk, and a great many spreading branches. Or, like a little leaven; which quickly diffuseth itself through the whole lump. Or, finally, like the stone, in Daniel's vision; which was cut, out of the mountain, without hands; and presently became, itself, so great a mountain, as to fill the whole earth.

Without the power and influence of the temporal magistrate, christianity spread, and gained ground. Nay; in opposition to all the wit, and malice, of a corrupt world, it, almost everywhere, became victorious; and triumphed, by the force of it's own innate goodness, as well as by external evidence.
For three hundred years, Christianity lived, and flourished, under numberless difficulties and discouragements; and, amidst frequent, and fierce, persecutions. After the Roman empire became Christian, it was greatly corrupted; 'till the empire fell; and made way, for the dominion, and grandeur, of the bishop of Rome. Under whom, the corruption arose to an amazement height; and true Christianity was almost lost, for several ages.

It is not much above two hundred years, from the commencement of the glorious reformation. Since which, the Protestants have not been able, entirely, to shake off the spirit of infallibility and persecution. We live, indeed, in a day, when liberty is in the ascendant; and ours the happy nation, where it is enjoyed, in a more ample manner, than in any other age, or nation, whatever. — Thanks be to heaven, for the inestimable blessing, of the illustrious house of Hanover! — But it is scarce half an age, since liberty, the greatest of temporal blessings, was precarious. It is, therefore, no wonder, that the study of the scriptures, (as well as of other arts and sciences,) is capable of improvement; and that, by free inquiry, some things are found to have been misrepresented, in the ages of darkness and tyranny.

May heaven grant mankind universal liberty; and settle it upon the most firm and lasting basis! And, as knowledge increases, may virtue and true piety proportionably increase; and Christians adorn their most excellent religion, by a suitable temper and practice!

The author's sincere attempt to promote so extensive a good, according to his capacity and station, doeth, at present, afford him the highest pleasure: will, (he doubts not,) yield him the most ease and satisfying reflections, in the concluding scenes of life; and be reviewed, with transport, in the celestial mansions, and through the endlessly revolving ages of eternity. Amen!

Grangewalk, Southwark.
September 1, 1735.

The INTRODUCTION.

Sect. I.

The wise and powerful creator seemeth evidently to have designed, and hath actually made, a very great variety of creatures, both animate and inanimate; though the gradations are so easy and gentle, that the highest and most perfect of an inferior class falls very little short of the lowest and least perfect of those of a superior rank and order. Nay, there is not only a difference between the various ranks and orders of created beings; but even, in the same species, the difference is great and remarkable.

As to the race of men; God hath made them reasonable and free agents; though they appear to be of a low rank, compared with other intelligent beings. But, if we look into the human species itself, different men have very different natural capacities. All men have (no doubt) had the means of attaining that knowledge, which is absolutely necessary to salvation; in what time, or place, forever, they have lived. But that great being, who created the world with such
The state of mankind, when Christianity was first planted.

Sect. 1.

such an amazing variety, and gave some men a capacity much superior to others, might (very consistently with the same wisdom and goodness) make different discoveries, at different times, or to different persons, or nations; either by immediate revelation, or authentic tradition: but always upon these two express conditions; namely, that such a revelation should be looked upon, as a superior capacity, or additional talent, capable of very great improvements, and for which they, who have it, remain accountable; — and, likewise, that they should use all the positive institutions of such a revelation, in an entire subordination to things, which are of an eternal, unalterable, nature; namely, justice and charity, temperance and piety.

In order to see the propriety of God's giving the christian revelation, it will be proper to take a brief view of the state of mankind.

— The nations in general were sunk into an amazing degree of vice and wickedness; and what greatly supported and encouraged their vicious practices, was, their profound ignorance of the true God, and their stupid and absurd idolatry. The nation of Israel, who retained the most just notions of the deity, had a standing revelation of the divine will; and were raised up, to bear their testimony against the great corruptions of religion, and particularly against idolatry. But they, also, about this time, were themselves fallen into great and amazing corruptions; relying more upon their descent from pious ancestors, and upon the observation of rites and ceremonies, than upon personal virtue and real piety; and, by their traditional divinity, making void the scriptures, which contained the revelation of the mind and will of God. — In such a state of things, how could an universal reformation have been effected, without the divine interposition?

The heathen sages and philosophers, though some of them men of distinguished knowledge and virtue, had in vain attempted an universal reformation. Their priests and poets rather corrupted, than reformed, their religion. — The doctors of the jewish nation had, by their glosses, taken away the key of knowledge, and obscured the light of divine revelation. But, notwithstanding that, their antient prophets had so frequently and expressly prophesied that, about this time, an extraordinary person was to come, who should be a light to the nations, as well as the glory of Israel, that it was become the national expectation; and the Jews, in general, were daily looking for his appearance.
SECT. II.

JESUS (who was the great prophet and savior of the world, and of whose coming the antient jewisb prophets had so expressly prophesied) descended, in a miraculous manner, from Mary, a virgin, of the family of David, and was borne at Bethlehem.

Besides some extraordinary events, which attended his birth, we are informed that he was circumcised, on the eighth day; and afterwards presented in the temple, according to the custom of the jewisb law. But there is little said of the early and private parts of his life, except his going up to the temple, at the feast of the pass-over; when, though he was only twelve years of age, he gave manifest proofs of uncommon wisdom. After that, he returned to Nazareth, and was subject to his parents.

The nations, in general, had grievously abused the law of nature; and had been, for many ages, without any written, divine, revelation. But, among the jews, the law and the prophets continued in full force and obligation, till the coming of John the baptist. From the time of his appearing, to Israel, as a prophet, the way began to be more immediately prepared for the approach of the kingdom of God; and all pious and well-disposed persons endeavored to qualify themselves to be the proper subjects of that kingdom of righteousness.

When an universal reformation was going to be attempted, it was highly fit and proper to begin with the jews; as they acknowledged the true God, and retained the soundest principles of religion; though greatly obscured, and too little regarded in practice. Accordingly; in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, then emperor of Rome; that is, reckoning from the time of his being taken in co-partner, with Augustus, in the empire, Pontius Pilate being procurator of Judea, and Herod Antipas tetrarch of Galilee; John, the son of Zacharias, of the race of the jewisb priests, came, in the character of an extraordinary prophet; and appeared in the towns and villages, which lay dispersed in the wilderness of Judea. He was borne but a few months before Jesus; and was called the baptist; because he emblematically baptized his followers, as well as preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. His garb, and severe manner of life, represented that of the antient prophet Elijah; and his spirit, and business, were like his. For he came
Jesus invested in his sacred office.

Sect. II.

to call upon the nation to reform: alleging, as his main argument, that the kingdom of the Messiah was at hand; in which no descent from pious ancestors, no national privileges, nor external performances; nor any thing else, but real virtue and unfeigned holiness, would be accepted of God.

Thus (like the harbingers sent, by great princes, to prepare their way before them) he levelled mountains, filled up valleys, made crooked things straight, and rough places plane, to smooth the way for the approach of the great king, the Messiah.

The reckoning of the Jews, from Daniel's famous prophecy of the seventy weeks, was now up and finished; and they were daily looking when the kingdom of God would appear. When John, therefore, preached, concerning the speedy approach of the Messiah's kingdom, and baptized the proselytes, whom he made, it greatly alarmed the whole nation; so that multitudes flocked out to him, from all parts of Judea; and were baptized of him, in the river Jordan; confessing their sins. And not only the people suspected that John was the Messiah, but even the Jewish Sanhedrim sent a deputation of priests and Levites, in a solemn manner, from Jerusalem, to inquire of him, "Who he was? and whether he himself was not the Christ?" In answer to which, John openly declared, "That he was not the Christ; but that great and extraordinary person was among them; though, as yet, they knew him not. And, notwithstanding he came after him, he was so far his superior as that he was unworthy to do the meanest office for him." — One particular, in which John declared that great person would excel him, was, "that though he himself baptized, only with water, unto repentance, the Messiah would baptize with the holy Spirit, and with fire."

When John had preached about half a year, and a great part of the people were baptized by him, Jesus of Nazareth, who was then about thirty years of age, came also to John, at Jordan, to be by him invested in his high and sacred office by baptism.

And (as he had emptied himself upon his incarnation, and was now going to enter upon his prophetic office, or public ministry) as soon as he came up, from the river, the heavens were opened, and the holy Spirit was poured down upon him; attended with the rays of a visible glory. And a voice, at the same time, came from the excellent majesty, declaring him to be the well-beloved Son of God. — When Jesus, the great high-priest, was thus consecrated, by being baptized with water, and anointed with the holy Spirit, and with power,
Jesus chooses apostles.

power *, he was led, by the spirit, into a solitary wilderness, where he fasted forty days and forty nights; as Moses and Elias had done, before they attempted a reformation in Israel.

And, after he had resisted a great and remarkable temptation, he returned, in the power of the spirit, into Galilee; where he began to work miracles, and gather disciples, who saw his glory, and believed on him.

John Baptist, who still continued preaching and baptizing, bore testimony to him, and told the people, "that he was the very person, of whom he had spoken; that Jesus his disciples were to increase, but his to decrease; that Jesus was sent of God, and spoke the words of God; and that God had not given his spirit by measure unto him."

Soon after this, John was cast into prison, for his free, but just, reproofs of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee; by whose orders, he was also afterwards beheaded. When John was cast into prison, Jesus (who had now such a fulness of the spirit) began more publicly to preach repentence (as John had done) to prepare men for the coming of his spiritual kingdom. By his own personal ministry, Jesus made several disciples (who were baptized, like the disciples of John; to intimate that purity of mind and life, to which they were now called.) And, after a night spent in prayer and devotion, he, according to the directions, which he then received from his father, selected, the next morning, twelve, from among the multitude of his disciples, whom he also called and constituted apostles. They were to be the prime ministers of his kingdom. And, therefore, he took a particular care to train them up, for the great work, to which they were designed; by allowing them commonly to live, and very familiarly to converse, with him; that they might be thoroughly acquainted with his person, life, doctrine, and miracles; and, particularly, that they might be able to bear witness to the world of his resurrection.

Their names were, Simon Peter; James the elder, and John his brother: Andrew, [brother to Simon Peter;] Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, [who was also called Levi, son to Alphaeus;] James, [son of another Alphaeus. He was also called James the less, and the brother, or kinsman, of our Lord.] Simon Zelotes. Judas, the brother of James the less; [who was, likewise, called Lebbeus and Thaddaeus.] And, lastly, Judas Iscariot, who afterwards betrayed his Lord.

* Exod. xxix. 4; 7.
* See Dr. Lardner's introduction to the Credibility of the gospel-history, part ii.
The doctrine, taught by Jesus.

With these twelve men, Jesus travelled through the towns and villages of Judaea; resorting, likewise, to Jerusalem, at the great festivals of the Jewish nation.

The doctrine, which he preached, was, that men should repent; for he came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. He farther taught, that God is to be worshiped in spirit and truth; and that such worship will be accepted, in all places. That the things, which defile a man, are those, which proceed out of the heart; evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, theft, false-witness, blasphemies. But to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man. That the great branches of men's duty, are, to love God above all, and their neighbors as themselves: That men should do to others, as they could reasonably desire that others, in like circumstances, should do to them. That they ought to imitate God, in mercy, forgivenesse, and all goodnesse. That they ought to be pure in heart, as well as unblameable in their outward actions. That they ought to pray, fast, and give alms, not out of vane ostentation, or to be seen of men; but to do all things with an eye to the approbation and acceptance of God, who feeth the most secret, as well as the most public, actions.

He recommended moderate affections for the things of the present world; and bade men seek, in the first place, the kingdom of God, and his righteousnesse; and, without solicitude and anxiety about the concerns of the present life, to confide in the providence of God, who oversees and directs all things. — He assured them that they, who believed in God, and in him whom God had sent, and obeyed the commandments delivered by him, should enjoy eternal life: And that, in order to their enjoying it, he himself would raise them up, at the last day. That God had given all judgment and authority to him; and that he would come again, and render to every man according to his works. — And of this doctrine, taught by him, he required a sincere and open profession; declaring, Whosoever shall confess me before men; him will I, also, confess before my father, who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men; him will I, also, deny, before my father, who is in heaven.

These, and the like excellent precepts, and powerful inducements to all virtue, he taught and inculcated, every where; to the poor, as well as to the rich; and to persons in high stations, as well as to the multitude. Sometimes, he spoke plainly, and sometimes in the more covert way of parable and similitude; as they were able to hear, or
The miracles worked by Jesus.

disposed to regard, him. But, always, with such a mixture of authority and familiarity for the manner, such weight and dignity for the matter of his discourses, that the multitude wondered at the gracious words, which proceeded out of his mouth; and even his enemies were obliged to acknowledge, that never man spoke as he did.

As he went about, teaching this doctrine, he worked many miracles, as evidences of the truth of what he said, and that the Father had sent him. He turned water into wine; fed, with a few loaves and fishes, great multitudes, in desert places; walked upon the sea, calmed the winds and the waves; gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, soundness and strength to the lame, and those that were bowed down; healed diseases of all sorts, even the most inveterate, and such as were otherwise reckoned incurable; restored to their right minds demoniacs, or lunatics; and even raised the dead. — These miracles were performed, at his word, in an instant; and some were worked on persons at a distance from him. They were done, by him, in the most public and open manner, at Jerusalem, and in every part of Judaea and Galilee: in cities, in villages, in synagogues, in private houses, in the streets, and in the high-ways; in the fields, and in the wilderness; upon a great many of the Jews, and upon some few Gentiles: before scribes, and Pharisees, and rulers of synagogues; when he was attended, sometimes, by a few persons; but at other times, by great multitudes. And, in a word, before men of all characters.

There were also, in the course of his ministry, divers other signal testimonies given to him. Besides the voice from heaven, at his baptism, he was transfigured, in the presence of three of his disciples; when his face shone like the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." At another time, being at Jerusalem, surrounded by a great multitude, and having prayed, "Father, glorify thy name;" there came a voice from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

To all these great and extraordinary things he appealed, as proofs of his divine mission and authority; referring men to the witness of John, the miracles which he himself had worked, and these testimonies from heaven.

Besides the wonderful works done by him, he also manifested a clear knowledge of the thoughts and designs of men; and foretold, frequently, expressly, and with many circumstances, his own death and
and resurrection; the descent of the holy spirit upon the apostles; their sufferings and successes; the destruction of Jerusalem; (at the prospect of which, he was so much affected, as to lament over that city with tears; notwithstanding he foresew they would apprehend and murder him:) And he predicted many other events; that, when they came to pass, his disciples and others might be confirmed in their faith in him, and his doctrine.

Once, during his own personal ministry, as a specimen of their future work, and a trial of their abilities, he sent forth his twelve apostles, with power over evil spirits; and to heal the sick, and cure all diseases, as a testimony of their doctrine; which was, that the kingdom of God was at hand. And, accordingly, they went, by two and two, through the towns and villages of Judea, to prepare the way before his face, and to proclaim what he had taught them; the substance of which, was, “that all Judea should repent; because the holy kingdom of the Messiah was approaching.” But that expedition was soon over. And, when they returned to Jesus, to attend upon him, he gave to seventy other of his disciples the like commission and extraordinary powers; that they might go over Judea, a second time, with the same solemn message, and work like miraculous cures.—All these things were still farther to rouse men’s attention to what was to follow.

While God thus glorified him, he voluntarily lived in a mean condition, without external state and splendor; and was exceeding meek and condescending in his behavior towards his disciples; and towards all, who reforted to him, for instruction, or relief: at the same time, freely declaring to all their duty, and impartially correcting the faults and failings of his disciples; and, with a true prophetic resolution and intrepidity, reproving the hypocrisie, pride, ambition, covetousness, false maxims, and vane traditions, of the scribes, pharisees, and saducees, and of the great and powerful of the Jewish nation.

For the last year of his public ministry, the twelve apostles seem to have lived with him, as his family, or constant attendants. These twelve appear, all of them, (except Judas Iscariot) to have been men of great simplicity and integrity; but they were all carried away with the national prejudice; namely, “that the Messiah should be a temporal prince, as well as a prophet;” and they expected to be the leading men in that his temporal kingdom.

That prejudice seemeth to have taken it’s rise from their not carefully and sufficiently distinguishing between Christ’s first and second
JESUS foresees his approaching death.

cond coming. His first coming was (according to the antient prophets) to be in the form of a servant; poor, meek, patient, and humble. But his second coming will be glorious and majestic, like Messiah the prince, the king of kings, and lord of lords. That prejudice, from whencesoever it arose, (as well as many others) our Lord indeavored gently to remove. But they never saw through their mistake, till after the effusion of the holy spirit.

To these twelve he gave a second commision, as his apostles; and promised them full power, instructions, and credentials, in order to erect his kingdom, after his resurrection and ascension. But their minds ran so much upon the temporal kingdom, and the Messiah's abiding for-ever, that they could not bear to hear him talk of dying. He, therefore, often took occasion to speak of it. But they hoped he had some figurative meaning, and that he would never really die — To prevent their forsakeing him, upon his crucifixion, he likewise (as has been already observed) admitted the three most inquisitive of them, to behold his transfiguration, upon the mount; as an emblem of that future kingdom and glory, to which he should finally arrive; and in which he will appear, at his second coming, notwithstanding the mean and suffering condition, in which they then beheld him.

SECT. III.

JESUS, having so fully taught and confirmed his doctrine; and made several disciples, in Jerusalem, Judæa, and Samaria; but chiefly in the lower Galilee; and having trained up the twelve, whom God had given him to be his apostles, (to train up whom was one great part of his business here below,) he went up to Jerusalem, at the public festival of the passover. For he knew that the time of his departure out of this world was just approaching, and that the father had put all things into his hands. He, therefore, took his leave of his disciples, in the most affectionate and instructive manner, and appointed a memorial of himself, and of his love; namely, "that of eating bread, and drinking wine, in commemoration of his dying for their sakes; and as a pledge of his future returning, with power and glory, to raise them, and make them eternally happy." After which, he retired to a private place, whither he had
Jesus foresees his approaching death.

He was particularly acquainted with their enmity to him, and forewove that he should then be apprehended, and put to death. But he would not, for all that, decline going up to Jerusalem, at that festival; neither would he use his power, in resisting, or making his escape. No! he was willing to seal the truth of his doctrine with his own blood; and to be as exemplary in his death, as he had been in his life; that he might teach his followers “rather to suffer with the truth than betray it; and that life itself is no longer to be valued than it is consistent with integrity, and the practice of righteousness.” He died, therefore, as a martyr, and was cut off, but not for himself: voluntarily giving his soul an offering for sin, that he might redeem men from iniquity, and introduce everlasting righteousness. For his death was plainly voluntary; as he forewove the treatment, which he was to meet with, from the leading men of the nation of the Jews; and yet bravely went among them, and without resistance suffered them to take away his life.

Nor was it any wonder that they should so treat him; considering their great wickedness, and his unpopular character, as a faithful prophet. For he had often and freely reproved their pride and hypocrisy; their laying a greater stress upon their descending from Abraham, and the patriarchs, and upon rites, ceremonies, and positive institutions, than upon real virtue, and true piety: their jostling out the scriptures, by the systems and traditions, which they had received from their fathers; their keeping the people in a blind subjection and dependence upon themselves, and leading them into error and wickedness; and, in one word, for all their enmity to truth and goodness. And, as his life and doctrine were so remarkably holy and excellent; and his miracles so evident and undeniable, so many and beneficent; that his character and authority among the people were not small; they were resolved upon his death; and had often attempted it, though hitherto they had attempted it in vain.

But, now, the hour appointed for his suffering death being come, Judas betrayed him into the hands of the leading men among the Jews.
The sufferings of Jesus.

Jesus; by whom he was examined and condemned, after he had in their presence solemnly avowed his great character. And then was by them accused, and prosecuted, before Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator; who, at their earnest and clamorous importunity, was prevailed upon, against his own conscience, to condemn him to be crucified. And, accordingly, he was crucified, near Jerusalem, at the great feast of the passover, in the common place of execution, between two malefactors. However, during this extraordinary scene of sufferings, there were some extraordinary testimonies given to his innocence and dignity. There was a darkness of three hours continuance over the whole land; the veil of the temple was rent asunder from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were rent.

Jesus, having expired on the cross, and Pilate having received particular information that he was dead; the body was, with his leave, taken down from the cross, and laid in a sepulchre, in which never man before was laid. And the Jewish sanhedrim took care to have the sepulchre secured by a guard of soldiers; lest (as they said) his disciples should come by night, and steal him away; and then say to the people, “He is risen from the dead.”

As to the effect, which this treatment of Jesus had upon the apostles. When Judas, the traitor, saw that he was condemned, he was greatly concerned for what he had done; and went, and returned the money to the Jewish sanhedrim, saying, “I have sinned, in having betrayed innocent blood.” To which they answered, “What is that to us? see you to that.” And he threw them down the money in the temple; and, in extreme anguish of mind, went and hanged himself. The eleven other apostles greatly bewailed and lamented Jesus his death. And (though they knew too much of his innocence and integrity to take him for an impostor, yet) they were greatly perplexed, and confounded, in their own minds, and scarce knew what judgment to form concerning him. Though thus they seem generally to have thought; that the Jews had cut him off from obtaining the temporal kingdom, which they imagined he had all along designed to establish. But, in the midst of all their anxiety, they seem to have had little, or no, expectation of his resurrection.

However; as he had no sin, death had no power over him. Though, therefore, he willingly submitted to it, for a time, yet, early in the morning, on the third day from his crucifixion and burial, he came to life again; notwithstanding the great precautions of his...
The resurrection of Jesus.

Now a resurrection from the dead being an event of so surprizing and extraordinary a nature, and withal so strong an evidence in his favor; and as the apostles were appointed of God to be witnesses of that grand fact unto the world; they were permitted to live with him, that they might be thoroughly acquainted with him. They were fully convinced (as multitudes both of his friends, and enemies, were) that he was certainly dead; and they had all the satisfaction, which they could reasonably desire, of the truth and reality of his resurrection. To prepare them to attend to a case so extraordinary, with due composure and care, he had not only mentioned his death and resurrection, frequently, before he suffered; but, after his resurrection, the discoveries were made gradually; and frequently, and in various manners, repeated. Several women, who had been the disciples of Jesus, went, early in the morning, to the sepulchre. And they found the sepulchre open, and the body gone. Upon which, Mary Magdalene went into the city, and told Peter and John, that the sepulchre was open, and the body removed. This occasioned the two apostles to run, in great surprize, to the sepulchre. And, upon examining the situation of the linen-cloathes, in which his body had been wrapped, and the napkin which had been upon his head, it appeared to them to be highly probable that Jesus was risen from the dead. While Mary Magdalene was gone to carry that message to Peter and John, and before they came to the sepulchre, an angel told the other women, that he was risen from the dead, and that they should go, and tell his disciples that he was risen. They went into the city with that message. In the meantime, Mary Magdalene came back to the sepulchre, with Peter and John; and, when they were gone away, she continued at the sepulchre. Then Jesus appeared, and discovered himself gradually to her. She went (as Jesus had commanded her) and told the disciples; but most of them gave little, or no, credit to what she said. His second appearance was to the other women; as they were returning, the second time, from viewing the sepulchre. And he sent them, in like manner, to tell his disciples, that he was risen from the dead. His third appearance was to Simon Peter. His fourth was, when he joined in company with two of his disciples going to Emmaus. And (when he had sufficiently prepared them for the greatest attention) he appeared to ten of the apostles. That was the fifth appearance of our Lord, after his resurrection.
The evidences of Jesus his resurrection.

The sixth appearance was to all the eleven apostles. The seventh appearance was to seven of his disciples, at the lake of Tiberias, as they were fishing there. The eighth appearance was to all the eleven apostles, upon a mountain in Galilee. The ninth was to five hundred of his disciples, at once; perhaps upon the same mountain, in Galilee. The tenth appearance was to James, the brother (or kinsman) of our Lord. The eleventh to all the apostles, at Jerusalem, just before his ascension. — Besides these eleven, he made several other appearances to his disciples, which are not particularly specified; and that for the space of forty days. And, upon such appearances, his conversation generally turned upon something that related to the gospel-kingdom.

The evidences, which they had of the truth of his resurrection, were such as these. They had known him very well, before he died; and, after his resurrection, they saw him again. They knew his face, his air, his stature, his voice, his looks, and all his features and lineaments. They talked to him, and heard him talk, upon various subjects, about which they had frequently conversed, before his death. They eat with him, and saw him eat. Nay; they felt and handled his body; and were sure that it was no spectre, nor apparition. They saw, and touched, the very scars of the wounds, which he had received on the cross. And (in one word) had all the satisfaction, which they themselves desired; or which the most scrupulous person could wish for, to convince him that his friend was alive, and present with him.

When he had convinced them; (who were indeed very hard to be convinced;) and had satisfied them, by plane facts, and clear, irresistible, evidence, that (though he had been crucified) he was certainly come to life again; — he told them, that all power was committed unto him, both in heaven and upon earth; and then he repeated their apostolic commission; which was, that they should go, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. And, then, he emblematically breathed upon them, as praefiguring the gift of the Holy Spirit, which he designed shortly to bestow upon them; and by which they should be qualified for the full execution of their commission.

When he had given to these apostles (whom he had chosen by the Holy Spirit;) all the instructions about the kingdom of God, which

Ver. 2. "Whom he had chosen by the Holy Spirit." Beza hath mentioned two antient manuscripts, that so joined the words; namely, दικα ἡμών ἐγιεσα; ἐκφεμε, &c.

and
which their minds were capable of, and which the state of things then required; he ordered them to tarry at Jerusalem; (the very place, where he had been crucified so lately; and from whence their fears would be most apt to drive them;) till he should send down upon them the holy spirit; "And that (faith he) is the promise of my father, of which you have heard me speak formerly. For "John baptized only with water, as preparatory to my coming; "but, within a few days, ye shall be baptized with the holy spirit, "whose coming down shall be attended with a glory, like a flame of fire."

Having thus set all things in order for a return to his father, he led the apostles out of Jerusalem, to that part of the mount of Olives, which was called Bethany; that there they might see him ascend into heaven. He had before intimated to them, since his resurrection, that all power was committed unto him, both in heaven and upon earth; and had, likewise, ordered them to go and tarry, some time, at Jerusalem, the metropolis of the kingdom. — They, hearing

and Dr. Mill hath informed us, that two of Stephens his manuscripts did so join the words. But Beza's most antient manuscript (now called the Cambridge manuscript) is yet a more evident confirmation. For there the words stand thus, ἐξελθέτω ἐκ τοις ἁγίοις ἀνθρώποις, ἐνῶ ἐξελθήσῃ ἐκ τοῖς ἁγίοις, ἐν ἐλαφόν καὶ θέρεσι ἕως ἕως ἕως ἕως. Until the day that he was taken up, when he had given commandments unto the apostles, whom he had chosen by the holy spirit. [See Beza in loc. & Wéstfæn.]

The syriac, also, and ethiopic versions, have rendered it, as we have here done. And, though the fenfe, given in our common English translation, is according to the more usual order of the words, as they now stand in the original; yet (as there are no stops in the most antient manuscripts) the words may be so pointed, as very well to admit of the fenfe here given. And I am apt to think that this fenfe is more agreeable to the current of holy scripture. For, though, when our Lord had emptied himself, and was in his state of humiliation, he had conferred upon him, before he began his ministrv, the spirit, without measure; and preached, acted, and worked miracles, by that fulness of the spirit; yet I do not remember any text of scripture, which intimateth this acting by the spirit, after his resurrection. I, therefore, would rather refer this agency of the spirit to Christ's choosing of the apostles, during his state of humiliation, than to his giving them commandments, after he was risen, and had entered upon his state of exaltation. — The apostles being chose, or pointed out, by the spirit, is according to other representations in scripture. [Acts xiii. 2.] The spirit (by the mouth of the prophets at Antioch) ordered Saul and Barnabas to be separated unto the work, to which he had lately called them. Nay; even inferior officers were so appointed. [Acts xx. 28.] The holy spirit had made some of the elders at Ephesus, bishops. — But, if any person should choose to read all, between ἀνθρώποι, and ἐκ τοις ἁγίοις, and refer [Christ's giving commands by the spirit,] to what he did, during his personal ministrv here upon earth, or before his crucifixion: he may retain the common order and punctuation of the words; and a fenfe, which I cannot but very much approve: though I prefer the order, in which they are placed in the Cambridge manuscript; and the interpretation, to which that seems most naturally to lead us.
The ascension of Jesus.

Hearing these things, and having their minds so prepossessed with the hopes of that temporal kingdom, which the Jews at this day do fully expect; and, being surprized that Jesus had said nothing about it, they were very desirous to know, "Whether he would not now be pleased to shake off the Roman yoke, and restore the dominion to Israel?" For they were anxious to be acquainted, what part they should transact, in that grand revolution; and were, very probably, surprized to think that so wicked and ungrateful a nation, as that of the Jews, should be so highly favored; and that so very soon after they had murdered the Lord of life and glory. When they proposed that question, Jesus replied, "It is not your business, at present, to know particularly the exact times and seasons, which my Father hath at his own disposal, and which he hath wisely calculated and proportioned to the circumstances of men and things. For such a discovery you are not as yet able to bear. But (as I have often told you) the Holy Spirit shall be poured down upon you, and then ye shall understand the nature of my kingdom; and shall be enabled to spread it, with great swiftness and success; both through Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost boundaries of the earth."

When he had made an end of speaking, and, like a departing friend, left his last commands with them; he lifted up his hands upon the Apostles, and, in a most solemn and affectionate manner, took his leave of them, and blessed them. And then, in their sight, (as Elijah did in the sight of his successor Elisha, who was thereupon to receive a double portion of his spirit,) Jesus mounted, gradually, up into the air; and the holy angels, in a cloud of glory, conveyed him, out of the Apostles' sight, into the third heavens, the mansions of glory and blessedness: Where he was received in a triumphant manner, seated at his Father's right hand; and the government of the whole world, from thenceforth, committed unto him.

The Apostles still continued looking up, after him, with fixed and longing eyes; as hoping, perhaps, that he would shortly return;—until two angels appeared unto them, like men, but in a glorious form, and bade them gaze no longer there. For Jesus was received up into heaven, quite out of their sight; and there he was

Ver. 9. Deut. xxxiii. 26. Psal. civ. 3. Rev. i. 7. and xiv. 14. Compare also, with this, the translation of the prophet Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 11, who was conducted to heaven by angels, which appeared like horses and chariots of fire, or in a bright and luminous manner.
The time of Christ's birth, &c.

Sect. IV.

was to continue till the time of the restitution of all things. But they withal assured them, that, though he was now gone from our world, he should, at the last day, return in the clouds of heaven, and with the holy angels; and that in full as glorious and triumphant a manner, as they had now seen him taken up into heaven.

According to the order and direction of the angels, the apostles returned to Jerusalem, from mount Olivet; the nighest part, or foot, of which mountain, was five furlongs from Jerusalem. But Bethany, the place, from which Jesus ascended, was about a mile from the city; and that space, the Jews (who, by the decree of their wise men, were allowed to walk so far on their sabbath-days) used to call a sabbath-day's journey. Perhaps that decree of their wise men took it's rise from the distance between the ark, and the nearest part of the camp, when Israel was incamped in the wilderness. [See Joth. iii. 4. With which compare Numb. xxxv. 4, 5.]

S E C T. IV.

There is no small difficulty in settling the chronology of Christ's birth, and of his crucifixion. Dionysius surnamed Exigius, a native of Scythia, and afterwards a Roman abbot, who flourished in the reign of the emperor Justinian, did, about the 527th year of the vulgar era, begin to use the birth of Christ as an epocha. For the Romans, before that time, used to reckon from the building of the city of Rome, or from the consuls; the Greeks, by the olympiads; and the more eastern nations, from other epocha's.

From
The apostles in their upper room.

From Dionysius, our countryman Bede took it, and used it in all his writings. And the credit, which he thereby gave it, recommended it to the common use of the Christians, especially in these western parts. But though it is so common, it is now generally acknowledged to be defective; and to begin too late, by two years (according to some) but by three, four, or five, (according to others.) To which last, I confess, I am most inclined; and reckon that the true Christian era ought to be fixed about five years before the Vulgar era.

Nor is the difficulty much less, to determine the year of Christ's crucifixion. For chronologers have, some of them, allowed Christ's ministry to be no more than one year, and some odd months; others allow three Passovers, after our Lord's baptism; others four; and others contend for five. I suppose our Lord's ministry to have begun, when he was thirty years old; to have continued only three Passovers, or two years and an half; and that he was crucified, in the year of the Vulgar era 29, of Christ's life 33. when the two Gemini were consuls. [See Le-Clerc's ecclesiastical history, p. 288, &c. and his first dissertation annexed to his harmony of the gospels. Origen against Celsus, edit. Cantab. p. 67.]

But, though this be my opinion (as it is, also, that of some others) I have had little, or no, regard to it, in composing this work. For the history begins, agreeably to the common opinion and computation, at the 33d year of the Christian era; which 33d year falls in with part of the 19th and part of the 20th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, the third Roman emperor, if we reckon from the death of Augustus. Or with part of his 22d, and part of his 23d year, if we reckon from the time that Tiberius was taken in, as co-partner with Augustus, in the empire.

S E C T. V.

There was in Jerusalem an upper room, in which the Apostles had been used to assemble with their Lord and Master; — where they had eaten the last Passover with him; and been present, at the first institution of the Lord's Supper; — where, perhaps, they had assembled, since his Resurrection; and had been favored with Jesus his company: — And such a room, many of
An apostle, chosen instead of Judas.

the richer and more devout Jews used to have, in their houses, for religious exercises. — When the eleven Apostles returned from the mount of Olives, from whence they had seen Jesus ascend into heaven, and were come again into the city, they repaired, very probably, to that same upper room, (which, as some say, was upon mount Sion) expecting to find the Christians there assembled: And, when they had entered, they found several women, who were Jesus his disciples; particularly Mary, the mother of Jesus; and some men also of his kindred. The whole number amounted to about 120 persons, the number of a Jewish council. It is very likely that most of the five hundred disciples, who met our Lord in Galilee, after his resurrection, did either live in Galilee, in the remotest parts of Judea, or in Samaria; and were not now in the city Jerusalem. But in that upper room, did these hundred and twenty, frequently assemble, to spend their time in prayer, and other acts of devotion. Though they assembled very privately, and with the doors bolted for fear of the Jews. For they had lately treated their Lord and Master in the most cruel manner, and could not be supposed to have much more kindness and affection for them.

One day, when the disciples of Jesus were there unanimously assembled, St. Peter, who often acted as their mouth and president, stood up, and made the following proposal. "Brethren, you know very well that Judas Iscariot (who was the guide to them that apprehended Jesus) was formerly one of our number, and had a share in the apostolate. He it was that betrayed our Lord. But, when he saw that he was condemned to crucifixion, Judas was
Judas murthers himself.

"was sorry for what he had done, and brought again the thirty shekels of silver, and threw them down in the temple, being full of the utmost horror and consternation, when he reflected on the vile fact, of which he had been guilty; and, under this intolerable anguish and remorse of conscience, he went away and hung himself. But, falling down, upon his face, from the tree, he burst asunder in the middle, and all his bowels gushed out. From which anguish of mind, and horrid self-murther, it evidently appeareth, that the vengeance of God persued that perfidious apostate.

"With the hire of his treachery did the chief-priests buy the potter's field, to be a burying-place for strangers. For, though they had not scrupled to procure the murther of an innocent person; yet they superstitiously scrupled to put the money into the sacred treasury, because it was the price of blood."

[Nay; it was a thing so well known at Jerusalem, that the field was

Ver. 18. k Vid. Casaubon. exercit. 16. ad Annal. Baron. p. 527. Dr. Mead [in his Medica sacra, p. 96, &c.] has another interpretation. As to which, see Raphelius on Matth. xxvii. 5.

1 Maundrel describes this potter's field, as situate on the west side of the valley of Hinnom, and fais that it is "a small plat of ground, not above thirty yards long, and about fifteen broad." Half of it is taken up, by a square fabric, twelve yards high, which the Armenian christians use as a charnel-house. [See Maundrel's travels, p. 101.]

Ver. 19. m Some have thought "that ver. 18, 19. were St. Luke's words, and no part of St. Peter's speech." As to the 18th verse, I think it a part of St. Peter's speech, which ought to be joined to ver. 20. and that the 19th verse ought to be read in a parenthesis.

It is true, it may be alleged, "that St. Peter could have had no occasion to inform that audience of Judas his returning the money, which he had received for betraying his master; nor of his murdering himself, in his despair and anguish: "because these things were notorious, and they must all have known them." But to this it may be easily and justly answered, that known facts are often related, among persons who are well acquainted with them, in order to introduce some thing farther, or to ground something upon such facts. And St. Peter seemeth to have mentioned these things with these very views.

But that the 19th verse containeth the words of St. Luke, the historian, and are no part of St. Peter's speech, but ought to be read in a parenthesis, as giving a more full account and confirmation of so remarkable an event: appeareth most likely to me, for the following reasons. (1.) The buying the field seemeth to be mentioned, as a thing, that had happened long ago; which was formerly known to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and that the name Hakeldama had continued down to that day. Now, this is a circumstance, that will much better fute the time of St. Luke's writing the history, than the time, in which St. Peter is supposed to have made this speech; namely, a few weeks after the thing happened; and, possibly, on that very day, on which Christ ascended. And what confirmeth this very much, is, that St. Mat-
An apostle chosen instead of Judas.

An. Christi was bought with the price of Christ's blood, that the very field itself hath been from that time called Hakeldama; which word, in the syro-chaldaic, and particularly, in the Jerusalem, dialect, signifies the field of blood.

"This Judas, I say, was formerly an apostle, and is now remarkably degraded. And no wonder that such signal judgments (as king David, the progenitor of the Messiah, did long ago prophetically denounce against his treacherous friends, and particularly against Achitophel) should fall upon him, who so perfidiously betrayed that great and excellent person, the Messiah himself, who was both king David's son and lord. For, of such infame,

threw, who wrote his gospel some years after Christ's ascension, hath used the very same phrase; and said, that "the field was called the field of blood, unto that very day." [Matth. xxvii. 8.] (2.) It's being said "that the field was called Hakeldama, in their proper tongue, or dialect. This might very properly have been said by St. Luke, who is reckoned to have been a native of Antioch in Syria, who very well understood, and perhaps commonly used, the Greek language; though, if he used the syriac, in the Antiochian dialect, as his common language, the argument will still hold good: Especially if it be considered that he was now writing in Greek, for the use of the gentile Christians in general, and more immediately of Theophilus, who (very likely) did not understand the syro-chaldaic. In such a case, it was necessary that he should explain himself, when he used a word from a different language, or dialect.

I know it may be said, "that the dialects of Galilee and Jerusalem differed so much, that St. Peter's speech, or pronunciation, discovered him, at Jerusalem, to be a Galilean." [Matth. xxvi. 73.] "And that one of the Targums, and Talmuds, was written in the Jerusalem dialect; and from thence called the Jerusalem Targum, and Talmud."

But I question whether the dialects of Galilee and Jerusalem differed much in the writing, though they appear to have differed in the pronunciation of the words. And, as to the Jerusalem Targum and Talmud, they differed from the others; as the others were written in the dialects, which the Jews used in the distant, and especially in the eastern, dispersion.

"It is Dr. Lightfoot's conjecture, "that the potter's field was the place, where "Judas hanged himself; and that it was not only bought with the money, for which "he had sold his Lord and master; but stained also with the traitor's blood." [See Lightfoot's works, vol. 2. p. 640.] Others have been of the same opinion. [Vid. Grot. & Wetstein, in loc.] This would make the reason of giving it the name of the field of blood, still stronger, and more emphatical. And, perhaps, this may seem to some to be the reason here assigned, by St. Luke, of the field's being so called; and that, by the current of the story, in this place, it doeth look, as if he had murdred himself, in the field, which was purchased with his own money; and that his blood being shed there, had occasioned it's being called the field of blood. However; Matth. xxvii. 7, 8. it is assigned as the only reason for it's having that name, that it was bought with the price of Christ's blood; and, as the more remote antecedent is frequently referred to; and this text may be so understood, I take that to have been the true and only reason of this appellation.

Ver. 20. "Psai. xli. 9."
An apostle chosen instead of Judas.

Infamously wicked persons, it is said, Psalm lxix. 21. Let their habitation be desolate; and let no man dwell in their tents. And again, Psalm cix. 8. Let his days be few, and let another take his office. Which expressions of the royal prophet are exactly applicable to the present case. Therefore, my advice is, that seeing Judas his place is thus become vacant, you would consider how to supply it. The grand qualification required, is, that it be one of the first, or most early, disciples of our Lord, who hath been commonly with us, from the time of John's baptism, and through the whole course of Jesus his ministry, even unto the day of his ascension: One, who knew our Lord very well, before his death, and hath seen, and conversed with, him, since his being risen again: that he may be a competent and unexceptionable witness, unto the world, of Jesus his life, doctrine, miracles, and death; and, particularly, of his resurrection from the dead.

According to the proposal of St. Peter, and the other ten apostles, the rest of the one hundred and twenty chose two, out of their own number, and presented them to the apostles; who referred the determination to the divine providence, by prayer, and casting lots; that God himself, who had chosen the other eleven, might point out, which of these two should be added, to complete their number again. The persons nominated, were Joseph called Barsabas, and Matthias.

They put their names into one urn, and the word apostle and a blank lot into another urn. And then they addressed themselves unto the Lord Jesus, by prayer, in the following manner: "Thou Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, and canst tell which of these two, now presented before thee, is fittest to share with us, in the great office of the apostolate; decide thou accordingly; and point thou out, unto us, which of them must supply that place, from which Judas, by his own treachery and wickedness, hath..."
An apostle chosen instead of Judas.

An. Chrifti "c hath degraded himself, and is since gone to the place appointed for him; that he may receive the due reward of his deeds;”

Then they drew forth the lots; and Matthias his name came up with the lot, on which was written the word APOSTLE. And, from that time, he was looked upon, by the general consent of the disciples, as of the same rank and order with the other APOSTLES. And, thus the number of the APOSTLES of the circumcision (which, in conformity to the number of the tribes in Israel, was to be twelve) was filled up again, before the effusion of the spirit: that the spirit might fall upon Matthias, as well as upon the other eleven; and that he might not only have like spiritual gifts and miraculous powers; but that they might be conferred, at the same time, and in the same conspicuous and honorable manner.

S E C T. VI.

S T. LUKE wrote the book, which we commonly call the acts of the APOSTLES. But I greatly question whether he gave it any title. And I think they, that have since given it a title, might, with much more propriety, have called it, [The history of the first planting of the christian religion.] For, it is evident, St. Luke never designed it as a full and complete history of all the APOSTLES, and of all their acts, labors, and travels: but only as a just and concise specimen of what doctrine they preached, to what sort of persons they addressed themselves, what arguments they made use of, with what evidences their

Ver. 25. "Gone to the place appointed for him." It was a maxim among the Jews, "He, that betrayeth an Israelite, shall have no part in the world to come." [See Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. 2. p. 177; 640. Instead of [τυφών, his own] the Alexand. MS. readeth [τυφών, the just, or proper, place.] but it is singular in that reading. However; in the sense, in which we have now taken the words, they were usual, among the primitive Christians. In the epistle, ascribed to Barnabas, §. 19. he intimates, that good men go to the place appointed for them; ἐν τὸ τόπον τοῦ φυλακοῦ. And Clemens Romanus [ep. ad Cor. § 5.] faith, that St. Peter suffered martyrdom, and went into the place of glory, which was due to him. ἐν τῷ ἐφικανοῦ τόπῳ τῆς ζωῆς. And Polycarp useth a like expression, [ep. ad Philipp. § 9.] Ignatius, likewise, [ep. ad Magn. § 5.] faith, "All things have an end; death and life are set before us, and every one must go into his own place, ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τοῦ φυλακοῦ τῆς ζωῆς." Compare, with this, what our Lord himself had said of Judas, Matt. xxvii. 24. John vi. 70, 71. and xvii. 12. [See, also, Dr. Whitby on this place. And, for a different interpretation, see Sir Norton Knatchbull, Le Cene's essay for a new translation, and others.]
their mission and doctrine were attested; and some general account of the success, which they met with.

Accordingly; after some brief account of their commission, and of the effusion of the holy spirit, to qualify them for their great undertaking, the history of the conversion of the jews is very naturally fallen upon; in which he hath pointed out to us the various reception, which christianity met with, among them. In this part, St. peter was a leading man. And, though the other eleven apostles were all of them active, yet little is said about them: because, in telling us what St. peter preached, and acted, he hath given us a sample of what they all preached, and acted.

The next period relateth to the conversion of the devout gentiles, whom I take to have been proselytes of the gate; and such as are, in the fourth commandment, called strangers within the gates of the jews. And here, again, St. peter led the way, by converting Cornelius, and his company.

But, when the sacred historian hath told us, that they were admitted into the christian church, without being first circumcised; and that, after St. peter had led the way, other christians imitated his example, and made converts among the devout gentiles also; the history of St. peter is very naturally dropped; because it doeth not not appear that he ever preached to the idolatrous gentiles.

As, therefore, the third grand period containeth a brief account of the conversion of idolatrous gentiles; and St. paul shone as brightly in that sphere, as St. peter had done, through the former periods; the history of that great apostle of the gentiles is there pursued; — whose convert, very probably, St. luke was; but certainly his companion and fellow-laborer, in the great undertaking; and concerned in many of the transactions, which he himself hath recorded.

As the greatest part of the world were then idolatrous heathens, and the greatest number of christians, since that, have been of the race of the idolatrous gentiles; this part was justly the most enlarged upon: because the doctrine, which is suited to their circumstances, is of the greatest and most extensive concern.

But, after we have had a full account of numbers of the idolatrous gentiles being brought off from their idolatry, and received into the christian church, without their submitting to any part of the law of Moses, (together with some intimation of the behavior of the jews, upon that occasion; — and that the devout gentiles were defended from any farther subjection to the law of Moses;) and a
The general division of this history.

Sufficient number of instances given, to illustrate what doctrine was preached to those idolatrous gentiles, with what evidences it was confirmed, with what success it was attended, and how the Apostle of the gentiles and his companions were treated; — after St. Luke, I say, had given us a specimen of these things, he finished the history. Though it appeareth, that he himself was with St. Paul, long after; and could, very probably, have carried down his history to the martyrdom of that great Apostle.

But, having given us a perfect idea of the christian doctrine, and of its evidences; and pointed out the manner and method made use of, which was suited to the cases of the persons, to whom they addressed themselves; he hath finished his design. And (after a careful and repeated examination of it) I may venture to say, that he hath done it judiciously and accurately. For, if he had been ever so prolix, he could only have heaped up more instances of the same kind. Whereas; by his brevity, he hath admirably consulted the general good.

As St. Luke hath pointed out the method, we shall divide this history into three books.

Book I. Will contain an account of the spreading of the gospel among the Jews only; that is, from the year of our Lord, according to the vulgar era, 33. to the year 41. and from Acts second, to the tenth, chapter.

Book II. Will contain an account of the spreading of christianity, among the devout gentiles, (commonly called, by the Jews, the proselytes of the gate;) together with its farther progress among the Jews; that is, from the year of the vulgar era 41. to the year 44. — and from Acts tenth, to the thirteenth, chapter.

Book III. Will contain an account of the spreading of christianity among the idolatrous gentiles; (together with its farther progress, among the Jews, and proselytes of the gate.) Acts thirteenth, to the end of that book; — and from the year of the vulgar era 44. to the year 63.

This period did, indeed, last till the year seventy, when the city Jerusalem, and the Jewish polity, were destroyed; which put an end to the division of the converts, into those of Jews, proselytes of the gate, and idolatrous gentiles.

The end of the introduction.
THE
HISTORY
OF THE
FIRST PLANTING
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION, &c.

BOOK I.

Which containeth an account of the spreading of the gospel among the Jews only; — from the year of our Lord, according to the vulgar æra, 33. to the year 41. — and from Acts second, to the tenth, chapter.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the effusion of the holy spirit; and what gifts and powers were thereby conferred. Acts ii. 1,—4.

SECT. I.

On the day of pentecost, the law had been given from mount Sinai. On that day, the holy spirit was poured out, upon the apostles, and their company. Upon which, they were illuminated; and received, particularly, the gift of tongues.

If the plan of man's redemption was laid, before-hand, by the infinite, and unerring, wisdom of God; we may expect to find it carried on regularly, and with vast and surprising success. — Let the following circumstances, therefore, be carefully and impartially considered.

Vol. I.

That Acts ii. 1.
The holy spirit poured down,

That our Lord arose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven, hath been particularly related above. When the seventh sabbath from the passover was ended, and the next day, or (which is the same thing) the first day of the next week, was completely come; that is, fifty days after our Lord's resurrection, and ten days after his ascension; the apostles, and (as I apprehend) their company also; namely, all the hundred and twenty, were unanimously assembled, in their upper room, with the doors bolted, for fear

Ver. 1. *The first day of the next week;] that is, the Lord's-day, as it is called, Rev. i. 10. On the first day of the week, our Lord arose from the dead; on that day of the week, he appeared to his apostles, when they were assembled, for two weeks successively; and, on the first day of the week, the holy spirit was first poured out, upon the apostles, and their company. On that day of the week, used the apostles and primitive christians to assemble, for religious worship. And, from their custom and example, which was approved by Christ himself, and who must needs have known his mind and will, the christian church still continueth to assemble, on that day, for religious worship.

The observation of that day was not introduced, by a strict and positive command; because that might have been attended with some bad consequences. For instance; Suppose such slaves, as were converted to christianity, in that first age, had been expressly commanded, by the apostles, to observe the first day of every week; their masters would have reflected upon christianity, as robbing them of their property, and breaking in upon their civil rights. But it was (with great wisdom) gradually and mildly introduced. And so polygamy, by being first condemned, in the bishops, deacons, and deaconesses, did gradually vanish in the christian church. — If any one would see the primitive custom, with respect to the observation of the first day of the week, let him consult John xx. 19; 26. Acts xx. 6, 7. Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Justin. Martyr. apol. 2. p. 98, 99. oper. Paris: edit. 1636.

Was completely come.] Deut. xvi. 9. Lev. xxiii. 15, 16. The Jews used to begin their days, about six o'clock, in the evening; and reckon 'till that time, the next evening; according to Gen. i. 5. By saying, therefore, [that the day of pentecost was fully come,] St. Luke meant that the night was past, and the light of the next morning begun. [See, also, Dr. Lightfoot's curious observations on this place, vol. 1. of his works, p. 746, 747.]

It is said, Acts i. 14, 15. of all the hundred and twenty, ηπερα· ἡςα — δούσαμαι ἐν, &c. All those met with one accord, to choose an apostle, &c.

The history is continued; (as would appear more planely, if we had not divided it into chapters and verses;) and, of the same company, it is laid here again, ἡςα ἐπερα· προσεύχαντες οὖν ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ, they were all met together, with one accord, in the same place, when the holy spirit was poured down upon them.

It is probable all these hundred and twenty were along with them, when the holy spirit was poured down, a second time. [Acts iv. 23; 31.] And it is evident, from Acts vi. 3. that several (besides the apostles) were full of the holy spirit. Which is the very phrase, in the text, when the spirit was now poured out. And a phrase, which, in other places, signifieth, that the spirit was conferred, in the most honorable manner, as well as in a greater degree; that is, that it was given immediately from heaven, and not by the laying on of the hands of the apostles.

Again; why might not the holy spirit fall down upon all the hundred and twenty, as well as upon Cornelius, and his company? Acts x. 44, 45, 46.
on the day of Pentecost.

fear of the Jews; and there they were spending their time in prayer, and other acts of devotion.

It is objected, indeed, "That the Apostles are the persons last mentioned, Acts i. ult. compared with chap. ii. 1."

Answer. It is allowed, they are so. But it is not here said, "that all the Apostles were met together with one accord." On the contrary, the historian here uteth the very phrase, which he had used, Acts i. 14, 15, to intimate that he is still speaking of the same persons; and proceeding to show what happened to them, after the election of Matthias, and the completeing the college of Apostles of the circumcision. The nearest antecedent is far from being always referred to. Gen. iv. 9, 10. And the Lord said unto Cain, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" And he, [that is, Cain] said, "I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" And he [that is, the Lord] said, "What hast thou done?" Gen. xviii. 7, 8, 9. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man. And he [Abraham] took butter and milk, and the calf, which he had dressed, and set it before them. And he stood by them, under the tree. And they did eat. And they said unto him, "Where is Sarah thy wife?" And he said, "Be bold, in the tent." [See the preface to Mr. Thomas More's discourse, concerning the priesthood of Jesus Christ.] Again; Phil. xix. 2. Archippus was the person last mentioned; and yet the church, there saluted, was not in his house, but in the house of Philemon; who is the principal person addressed, though not the nearest antecedent. [See on 1 John v. 20.] In like manner, are the Apostles mentioned, Acts i. ult. that is, only incidentally. For, if we take the history in its connection, it is evident, that the hundred and twenty are the persons, spoken of, in the current of that history, from Acts i. 15, &c. Of them, it is said, "that, upon St. Peter's proposal, they chose out two, from among themselves; and presented them to the Apostles; that one of them might succeed, in the place of Judas the traitor. And, when they had chosen two, and God had, "by lot, determined that, of the two, Matthias should be the person; then, it is said, "that he was numbered with the eleven Apostles."

The historian now procedeth, and declareth, that "they were all met again, with one accord, when the Holy Spirit came upon them;" that is, (as appeareth to me) all the company, of which he had been speaking, in the current of the former discourse. [See Miscellanea sacra, vol. i. p. 101, 102.]

(2.) It is objected, that some MSS. read here, καὶ ἀπεφέείθησαν ἅπας ἡ Ἰουδαία, καὶ οἱ ἀποστόλοι, κτλ. But the MSS. that so read, are not many, nor those of the greatest authority. And, what is a remarkable circumstance against this reading, is, that we do not find any of the fathers, nor any of the versions, antient or modern, have followed it.

Dr. Mill hath very judiciously observed, that the MSS. which so read the words, seem to have had that addition, only for the sake of explaining what the transcribers thought the sacred historian intended. So that this reading will amount to no more, than the opinion of some few antient transcribers of the new testament.

(3.) It may be objected, "that the Apostles had the highest and the most of the "spiritual gifts; and are taken notice of, as the only persons, that preached to the "multitude, which then came together."

Answer. It is allowed, that the Apostles had the most, and the best, of the gifts of the Spirit. But, for all that, the other disciples might have some inferior gifts, and those granted them, at the same time; in what measure, and proportion, God saw fit. For there were diversities of gifts and operations, though they all proceeded from one and the same Spirit. And the Spirit could easily distinguish, between the Apostles, and others; though they were all in the same room, and company.
The effusion of the Spirit.

It was about fifteen hundred years before this, and (as many think) on this very day of the year, that the law was given of God, from mount Sinai, in the sight and hearing of all Israel; and attended, not only with a visible glory, but with pomp also, and terror.

And, now, the new law of grace is given to the apostles, upon mount Sion, attended, likewise, with a glory; but communicated (agreeably to the nature of it) in a much more mild, gentle, and familiar, manner. For, while they were big with expectations of their ascended Lord's fulfilling his promise, in sending down the oft mentioned gift of the holy spirit, — there came, all on a sudden, a sound from heaven, as of a mighty, rushing, wind: and the breeze filled all the house, where they were assembled; as their doctrine was afterwards to fill the whole earth.

As to the apostles preaching first. That belonged to the dignity of their office. And, indeed, I am apt to think, that none of the hundred and twenty, except the apostles, received the whole scheme of the gospel-doctrine, by that effusion of the spirit: though they might receive some inferior, and more particular, revelations, as well as miraculous powers.

But what seems much to confirm this account, of the presence of the hundred and twenty, is, St. Peter's speech, ver. 16, &c. of this chapter; where he saith, that, by that effusion of the holy spirit, the prophetic of Joel was accomplished; in which it was foretold, "that the spirit should be poured out, upon women, as well as upon men; that their daughters should prophesy, as well as their sons; and the spirit be given, to maid-servants, as well as men-servants, &c." For, I cannot conceive how that prophecy could be already fulfilled; unless the spirit was shed down, upon all the hundred and twenty; among whom it is expressly said, Acts i. 14. "there was Mary the mother of Jesus; and some other women, who were his disciples." (4.) It may be objected, "that St. Peter, verses 19, 20. mentions the signs and fore-runers of the destruction of Jerusalem, as part of the prophetic of Joel. And yet these were not yet accomplished; but the accomplishment only approaching. In like manner, verses 17, 18. he might not only refer to what was come to pass; but also to the future pouring out of the spirit, which was then shortly to follow." To this I answer, That, from his manner of expressing himself, ver. 16. (as well as from the connection of the history mentioned above) I should rather be inclined to take verses 17, 18. to relate to what had happened; and that verses 19, 20. are added, partly for the sake of the exhortation, ver. 21. and partly because of their being joined to the other predictions in Joel; and were now, in a few years, to be accomplished. See Archbishops Usher's annals of the old testament. Bishop Patrick on Exod. xix. 1. Dr. Lightfoot's works vol. i. p. 748, &c. Ainsworth on Exod. xix. 11. &c. Stein in loc.

Ver. 2. [Filled all the house.] When Moses had finished all things, according to the pattern shown him in the mount, it is said, Exod. xl. 34, 35. "that a cloud covered the tent of the congregation. And the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon: and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." And, when king Saul—
The effusion of the Spirit.

Then there appeared, all over the room, in a visible and clear manner, the rays of a divine glory; like cloven, or separate, tongues of fire. And the fire, or divine glory, rested upon the head of each of the persons there assembled. Which form and appearance was a lively emblem of one of the most remarkable gifts then conferred.

That the tongues were separated, might denote the multiplicity and variety of languages, which they should be able to speak; though, as all these proceeded from one and the same spirit, they should all agree in their doctrine. And, as the glory rested, for some time, upon them, it might shadow out the permanency of the gifts then bestowed; — in which, as well as in many other particulars, they excelled the old testament prophets.

Upon this effusion, all the company were filled with the holy spirit; as immediately, and most manifestly appeared, For, though they were men of a low education; and, before that, understood only their own native language; ye they now, all on a sudden, found themselves illuminated with a large stock of new knowledge, and able to speak it in a variety of languages, which they had never learned.

Solomon had finished the building of the temple, and the ark of the covenant of the Lord was placed therein, it is said, "that the cloud filled the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister, because of the cloud. For the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." [I Kings viii. 10, 11. 2 Chron. v. 13, 14.] In like manner, when Isaiah saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, it is said, "that his train filled the temple." [Isai. vi. 1.] But, now, the divine presence had left the temple. And the glory of the Lord rested upon mount Zion; and filled the house, where the apostles were assembled.

Ver. 3. Like cloven, or separate tongues. What, in our English bible, is rendered [fire,] Isai. v. 24. is, in the original, וֹנַּבִּים, lebion eho; [a tongue of fire.] Our old English version hath preferred the allusion, and rendered the words, [lyke as fire lycketh up the flame.] Tongues of fire properly signify the points of flames; which move nimbly, and lick like tongues. The antient Romans alluded to this, when they spoke of lambent flames; and we seem to have taken the phrase from them. Virgil's fiction, concerning the omen, which happened to Iulus, and by which Anchises and Æneas were determined to leave Troy, — is so pertinent to the present purpose, that I cannot forbear transcribing it.

Ecce levis, summo de vertice vius Iuli
Fundere lumen, apex, tachus; inoxia moli.
Lambere flamma comas, & circum tempora paci. Æneid. lib. ii. 1. 682, &c.

Strange to relate, from young Iulus' head
A lambent flame arose; which gently spread
Around his brows, and on his temples fed. Dryden.

Ver. 4. Some commentators of note, both among the antients and moderns, have main-
The symbols of the Spirit.

John the baptist had often declared, “that though he himself could "baptize onely with water; yet the Messiah should baptize with "the holy spirit, and with fire; or attended with a glory like a flame: "of fire.” And, now, was the promise fulfilled in it's season.

CHAP. I. SECT. II.

The symbols of the Spirit; together with the external appearances, which accompanied this effusion.

There is no question to be made, but that God is ready, in all ages, to grant that gracious assistance, which is proper, in order to men's practicing piety and virtue, or necessary to their working out their own salvation. But what we are now going to consider, is the

maintained "that they spoke onely one language, (that is, hebrew, or syro-chaldaic,) "but that the people heard them, every one, in their own language."

This is really making the miracle to consist in the hearing, and not in the speaking; and seemeth so groundlesse, that it doeth not need any labored confutation. Our savior promised, Mark xvi. 17. that they should speak with new tongues, &c.

And, St. Luke here plainly asserteth, ver. 4. that they did speak with other tongues, or in other languages, besides their own native language. The same thing is either supposed, or plainly asserted, by St. Paul. [1 Cor. xii. 10; 28; 30, and xiv. 2; 4, 5, 6; 9; 13, 14; 18, 19; 21, 22, 23; 26, 27; 39.] The mistake seemeth to have risen, from ver. 6; 8, where it is said, that every one of the foreigners heard them speaking in their own native language. But St. Luke did not there intend to say, that any one of the apostles spoke more languages than one, at a time; nor, that they spoke one language, and the people heard one, or many others. But his plain and evident meaning, is, that one of them spoke one language, and another another language, and so on: and that different apostles addressed themselves to men of different nations, at the same time:—or, that one apostle addressed himself to men of different nations, one after another. By which means, all the foreigners heard their own native languages spoken, distinctly and intelligibly. And not onely the languages spoken, but the christian doctrine, also, plainly delivered unto them, in their own languages.
The symbols of the Spirit.

The miraculous affihfence of the spirit, peculiar to the first age of the Christian church.

As this was the effusion of the holy spirit, which had been so often prophesied of, and promised: and so signal and plenteous an effusion, as that (notwithstanding all the prophecies and miracles, which had formerly proceeded from the spirit of God) the holy spirit Acts ii. 4: was said, comparatively speaking, never to have been given before this: As this effusion, I say, was so remarkable, both as to it's appearances, and as to it's effects, we will consider them both; in order to clear up several texts of scripture, which take notice thereof, or allude thereto. — But more especially, to show what a vast alteration it made, in the minds of the Apostles; and how well qualified they, and their associates, hereby became, for successfully carrying on such a glorious work, as that of instructing an ignorant, and reforming a wicked, world.

The external symbols of the spirit may best be considered, at one view; as they will reflect a light upon one another, and help to explain several texts of scripture.

God could, undoubtedly, have communicated the inward spiritual gifts, without any external symbols, or appearances. But, as men are more strongly affected with what striketh upon the outward senses; God (who knoweth their frame) communicated the spirit, in this sensible, visible, manner.

The external symbols of the spirit, mentioned in holy scripture, are four; air, fire, water, and oil.

1. The wind, or air, is, in scripture, often used, as an emblem of the gifts, and operations, of the spirit of God; and as a symbol of the divine presence.

It is used by way of comparison, John iii. 8. “The wind bloweth, where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is borne of the spirit.” And, [John xx. 22.] our Lord, before his ascension, breathed upon his Apostles; thereby intimating in what manner they should afterwards receive the holy spirit.

Thus, [Gen. ii. 7.] when God had made the body of man of moist clay, “he breathed into his nostrils the breath [or spirit] of life.” And, upon the resurrection of the two witnesses, Rev. xi. 11. it is said, that “the breath of life entered into them again.” Nay; the word spirit doeth primarily signify the air, in which we breathe: though, in a figurative sense, it is used concerning intelligent
The symbols of the Spirit.


The air is a most lively emblem of the true Christian spirit, which
is meek and gentle; invisible in its secret causes and operations;
yet most penetrating and active; diffusing itself to an incredible
extent; and of universal benefit, where it is received, and made the
right use of.

The wind is, also, in scripture, used for a symbol of the divine
presence; especially when the presence was more awful and rever-
ential. Thus, [Gen. iii. 8.] our first parents, after they had eaten
the forbidden fruit, “heard the voice of the Lord God walking in
the garden, in the wind of the day”; and they were afraid, and
hid themselves, among the trees of the garden.”

And, remarkable to this purpose, are the words of Josephus, that,
upon the giving of the law from mount Sinai, “vehement winds came
rushing down; and that this was one of the tokens of the divine
presence.” And Josephus his account is confirmed by the apo-
tle: [Heb. xii. 18.] who mentioneth [tempests,] as well as many
other awful things, accompanying the giving of the law, from
mount Sinai.

And again; [Psal. xviii. 10.] the symbols of the divine presence are
thus expressed: “He rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did
fly, upon the wings of the wind.” [See Psalm civ. 3, 4.]

In allusion, I suppose, to these former representations, we here
find, that, when the holy spirit was given, “there came down,
on a sudden, the sound as of a mighty rushing wind.”

It is not said, “that there really was a strong wind;” (such as
thofe, which accompanied the giving of the law, from mount Sinai;) but only, that it made a noise, and came on a sudden, like a
strong wind.

And the emblem, in this view, was lively and pertinent. For,“the doctrine of the Apostles, though meek and gentle, was to
be mighty and powerful. Their found was to go through the
“earth, and their words to the ends of the world.”

The holy angels, those bright and active ministers of the divine
will, are sometimes compared to wind, as well as to flames of fire.
But, here, winds and flames are made symbols of the presence of a super-
ior

* So ὡθη προς τὸν θεόν, [leruach hajom,] ought to have been translated.

b "Ἀναμείκτης ἐγοῦν — καθότι. [vel καθορισμότω] εἰ — ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ σοφίᾳ,
Joseph. Antiq. l. 3. c. 5. § 2.
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perior spirit. Just as, in Ezekiel's vision, together with the whirlwind, and the flames of fire, there was, also, present the spirit of the Lord. [Ezek. i. 4, &c.]

To conclude this head. As the wind was, of old, a token of the divine presence, so it was now. And, as God breathed, into the first Adam, the breath [or spirit] of life, when he imparted unto him that animal, terrestrial, life, which he was to convey to his posterity; so the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, breathed his quickening spirit, into his apostles, as the seed and principle of a new life, to such as would embrace their heavenly doctrine,—a life of holiness, which will terminate in a blessed and glorious immortality.

Thus, was the spirit an earnest of their adoption, and a pledge of their future glory and happiness. [See on 1 Thess. i. 6.] And, by this quickening spirit of the Lord, we hope to be raifed; and that he will again breathe, into us, the breath of life, at the last day, and in the resurrection of the just.

2. Another symbol of the holy spirit was fire, or flames of fire.

When the law was given from mount Sinai, there were not only thunders, but lightenings, also. And the shechinah, or cloud of glory, which appeared so often to the patriarchs, and which conducted Israel through the wilderness, was like a cloud, by day; but like a pillar of fire, by night.

Something of the like nature, very probably, was the appearance, which attended the pouring down of the holy spirit, upon our Lord, after his baptism; namely, a glory, which surrounded his head, and and hovered over him, for some time, as a dove fluttereth over her nest.—Such a glory did now attend the pouring out of the holy spirit, upon his apostles, and their company. And such a glory did commonly, or, perhaps, always, attend the giving of the holy spirit, when that divine gift was poured down, upon any person, immediately from heaven, and without the laying on of the hands of the apostles.

In some cases, the old testament prophets were so uneasy, when they stifled their prophecies, that it is said, "The word of God was, "in their hearts, as a burning fire, shut up in their bones; and "they were weary with forbearing, and could not stay." But as a glory, like a flame of fire, accompanied the giving of the holy spirit, to the first christians, the allusion is much more strong and beautiful, when they are charged not to quench the spirit; but,
The symbols of the Spirit.

An Chrísti on the other hand, to stir, or blow up, that sacred flame*. For, the spiritual gifts, like the fire upon the altar, could be kindled only from heaven, but might be quenched by mere men; and did die out, and quite decay, if they were not fed with new fuel, here, upon earth. All manner of wickedness tended to quench those sacred flames, and all manner of virtue and piety to blow up and increase them.

The light, the heat, the powerful efficacy, and purifying nature, of flames, rendered this a very proper emblem of the power and efficacy, the light, knowledge, and purity, of the christian doctrine; as well as of that sacred spirit, which burned up the dross, purified the heart, and prepared the christians for a state of perfect purity and complete happiness.

3. The effusion of the holy spirit is, in scripture, frequently compared to the pouring out of water*. [Isai. xliv. 3.] “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour out of my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine off-spring.” To this, there is an evident allusion, in the prophecies, [Joel ii. 28.] “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh,” &c. Which prophecies (as St. Peter assured the Jews) was now accomplished.

The eighth was the last day of the feast of tabernacles, and the greatest day of that feast. On that day, there was a holy convocation, among the Jews, when a vast congregation of the people assembled together, at the temple. And then, it was their custom to fetch water, from the brook, Siloam; some of which they drank, with loud acclamations of praise and thanksgiving; and some of which they poured out, upon the altar, as a drink-offering unto God; both as a commemoration of the rock, that flowed, and followed them, in the wilderness, to relieve their thirst; and, as an oblation, joined with prayer for rain, against the following seed-time. — On that great day of the feast, Jesus (observing the usual solemnity, and alluding thereto,) stood in a convenient place, in the temple; and cried aloud, and in the hearing of the people: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. For I will give him of my spirit, not onely enough to refresh him, but he shall be filled with it; and it shall plenteously overflow, like swelling

* Ἀνωτέρωσιν. [See on 2 Tim. i. 6.]
* Besides the texts mentioned in this history, see Prov. i. 23. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, &c. and xxxix. 29. Isai. xii. 3. and lv. 1. Tit. iii. 5, 6. With which compare John iv. 14.
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"...rivers of living water." That (as St. John hath informed us, John vii. 39.) was an allusion to the plentiful effusion of the holy spirit, which was to be poured out, after our Lord's ascension. And, on this day of Pentecost, the promise was accordingly fulfilled.

It is with the same allusion, that St. Paul, [1 Cor. xii. 13.] faith, of the christians, who had the gifts of the holy spirit, that they had been all made to drink into one spirit.

They were, likewise, initiated into the christian church, by being baptized with water; which is called the washing of regeneration, and joined with the renewing of the holy spirit. [Tit. iii. 5.] And, as the primitive christians, after baptism by water, were generally baptized with the holy spirit; and that was the usual way, for the apostles, to receive persons into the christian church, the spiritual kingdom of God among men; it was said, [John iii. 5.] "that, unless a man was born of water, and of the spirit, he could not enter into the kingdom of God."

The outward washing with water, in baptism, denoted that inward purity, which was (and still is) required of christians; their obligation "to cleanse themselves from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit; and to perfect purity, or holiness, in the fear of God."

And baptism was said to wash away their sins. For christians were required "to have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, as well as their bodies washed with pure water." — And, upon this account, the church of Christ is said to be cleansed, by the washing of water, as well as by the word of God. Thus, the gift of the spirit is compared to water, because it's purifying, cleansing, quality. And, in allusion to the pouring out of water, this manner of communicating the spiritual gifts, is called the effusion of the holy spirit.

4. and lastly. The giving of the holy spirit is sometimes compared to the anointing persons with oil: — which was a thing much practised in the eastern countries.

Their kings, and sometimes their prophets, were inaugurated, by being anointed with oil; and the jewish high-priests were consecrated, at thirty years of age, by being washed with water, and anointed with oil. Accordingly; Jesus Christ, the prince of the kings of the earth, the prophet of the church, the great apostle of christians were required "to have their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, as well as their bodies washed with pure water." — And, upon this account, the church of Christ is said to be cleansed, by the washing of water, as well as by the word of God. Thus, the gift of the spirit is compared to water, because it's purifying, cleansing, quality. And, in allusion to the pouring out of water, this manner of communicating the spiritual gifts, is called the effusion of the holy spirit.

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* 1 Sam. xvi. 13. Judg. ix. 8. 1 Kgs. xix. 16.
1 Exod. xxix. 4; 7. Lev. xxii. 10.
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and high-priest of our profession,—when he was about thirty years of age, was first washed with water, or baptized by John the Baptist, and, after that, was farther set apart, for his high, sacred, and prophetic, office, by being anointed with the holy spirit, that oil of gladness, above his fellows. [Heb. i. 9. Psal. cx. 4, 5. Acts ii. 34, 35.] Hence had he the name of Messiah, [or the Christ,] which signifies the anointed. [Dan. ix. 25, 26. Isai. lxvi. 1. Acts iv. 27.]

Thus, also, the Christians, who had the gifts of the holy spirit, are said to have had an unction from the holy one: [See on 1 John ii. 20.] and to have been anointed of God. [2 Cor. i. 21, 22.] By that unction, they were both instructed and comforted. [1 John ii. 27.] And hence they were called kings and priests, unto God, and the Lamb. [Rev. i. 6.]

As the Jews used to pour oil upon the firstfruits, which they offered unto God, there might, perhaps, be some allusion to that custom, in the case of the first Christian converts, who were the firstfruits of this new creation, and who had the firstfruits of the spirit. But the unction of kings and priests, is (I think) more generally alluded to.

These are the four symbols, or emblems, which the scripture mentioneth, or alludeth to, in speaking of the wonderful gifts of the holy spirit.

C H A P. I. S E C T. III.

The general division into spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers: and into those, that were peculiar to Apostles; and those, which were common to them, and other Christians.

We have already spoken of the symbols of the spirit. The effects of receiving the spirit come next to be considered. And they were either spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers.

By spiritual gifts, I understand "that inward illumination, which the disciples of Jesus, and especially the Apostles, received, upon the effusion of the spirit." And, by the miraculous powers, I understand "those powers, by which the mighty and uncommon effects
and miraculous powers.

"effects were performed, that often attended their speaking, or
"acting."

By the spiritual gifts, they had a vast compass of knowledge com-
municated, concerning doctrines, and languages; of which (before
that) they were entirely ignorant. And all that I suppose them to
have had, from the spirit, in the working of a miracle, was onely a
propheic impulse upon their minds, that, upon their speaking, or
acting, so or so, a miracle would be worked; to rouze men's at-
tention to, or confirm them in, the christian doctrine. Such an im-
pulse may, indeed, not improperly, be ranked among the gifts of the
spirit. But the power, which was exerted, in the working of a mi-
racle, did not proceede from the christians, but immediately from
the lord jesus christ; upon their invokeing his name, or pro-
nounceing the person healed; or declaring that the miracle would be
done, by his power.

There may be other reasons alleged, for the distinction between
spiritual gifts and miraculous powers. For instance; The apostles,
and the seventy disciples, worked miracles, in our savior's life-time; and
yet the holy spirit is said not to have been then given. [John vii. 39.]
And the writers of the new testament do, themselves, frequently
distinguish between spiritual gifts and miraculous powers; calling the
first the gifts of the holy spirit; and the latter, by the name of signs,
and wonders, and various miracles.

But, perhaps, this distinction may be still better understood, sup-
pofe we say, that the illumination, or impulse, which they had, in the
working of a miracle, terminated in that particular act of the divine
power. Whereas; by the spiritual gifts, they conveyed some know-
edge, and delivered some truths, which tended to edification, or ex-
hortation, or comfort. By the miracles, they might rouze men to
attention; but, by the spiritual gifts, and by them alone, they could
instruct, and inlighten, them.

The apostles were the ambassadors of god to men. Now, amb-
assadors must have qualifications, and credentials, (as well as a
commission;) in order to the successful execution of their high office.
They had, indeed, seen our lord; and were sufficiently qualified
to be witnesses to the world of the truth and reality of his resurrec-
tion

* It is said, Mark v. 30. Luke vi. 19. and viii. 46. that ναόμως, power, went out
of jesus. But I do not find such an expression ever used of his apostles, or any
of his disciples. Though, I confesse, that, by the power of our lord jesus
christ, st. peter was inabled to do something of the like nature. And, which
was (to say the least) equally miraculous. [Acts v. 15, 16.] And so, likewise, st. paul.
[Acts xix. 11, 12.]
The Apostolic gifts.

An. Christ. 33.

Tiber. 19.

BOOK I.

Chap. I.

Sect. IV.

Acts ii. 4.

Concerning the spiritual gifts, which were communicated unto the apostles.

THAT the apostles were well acquainted with our Lord, before his death; and had full conviction of the truth and reality of his resurrection, so as sufficiently to enable them to be his witnesses unto the world; hath been fully shown already.
The Apostolic gifts.

But, by this effusion of the Spirit, they were qualified to teach Christianity unto mankind; and to work miracles, in attestation to their mission and doctrine; — as well as to be witnesses of the facts.

The supernatural gifts, from which they had their inward illumination, come now to be considered; and, in the next section, we propose to consider their miraculous powers.

They were called gifts, from their being so styled, in the famous prophecy. [Psal. lxviii. 18.] Where the Messiah is prophesied of, as a mighty conqueror, ascending to heaven in triumph, receiving gifts from God, and distributing them among his people. [See Eph. iv. 7, 8,]

The most full and particular account of their gifts and powers, is found, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10; 28, 29, 30. And, therefore, we may look upon that, as the text, which ought particularly to be explained. But there are, also, other hints, elsewhere, that deserve to be considered.

A view of the order, in which St. Paul hath ranked the gifts of the Spirit, 1 Cor. xiiiith chapter.

Verses 8, 9, 10.

1. The word of wisdom. (1.) Apostles.
2. The word of knowledge. (2.) Prophets.
3. Faith. (3.) Teachers.
4. Gifts of healing. (4.) Miracles, \( \delta \nu \mu \alpha \mu \varepsilon \). (4.) Miracles, \( \delta \nu \mu \alpha \mu \varepsilon \). (5.) Gifts of healing.
8. The interpretation of tongues.

Verse 28.

1. Unto

(1.) Apostles.
(2.) Prophets.
(3.) Teachers.
(4.) Miracles, \( \delta \nu \mu \alpha \mu \varepsilon \).
(5.) Gifts of healing.
(6.) Helps.
(7.) Governments.
(8.) Divers kinds of tongues.
(9.) Interpreters of tongues.

* Speakers of tongues, in the third lift, may comprehend prophecy, discerning of spirits, and divers kinds of tongues, in the first lift; inasmuch as these were generally the subjects treated of, by those who had the gift of tongues. For, besides exercising the gift of tongues, they prophesied, spoke the wonderful things of God, or magnified God. [See Miscellan. sacr. vol. i. over against p. 74. Mark xvi. 17. Acts ii. 11. and x. 46. and xix. 6.]

b Perhaps the Apostle makes divers kinds of tongues, in the second lift, answer both to tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, in the first.
The Apostolic gifts.

1. Unto the Apostles was communicated, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom. So St. Paul calleth it. I Cor. xii. 8. that is, "a full and clear knowledge of the whole scheme of the Christian doctrine; whereby they were illuminated themselves, and able to make others wise unto salvation."

On this day of Pentecost, they appear to have received that general part of Christianity, which was common to all mankind; and that particular part of it, which related to the Jews, and proselytes of righteousness, who were always looked upon, and treated, as Jews. And, by farther effusions, and revelations, (which were communicated to some, or other, of the Apostles, as the state of things required) they had the whole scheme of Christianity, with all the particulars; whether relating to Jews, or Gentiles.

By the word of wisdom, I understand "such a comprehensive view of the Christian doctrine," because, in this sense, St. Paul hath used the phrase [wisdom] and [the wisdom of God.] I Cor. i. 24. and ii. 6. &c. Eph. iii. 10. And St. Peter informeth us, that his brother Paul wrote his epistles, according to the wisdom given unto him. [2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.]

In our Lord himself, were hid all the treasures of wisdom, and knowledge. [Col. ii. 2, 3.] And hence he is sometimes called the wisdom of God. [Luke xi. 49. compared with Matt. xxiii. 34.]

This I reckon to have been the highest spiritual gift, and to have been communicated to none but the Apostles. Because, in reckoning up the gifts themselves, it is set first, 1 Cor. xii. 8. And answereth to Apostles. For, we find, that, among the persons who had the gifts, they are placed the first in order, ver 28, 29. as having the greatest honor, and most excellent qualifications.

Hence it is they are called [wise men.] Matth. xxiii. 34. compared with Luke xi. 49.

This word of wisdom was communicated unto them, by immediate revelation, from our Lord, or from the Spirit; and is, therefore, called by the name of revelation. [1 Cor. xiv. 6.] For it is true, of all the Apostles, "that they neither received their gospel, from man, neither by man; but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, or the illumination of the Spirit." Whereas; even superior prophets, and evangelists, (not having the word of wisdom,) were to teach, what they had learned from the Apostles, "unto faithful men, who should be able to teach others also." [2 Tim. ii. 2.]

But, under the word of wisdom, I would, also, include the greater prophecies; that is, the revelation of divers mysteries, or grand events,
The Apostolic gifts.

"events, relating to the spreading, corrupting, and restoring, the Christian religion; which could not have been known by any human foresight." For, (1.) Our Saviour speaketh of it, as a thing peculiar to the Apostles, "that, unto them, it was given, first, and immediately, to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." [Matthew xiii. 11. Mark iv. 10, 11. Luke viii. 10.] (2.) The whole scheme of the gospel-doctrine is called the mystery of godliness, [1 Timothy iii. 16.] and the wisdom of God in a mystery, [1 Corinthians ii. 7.] (3.) The mystery of God's calling the gentiles to be his people, without any subjection to the law of Moses, is included, under the general name of [wisdom;] as may be seen, by comparing the following texts: Eph. i. 8, 9, 10. Col. i. 9; 12, 13; 26, 27, 28. and ii. 2, 3. (4.) These mysteries are said to have been communicated by revelation, [Gal. i. 12. Eph. iii. 3. Romans xvi. 25.] just as the former branch of the word of wisdom is intimated to have been given, [1 Corinthians xiv. 6.] (5.) None but Apostles appear to have had the revelation of those great mysteries. For unto St. Peter was it first revealed, that the devout gentiles should be taken into the Christian church, without any farther subjection to the law of Moses, than that to which they had already submitted. [Acts xvi. and xix. chapters.] And to St. Paul, that the idolatrous gentiles should be accepted, without any subjection to the Mosaic law. This was one of the mysteries of God, of which he was a faithful steward. [1 Corinthians iv. 1, 2.] And he often calleth it a mystery. [Romans xvi. 25. Eph. i. 9. and iii. 3.—11. and vi. 19, 20. Col. i. 26, 27. and ii. 2. and iv. 3. 1 Timothy iii. 9.] Unto him, also, was revealed the mystery of God's casting off the Jews, the mystery of iniquity, or of the revelation of the man of sin, and son of perdition; whereby great corruptions should, in the last days, be introduced into the Christian church. [2 Thess. ii. 1, &c.] the mystery of recalling the Jews into the church of God, and of the complete fulness of the Gentiles. [Rom. xi. 11, &c.] the mystery, that the last generation should not die at all. [1 Corinthians xv. 51.] And, finally, unto St. John was revealed the mystery of the seven stars, [Rev. i. 20.] the mystery of God, [Rev. x. 7.] and the mystery of Babylon, the woman, the beast, and the false prophet. [Rev. xvii. 5; 7, &c.]

But I have not found any clear and certain intimation, in the new testament, that such mysteries were revealed, immediately, to any of the superior prophets*, or evangelists; much less, to any of the Christian

* There is one text, (namely, Eph. iii. 5.) which will be taken notice of, when we come to consider the gifts of the superior prophets.
The Apostolic gifts.

It is a considerable argument, (which hath already been just hinted at) when it is added, to what hath been said, that the order, in which things are ranged, 1 Cor. xii. 8; 28, &c. requireth that the revelation of the mysteries, or grand events relating to the Christian church, should be reduced under the head of the word of wisdom; and looked upon, as peculiar to the Apostles. For, as the word of wisdom, ver. 8. is placed first, among the spiritual gifts; it must, of course, answer to Apostles, who are ranked the first among the persons, who had the gifts, ver. 28, 29, 30. And, consequently, under that word of wisdom, we ought to reckon all the branches of the gift, which was peculiar to Apostles. Whereas, if we place the revelation of such mysteries, under the second head; namely, the word of knowledge; it will answer to superior prophets; who do not appear to have had such revelations.

The Apostles (though honest, and sincere men) were slow of understanding, and greatly prejudiced. Our Lord, during his ministry, had endeavored to open their understandings, by parables, and by other methods, gradually, and as they were able to bear it. But often, when he spoke, they understood him not; and the thing was hid from their eyes. They misunderstood the nature of his kingdom. And, though he had many things to say unto them, they could not then bear them. But, when the spirit of truth should come, he was not only to bring to their remembrance what Christ had taught them; but to lead them into all the truths, that were necessary to their spreading the gospel. Accordingly; by the first branch of the word of wisdom, they had given them, immediately from heaven, and retained in their minds afterwards, through their whole lives, clearly and accurately, a more perfect body of divinity, than forty years close study can now give the most candid, sagacious, and industrious divine; even though he hath their writings to guide and assist him. Hereby they saw through their former mistakes, about Christ’s person and offices. They could now easily reconcile the prophecies, which spoke of his humbled, and exalted state. For, they were convinced, that, though he had emptied himself to come upon earth; yet, since that, he was exalted, at the right hand of God, and had all power given unto him, both in heaven, and upon earth. That his preparatory kingdom was not a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom, ruling over the consciences of men. His mean and afflicted life upon earth, and his undergoing such an ignominious death, appeared fully consistent with his being the Messiah. For his resurrection, ascension,
The Apostolic gifts.

cension, and pouring out of the spirit, had taken away all the infa-
my of the cross; and light shone clearly through many of their
groffest prejudices. They could now enter into the design of the
son of God's coming down among men, and of his erecting a king-
dom of righteousness; and saw plainly what part they were to tran-
act, in erecting that holy kingdom.

As Moses had the two tables of the law, and a pattern of all things,
delivered unto him, in the mount; when he was about to erect
God's temporal kingdom, in Israel; so the apostles of our Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ, in order to erect the spiritual kingdom of
God, among all nations, had a full and clear revelation of the nature
and laws of that kingdom, communicated unto them, by the spirit,
who enlarged their capacities, and filled them with knowledge, for
themselves, and for the world.

To the second branch of the word of wisdom, the revelations,
which God made to some of the superior old testament prophets, bear
a very great resemblance: I mean, the prophecies, concerning the
greater events, which would affect the Jews, and particularly concern-
ing the kingdom of the Messiah.

By this second branch of the word of wisdom, the apostles could
comfort the christians, under many and threatening prospects, with
the full assurance that Christianity would prevail and flourish, notwith-
standing all discouragements and oppositions whatever;— as well as
could, in the mean time, declare the terms of acceptance, both of
Jews and Gentiles; which terms were exactly suited to the state, in
which they were, antecedent to their embracing Christianity.

By this word of wisdom, in the full and most comprehensive lati-
tude of it, the apostles became the common funds of christian
knowledge. For the primitive christians did, all of them, receive
Christianity, from the apostles, mediately or immediately; superior
prophets and evangelists not excepted.

And, though we do not receive Christianity so immediately from
them, as to hear the word at their mouths: yet we may learn, from
their writings, that doctrine, which they received from our Lord
Jesus Christ; and delivered unto the world, faithfully, as they
received it, from him; God also bearing them witness, both by
signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the holy spir-
it, according to the divine good pleasure.

The books of the new testament were, most of them, written by the
apostles. And, as they had this illumination of the spirit con-

4 John xvii. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 2. and iii. 14.
The Apostolic gifts:

Accordingly, "Christians are " said to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." [Eph. ii. 20.] And, [Rev. xxi. 14.] in the vision, which appeared to one of the apostles of the circumcision, the walls of the new Jerusalem were represented as twelve; upon the foundations of which were inscribed the names of the twelve apostles of the lamb.

Thus, according to the infinite and amazing wisdom of God, when the world stood in need of a universal reformation, God did not see fit to inspire every man, or every Christian. But he illuminated the apostles, with the doctrine, which is calculated to promote virtue and piety. And, by their preaching, or writings, he enlightened the earth. For, the scheme of Christianity, which we have, in the new testament, unto this day, came originally from the apostles, who were the only persons that were favored with the word of wisdom.

ii. To the apostles was communicated, by the spirit, what St. Paul calleth the word of knowledge, 1 Cor. xii. 8. that is, "a full, and clear, comprehension of the scope and design of the law, and of the prophets. And a thorough understanding of the confirmation, which the old testament gave to Christianity."

In this sense, hath St. Paul used the word, γνῶσις, knowledge, [Rom. ii. 20. with which, compare 1 Tim. vi. 20.]

I cannot easily be persuaded, indeed, that the old testament had, besides the direct and literal sense, an hidden and spiritual meaning; which could not be found out, without a new revelation. The true design and meaning might be hid, from the carelesse and prejudiced: but, surely, a revelation could answer no great end, that should want another revelation to explain it, in its most material branches. I am, therefore, persuaded, that a diligent and unprejudiced inquirer might
The Apostolick gifts.

might have understood the design of the law and the prophets; and An. Chri-

ti have comprehended the sense of the most material and important

prophecies. [Acts xvii. 11.] But, notwithstanding all this, the word of

knowledge was, as things then stood, a spiritual gift of great use and

advantage. For, the apostles themselves had been bred up in low

occupations; and had not had leisure to study and search into the Acts ii. 4.

old testament revelation, with that care and exactness, which the

case required. Nay; (what is more) not only they, but the learned

and leading men among the Jews, [1 Cor. ii. 7, &c.] and even all the

nation of the Jews in general, were greatly prejudiced, and were

gone into a wrong interpretation of the grand prophecies; over-look-

ing such predictions, as regarded the humble state of the Messiah; and

expecting a temporal prince, to exalt the grandeur of their nation.

In such circumstances, it could not be expected, that the apo-

stles should have understood the scope and design of the law and

the prophets, without the illumination of the spirit, to lead them into

those truths; much less could they, without extraordinary as- 

sistance, have been supposed to have convinced numbers of other Jews

of their mistakes, and to have led them inta a right and just con-

ception of the true intention of their antient prophets.

A long preparation of learning and study would not have led

them into so full and accurate a knowledge of the general design of

the old testament, and of the meaning of particular prophecies. And,

yet it was necessary, that the apostles should have had such a

thorough knowledge of the old testament. For, they were not only
to teach Christianity, which was founded upon facts; but they were
to build up believers in their most holy faith. And they actually
did so, by justly explaining the old testament prophecies; and by re-

moving those scruples, which arose in the minds of the Christians,

who had been Jews, or proselytes of the gate, from a misunderstanding

of those antient prophecies. Nay; they could not only satisfy

the honest inquirer, but convince gain-fayers; and stop the mouths of

the unbelieving Jews, and of the perverse Judaizing Christians, who

endeavored to subvert the minds of the other Christians, and to draw

away disciples after them, from an unjust interpretation of antient

revelations.

By

The apostles were not (before this) acquainted either with the antient hebrew,
in which the books of the old testament had been written; nor with the greek, which was
then the only version. For, as to the targums in Chaldee, they were paraphrases, and
not versions.

1 Tim. i. 7.

Tit. i. 9, 10, 11.
The Apostolic gifts.

By this gift, the apostles saw that all that vast apparatus of the law, and the prophets, was for the carrying on of one grand design, regularly and uniformly;—that the figures, shadows, and prophecies, for a succession of many ages, did, at last, center in Jesus of Nazareth; and in that most perfect revelation, which God gave to mankind, by him.

The apostles did, indeed, always found Christianity upon facts; and then preached the christian doctrine, according to the word of wisdom. But they, also, confirmed the doctrine, by appealing to the old testament, when they attempted to convert Jews, or proselytes of the gate; and afterwards removed the scruples, which arose in their minds, concerning the intention of former revelations. For, as these two sorts of persons acknowledged the authority of the scriptures of the old testament, and were acquainted with those antient and sacred writings;—it was necessary to clear up to them the connection between christianity and those preceding revelations.

But, as the idolatrous gentiles neither acknowledged the authority of the Jewish canon, nor were acquainted with what it contained; we never find the apostles appealing to the prophecies, in converting them. But, when those idolatrous gentiles had embraced the christian religion; and were told that the things had long before been predicted, which were now come to passe; it was a circumstantial and confirming evidence, to show them that it was so, and to point out to them the connection between christianity and those former revelations. — Which method, the apostles, with great justness and propriety made use of.

We are here considering the word of knowledge, as a gift, which was bestowed upon the apostles. And they seem plainly to have had it, all of them; and in the highest degree. But that it was not peculiar to the apostles, will be shewn, when we come to speak of the spiritual gifts conferred upon the other disciples.

III. The apostles had the gift of discerning spirits.

Under this general head, may be comprehended three remarkable and distinct branches of divine illumination.

(1.) "A being able to discern, or distinguish, by what spirit any man spake, who pretended to prophesying: that is, whether he spake only of himself, from an evil spirit, or by an impulse of the spirit of God." This seems to have been the thing intended, in the new testament, by the phrases; proving, trying, or discerning, of spirits. — In order to understand the nature of this gift, it ought to

1 Rom. xvi. 25, 26.
The Apostolic gifts.

to be considered, that other christians had revelations, as well as the APOSTLES; and sometimes particular revelations, which were not communicated to the APOSTLES, by the spirit. Now, it was of great service, to be able, in such cases, to distinguish, whether such a person spoke, onely from his own private suggestion, from an evil spirit, or from the spirit of GOD.

Some of the inferior christians had this gift; by which they could try doctrines, and judge whether they were divine revelations, or agreeable to divine revelations. But, though the APOSTLES (who had the word of wisdom) had no need, in many cases, to make any such use of this gift, because they had the whole scheme of christianity always, in their minds, as a standard, by which to try, and judge of, all doctrines;—yet, where there was a prediction of some future event, or a particular revelation, which had not been discovered to them before: In such cases, the APOSTLES might, with advantage, make use of this extraordinary gift. For, many false apostles, and false prophets, did, (even in that first age of the church) go out into the world: and acted so subtilely; that (if possible) they would have deceived the very elect. But, christians, having an unction from the holy one, knew all things. And, therefore, they were, with great propriety, advised not to believe every spirit; but to try the spirits, whether they were of GOD. For, though they were not to despise prophesyings; yet they were to prove all things, before they held fast that which was good.

(2.) Under this head of discerning spirits, there seemeth to have been included “an ability of knowing the secret intentions of some of the christians; as well as of some, who disbelieved, or were ignorant of, the christian religion.”

By this mean, St. PETER detected the fraudulent designs of Ananias and Sapphira; and laid open their most secret contrivances. [Acts v. 1, &c.] ST. PAUL, also, detected the wickedness of Barjesus, the magician, who secretly endeavored to turn away Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul, in the island Cyprus, from embracing the christian faith: [Acts xiii. 6, &c.] And perceived that the lame man, at Lystra, had faith to be healed. [Acts xiv. 9.]

This gift was granted unto some of the old testament prophets: For instance, to Abijab¹, to Elisha ², and to Daniel ³.

(3.) Under this head of discerning spirits, may most properly be comprehended, “The knowing the temper and future behavior of some

¹ Acts xi. 28. and xiii. 1, 2, and xxii. 10, 11. ⁲ 1 Kings xiv. 5, 6. ³ 2 Kings vi. 8—12. ¹ Kings iv. 5, 6. ⁴ Dan. ii. 28—35.
The Apostolic gifts.

An. Christi

some of the christians; and, consequently, their fitness for such
and such particular offices, and stations, in the christian church.

Tiber. 19.

We have several instances, in the new testament, of prophets having
this gift; such prophets, I mean, as were not apostles, but of an
inferior order. For instance: The holy spirit, by the mouth of the
prophets, at Antioch, in Syria, said, “Separate me Barnabas and
Saul, for the work, unto which I have called them.” [Acts xiii. 2.]
And Timothy, who entered very young upon the work of an evangelist, was pointed out, to St. Paul, by prophecy. [1 Tim. iv. 14.]
And, [Acts xx. 28.] it is said, that the holy spirit had made the elders
of the church, at Ephesus, bishops: that is, such of them as then
met St. Paul, at Miletus. In like manner, Clemens Romanus informeth us, that “the apostles appointed the first-fruits of their con-
versions to be bishops, and deacons;—having first tried [or proved]
them by the spirit.”

Ignatius [proem. ep. ad philadelph.] speaketh of the bishops, pres-
byters, and deacons, at Philadelphia, as appointed, by the counsel of
Jesus Christ; and confirmed by his holy spirit. [See, also, § 1.
& ep. ad Ephes. § 1; 3; 6.] And Clemens Alexandrinus intimateth
“that St. John (after his return, from the island Patmos, to Eph-
esus,) went about, among the churches, in the neighboring prov-
ces; and (among other things) chose such men, into the number
of the clergy, as were pointed out, to him, by the spirit.”

I have said, that the apostles were acquainted with the temper
and future behavior of some of the christians. But they appear to
have been unacquainted with the amazing hypocrisy and wicked-
ness of others;—even of some, who were placed in offices of trust
and dignity, in the church.

Our Lord himself (though he knew what was in man) chose
Judas, for an apostle; notwithstanding he forewarned that he would
prove a traitor. And, for the discovery of hypocrites, and the trial
and confirmation of the sincere, he might conceal, from the apo-
stles, the malignity of mind, or future behavior, of some, whom

* Ep. ad Cor. §. 42. Δοκιμάζοντι τον πνεύματι answering to γίνη
ς δοκιμαζότες, 1 Thess. v. 21. and δοκιμάζοντι τον πνεύματι, 1 John iv. 1. So that, though the new testament
has not used this phrase, in this sense; yet one of the apostolic fathers has directed us
to place this, of trying men, or proving them, who were to be intrusted with public
offices in the church, under this head of trying, or discerning, spirits. And certainly,
Clemens Romanus knew the language of that age, and even of the apostles them-


υδετά τού πνεύματος συμπαθής.
they constituted officers in the christian church. If Nicolas the deacon, An. Christi [Acts vi. 5.] was the head of the wicked sect of the Nicolaitans, Tiber. 19. [mentioned Rev. ii. 6.] as he is commonly thought to have been; he was a notorious instance of the case in hand. But, whether he was, or was not, the apostles had evidently a limited knowledge of the secret intentions, or future actions, of other men; — whether christians, or unbelievers.

iv. In consequence of the forementioned gifts, or in close connection with them, the apostles had the power of binding and loosing.

Our lord promised to St. Peter, [Matth. xvi. 19.] "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Our lord, also, promised to all the apostles jointly, thus, [Matth. xviii. 18.] "Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." Binding and loosing, in both these places, are generally restrained, by christian interpreters, to matters of discipline and authority. But it is plain, from numberless passages in the Misna, as well as from the later Rabbins, when they are treating of ritual subjects, that binding signified, and was commonly understood by the jews, at that time, to be "a declaration that any thing was unlawful to be done." And loosing signified, on the contrary, "a declaration that any thing might be lawfully done." — The words, [bind and loose,] are, in both the places quoted from St. Matthew, used in a declaratory sense, of things, not of persons. It is ἀνάλημα, in both places, in the neuter gender. whatsoever thing, or things, ye shall bind, or loose. Consequentially, the same commission, which was given, at first, to St. Peter alone, was, afterwards, enlarged to all the apostles. St. Peter had, first, confessed "that Jesus was the son of God, or the promised Messiah." To him, therefore, were first given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. God made choice of him, first, to open the door of faith, to the jews; and, afterwards, to the gentiles. And what St. Peter declared, as necessary to be believed and practised, by the disciples, here, (that is, what he loosed,) was ratified above. And what he declared unlawful to be believed, and practised, (that is, what he bound,) was actually forbidden of God himself. And this was true, also, of all

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all the other apostles. The people, consequently, were obliged to believe the doctrines, which the apostles taught; and to obey the rules, which they prescribed. This is exactly agreeable to what Maimonides relates, concerning the Jews ordaining a person to teach the people, when they said unto him, *Take thou power to bind and loose, &c.*

In this sense of the phrase, the apostles had the power of binding and loosing, after they had received the gift of the spirit; that is, they could declare, with certainty, what laws were obligatory upon christians. For instance; that all christians were to cultivate faith and love, piety, virtue, and universal righteousness. That such, as had formerly been jews, and still lived in juda, continued under obligations to observe the moral, and political, parts of the Jewish law, even after their embracing christianity; but that they, and all other christians, were to trust solely to the gospel-method of justification, and acceptance with GOD. That the Jewish christians, out of juda, were bound to obey the laws of the countries, where they lived, as far as they could, with a good conscience; or patiently to suffer, when they were persecuted and oppressed. Though christianity was never designed to abridge men of any privileges, to which they, as men, or subjects, had a right before; nor to support governors, in a lawless and unlimited authority and tyranny.

The apostles, (and particularly St. Paul) declared that the Jewish christians were freed from their former obligation to the ceremonial law;—provided they could get over their scruples, and be convinced of their being free from that obligation.

They declared that the christians, who had been devout gentiles, or proselytes of the gate, were obliged to observe only such parts of the law of Moses, as had been formerly obligatory upon them. And, notwithstanding some bigoted Jewish christians would have imposed the rest of the Jewish law upon them) they declared them free from any farther obligation to that law. They declared that the idolatrous gentiles were obliged to forswear their idolatry; and to believe in the true GOD, and in his son, JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD. But they let them know, that they were free from all obligations to the law of

1 My only remaining difficulty, with respect to this interpretation of binding and loosing, is, that *Nou, to bind,* seems to signify, *to oblige,* Rom. vii. 2. 1 Cor. vii. 27; 29. And * looping, to loose,* seems to signify, *to break a law, or dissolve the obligation of it,* Matth. v. 19. John v. 18. and vii. 23. and x. 35. 1 Cor. vii. 27. Eph. ii. 14. with which compare 1 John iii. 8.
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of Moses. And the gospel was, to them, upon that account, the per-
fect law of liberty.

(2.) There is, also, in scripture, another sense of binding and loo-
ing; that is, a binding men over to punishment, or loosing them
from the obligations to punishment. And thus the words binding
and loosing are used, Luke xiii. 12; 16. And this, I think, is the
sense, in which we ought to understand the other phrases; of retain-
ing, or remitting, the sins of men.

By remitting of the sins of men, I understand the freeing them from
punishments, or rather, the declaring them free from punishments;
and, by the retaining of sins, the inflicting punishments upon them;
or, rather, the declaring them liable to be punished.

But, perhaps, this extraordinary power, a great part of which
was peculiar to the apostles, will be better understood, if we fur-
ther consider it, according to the blessings, or punishments, which fol-
lowed, upon their remitting, or retaining, of the sins of any persons.
And, in this sense, again, the gift was two-fold; that is, as it re-
lated, either to things temporal, or eternal.

(1.) The apostles remitted, or retained, the sins of men, as
they bound them over to, or freed them from, temporal punishments.
For instance: they struck bold, daring, and incorrigible offenders,
with some bodily distempers, and sometimes with death itself. Or,
in other words, they retained their sins, so as to denounce divine
judgments against them, which were immediately (bound, or) in-
flicted upon them. But, when the persons became penitent, upon
whom god had, according to their predictions, inflicted diseases;
they miraculously cured them. And so, likewise, they cured other
persons, who had formerly labored under great disorders; by which,
they (according to our savior's frequent sense of the phrase) re-
mitted their sins, and cancelled the obligations to further punish-
ments.

This power, as it regarded the retaining of the sins of men, may
be called the having the apostolic rod. For of this power, I think,
St. Paul was speaking, [1 Cor. iv. 21.] when he faith, to the dis-
orderly christians, at Corinth, “Which do you desire? Shall I come
unto you with a rod? Or in love, and in the spirit of meek-
neffe?”

He might, possibly, call it a rod, in allusion to the rods and axes
of the civil magistrates. But, I rather think, he alluded to the fa-

See Matth. ix. 2; 5, 6. Mark ii. 5; 9, &c. Luke v. 20; 23, 24, 25. John
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An. Christi mous rod of Moses; by which God gave him power to call up plagues, upon hardened Pharaoh, and idolatrous Egypt.

This power is referred to, by St. Paul, again, [2 Cor. x. 6.]

Book I. For he declareth, “He was fully able to revenge all disobedience; Sect. IV. after as many of the Corinthians, as would take the warning, were reduced to obedience.” And that he had such a power, is evident to me, from 2 Cor. xiii. 2, &c. For he, there, assures them, “that, if he came again, and found any of them intractable, he would not spare them; but would give them such remarkable proofs of his having a supernatural, and extraordinary, power, to punish the obstinate offenders;— that they should have reason to repent their having questioned it so long; and that they had, till then, been so audacious and incorrigible.”

The power of Moses did, in many things, bear a resemblance to that of the apostles; though the apostolic power and illumination, were much superior. [2 Cor. iii. 3, &c.] As, therefore, Korah, and his accomplices, were struck with sudden death, for their great wickedness, upon the denunciation of Moses, the Jewish law-giver, when he was erecting God’s temporal kingdom, over Israel: [Numb. xvi. 28,—35.] So it is most reasonable to refer, to this head, the remarkable death of Ananias and Sapphira; which was inflicted immediately from heaven, upon St. Peter’s reprimanding them; and as the divine seal and attestation to his apostolic mission and doctrine: [Acts v. i,—11.] and inflicted, when the apostles were setting up the spiritual kingdom of God among men.

We do not, indeed, find that this power was carried, any more, to so great a length, as in the instance already mentioned. Nor could it, at any time, be more proper to use extraordinary severity, than in the beginning of this new dispensation. For one, or two, such early examples might prevent the like daring wickedness, in multitudes. And, besides; their fault was, then, greatly aggravated, when there were so many bright and shining evidences of his being the spirit of truth, and power. In such circumstances, it was highly requisite, to convince the world, by some remarkable instances of terror, that the apostles made no pretensions to the spirit, which the spirit would not enable them to support. And that (though their miracles were generally of the beneficent kind; yet) the Being, who sent them, had power to punish the disobedient; though He law fit, in the planting and establishing so merciful and benevolent a religion, rarely to make use of that destructive power.
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But, though Ananias and Sapphira were alone struck dead, and An. Christi the power was no more carried to so great a height; yet Bar- Jesus, Tiber. 19. the magian, was struck blind, immediately, upon St. Paul’s pro- phetic denunciation of that sudden and divine judgment. [Acts xiii. Book I. 10, 11.] Which is the onely case, recorded, in the new testament, Sect. IV. where this power was exercised upon any, who were not professed christians. Nay; St. Paul, treating of the case of the incestuous Corinthian, speaks onely of judging such as were within the church; and of leaving such as were without, to the righteous judgment of God: [1 Cor. vi. 12, 13.] though that text may, possibly, relate to a church-censure, which sometimes accompanied the exercise of the apostolic rod.

This power, of miraculously punishing offenders, was very sparingly exercised, even upon professed christians; though it was a most signal attestation to the apostolate. But, when professed christians became notoriously scandalous; and were so obstinate, as to be incorrigible, by milder methods; then it was exerted; though not, even in that case, “for destruction, but for edification.” [2 Cor. x. 8. and xiii. 10.] that is, to strike an awe and terror upon the whole church; and upon as many others, as heard of it: To teach them not to offend, in a like, or equal, manner. [Acts xi. 11; 13.] And, when a disease was inflicted, it was not onely as a warning to others; but, (if possible,) by such a temporal chastisement, to reduce the offender himself to repentance, in order to prevent his everlasting destruction. Or, (in the apostle’s language,) it was done “for the destruction (or mortification) of the flesh; that the spirit might be saved, in “the day of the Lord.” [1 Cor. v. 5.]

In some instances, the expression varies. And the criminal is said to have been delivered over to Satan, to chastise him, for the purposes already mentioned. [1 Cor. v. 4, 5. 1 Tim. i. 20.]

Dr. Lightfoot, [vol. 2. of his works, p. 622, 623.] takes notice, that delivering a person to Satan, was a phrase, well-known to the antient jews; by which they meant more than excommunication;—even delivering men over, by miracle, to diseases, or death.

But, as it is said, [1 Cor. v. 4, 5.] to have been done, by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ; it deserveth to be inquired, Whether it meaneth any more, than “that such a particular distemper was to “be inflicted, as the jews used, more especially, to ascribe to the “power and malice of evil spirits?”

1 See on 2 Thess. iii. 15. 1 Tim. i. 20. and the dissertation on 1 John v. 16, 17.
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It doeth not, indeed, appear, that the Corinthians, who were punished, with some temporal judgments, for their unbecoming behavior, at the Lord's table, [1 Cor. xi. 30.] were so punished, upon any apostle's denouncing such judgments upon them: — or the persons spoken of, James v. 14, 15. or those, about whom St. John writeth, John v. 16, 17. But, very probably, the persons, referred to, in all those places, had been guilty of things, so very unbecoming their Christian character, as to draw down, upon themselves, remarkable, divine, judgments; some greater, and others less, according to the aggravations of their crimes. For, the prayer of faith, or the inspired prayer, of such as were indued with a power of working miracles, was to heal some of them. — But others, having sinned a sin unto death, or such a sin as had drawn down, upon them, a sickness, which was to end in death; — he, who had the gift of healing, or the power of working miracles, was, in that case, not to pray for them, or to attempt to heal them: because God would not hear his prayer, nor enable him to work such a miracle. And, by such fruitless attempts, Christianity would have suffered.

It appeareth, that other Christians, besides the Apostles, had, in some cases, this power of miraculously curing the diseased. Though others, again, pretended to use it, who had it not at all; or could not exert it, at that time. For none of them could succeed; but when the Spirit, by an impulse, directed them to make use of that miraculous power.

It is remarkable, that we never find any of the Apostles exerting, or making use of, this power, of punishing bold and incorrigible offenders; — except St. Peter, as the chief Apostle of the circumcision; and St. Paul, as the chief Apostle of the uncircumcision. It is dubious, therefore, whether or no the rest of the Apostles had such a power. Though, it must be confessed, they might have it, and yet no instance be left upon record, of their exercising it.

However; I think it is very evident, that none of the Christians, except the Apostles, could inflict such diseases. And, most probably, the Apostles had the power of miraculously releasing the penitent, from such judgments, either more frequently, or in some superior manner and degree. Nor can we suppose, that they would ever attempt to exert such a power, but when, and in what cases, the Spirit directed them; though some of the inferior Christians seem to have been so rash and presumptuous.

I should
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I should, indeed, have placed this, among the miraculous powers, if it had not appeared to me, to have been included, under the head of remitting and retaining the sins of men.

(2) As some of the blessings, and punishments, which followed, upon the apostle’s remitting, or retaining, the sins of men, were temporal, so others were eternal; that is, “They published the gospel-terms of justification; and declared, also, in what cases, and upon what accounts, persons would fall under condemnation.” The substance of which, was, “That whoever believed in the one true god; and in his son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; repenting of, and for sakeing, his sins; and living, for the remaining part of his life, in piety and holinefe, love and charity, temperance and righteousness; — he should, certainly, have his sins remitted, and inherit eternal life. But, then, he was to obey the laws of the country, where he lived; and to make conscience of all social, relative, and domestic, duties.

“Whoever would lead a life contrary to these rules, his sins should certainly be retained; and he would be liable to fall under the righteous judgment of God.”

This declaring the terms of acceptance, or in what circumstances men would be rejected of God, — doeth, indeed, most properly, belong to the word of wisdom; — though, as men were bound, thereby, to stand to the consequence of their behavior, it cannot be improper to mention it, under this head, also.

But farther; besides this power, which the apostles had, of remitting, or retaining, the sins of mankind, in general; they had, also, (as hath been already hinted) the gift of discerning the spirits, or secret thoughts, of some particular persons. And, as they thoroughly understood the gospel-terms of acceptance, they could declare unto such, whether their sins would be remitted, or retained; — provided they persisted, in the same temper of mind, and course of life.

I would add, that I take this apostolic power, in all the branches of it, to have been merely declarative; that is, they were illuminated, or directed, by the spirit of God, what rules to bind, or injoin, upon men; and from what former obligations to free them.

When they miraculously punished, or healed, any person, all, that they had, was onely an impulse of the spirit; whereby they foretold what would befall such a person. The miraculous power was really our Lord Jesus Christ’s; and would never follow, upon their declaration; but when, and where, the spirit had directed them to make
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An. Christi make use of it. So that all, which they did, was the foretelling, what the Lord Jesus Christ was about to do, according to the directions, which they had received from the spirit. — So, likewise, when they published the gospel-terms of acceptance with God, they only declared, that such, as came up to them, would be saved; but that others, for want of complying with them, should perish. And these general terms they, sometimes, by the gift of discerning spirits, might, perhaps, apply to the cases of particular persons.

Though I do not remember any instance of their so doing. Nor did they ever pretend to such a ridiculous thing, as an authority to bind and loose, and to oblige God to stand to their determination; whether they did, or did not, teach, what Christ had commanded them; — and whether they did, or did not, follow, the direction and illumination, which they had received from the spirit. — In one word; they pretended to no authority, but this; namely, that, when they spoke by divine inspiration, God would stand to his own word; and manifest himself to be a God of truth, as well as goodness, justice, and power. And, in such a case, indeed, “They, that despised the apostles, despised him who sent them.” And, if this was all, that they, who had the apostolic illumination, and miraculous powers, ever pretended to; — I will not say, how ridiculous their claims are, who, without inspiration, and miraculous powers, pretend, authoritatively, to bind and loose, retain or remit, the sins of men; and assert, that God is obliged to stand to their determination; even supposing they should mistake; and absolve the impenitent, or retain the sins of the sincerely virtuous and penitent.

But enough of this. We, therefore, proceed,

v. The apostles had the gift of prophecy.

But, as this was common to them with many of the inferior prophets, we will defer the inlarging upon it, till we come to consider the gifts, which were bestowed, upon other christians, besides apostles. Where we shall shew, that it included, not only “the foretelling future events, but also an ability to carry on the several parts of religious worship.”

vi. Another gift of the spirit, which was conferred upon the apostles, and of which St. Luke hath often taken a particular notice was the gift of tongues; that is, “an ability to understand; and readily, and, in an intelligible manner, to speak; a great variety of languages.

We do not find that any of the old-testament prophets ever had this gift. And, though other christians, besides the apostles, had this
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this gift, in some degree; yet the apostles appear to have had it, in a superior manner; and to have been able to speak more languages than the inferior christians. [1 Cor. xiv. 18.] This gift was given them, that they might preach the gospel, to men of different nations, without an interpreter; or, in the apostle's language, to be a sign to (that is, to convince) unbelievers.

For, had the apostles been obliged to learn the language of every nation, before they had planted christiandty among them, their lives would have been too short for the great undertaking; and they could not have made half so swift a progress, nor succeeded so well, as they did. They are said to have spoken fourteen, or fifteen, different languages, that very day, in which the holy spirit was poured down, upon them. — More languages than men can attain to speak, who spend a great part of their lives, in the acquireing of languages!

This amazed the great concourse of people, then at Jerusalem;—to hear illiterate fishermen of Galilee speaking, unto every one of them, in their own language, the wonderful works of god.

By the word of wisdom, and the word of knowledge, they were masters of their subject; and, by the extraordinary fortitude, with which they were indued, (of which I shall treat more largely hereafter) and by this gift of tongues, they could readily express what they so perfectly understood; and preach christiandty, to persons of different nations, and different languages. Whereas; without this last gift, their inward illumination would have been very much like a talent hid in a napkin.

By the confusion of tongues, at Babel, mankind had been separated, and divided into different kingdoms and nations: But now, that curse, which god had formerly sent upon the nations, was turned into a blessing. For the multiplicity of tongues, bestowed upon the apostles and primitive christians, was designed, not only to be a strong evidence of the truth of christiandy; but also to unite mankind again, into one holy, spiritual, kingdom; and to gather together the virtuous people, who were dispersed among the nations, into one compact body, one elect nation, one holy church, and people, of god.

At Babel, god had confounded the languages, and made the different dispersions unintelligible to one another; that they might, in several colonies, people the earth. But, now, the apostles, and some of the christians, understood, and spoke, the several languages of the world, with as much ease, as the antediluvians could undergo.
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An. Christi stand, or speak to, one another; when the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And, thus, the dismal part of the curse, was, at a remarkable time, and upon a glorious occasion, removed.

For, by this mean, the Jews, in gentile countries, had the gospel preached among them: and, afterwards, the gentiles, also, who had been aliens from the church and people of God; and, for many ages, cut off, in a great measure, from that spiritual knowledge, which was contained in the scriptures of the old testament, were easily addressed to, and converted; when (in the fulness of time) God was gathering into one, again, all nations of men, who dwell upon the face of the earth; and uniting them all into one church and body, under Jesus Christ, his only Son, who is justly, and emphatically styled, the prince of peace.

This gift of tongues is taken more notice of, in the new testament, than any other spiritual gift whatever. Not that it was in itself equal to the word of wisdom, or to the word of knowledge; or to many other spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers. On the contrary; when St. Paul is reckoning up the spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, according to their order and dignity, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10; 28, 29, 30. he placeth the gift of tongues the last but one; and prefers to all the other gifts and powers, except only the interpretation of tongues.

The reason, therefore, why it was so much taken notice of, seems to have been, because it was a showy gift; a gift, which engaged men's attention, and struck them with great surprize and admiration. And what affected the world so much, and commanded men's attention, was, with great judgment, the most frequently taken notice of, and mentioned, with a mark of distinction, in an history, which was designed to represent things, in a popular style and manner.

vi. By the effusion of the spirit, the apostles were indued with the gift of the interpretation of tongues; that is, "a power of understanding, and of readily and intelligibly turning, into the "vulgar tongue, what another had spoken, in a dead, or foreign, lan-

guage." For instance: Several of the christians had the gift of but one or two languages; and some of them could speak only his own native language; though they had some other spiritual gift, or mir-

raculous power. — Suppose, therefore, one of them to have spoken hebrew, in a church, where the body of the christians understood only greek; and that the person, who spoke in that unknown tongue, was unacquainted with the greek language; or (at least) that he
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he could not speak it, readily and intelligibly, (which, perhaps, was An. Christi the cafe of the false apostle, in the church of Corinth) then there was a necessity, for some, who understood both the languages, to interpret, in Greek, what he had spoken in Hebrew. And so, at any time, when the auditory consisted of persons of different nations, it was highly proper that some should interpret what any of the persons, then present, did not understand; that all might learn, and all might be edified.

We know, very well, that a man may hear, and understand, an oration, delivered in Latin; and yet not be able to stand up, and repeat it, directly, in English. Nay; many a man, that has made, and publicly read, a Latin oration, himself, could not, with any tolerable propriety and fluency, repeat it all, in English, directly, to the same audience. And, if such things may happen, now-a-days, when learning is so common; we need not wonder, that, in the apostolic age, the gift of the interpretation of tongues was a distinct thing from the gift of tongues.

These were all, or, at least, the principal, of the spiritual gifts, which were bestowed, upon the Apostles, by the effusion of the Holy Spirit.

The miraculous powers, conferred upon the Apostles.

Besides the spiritual gifts, the Apostles had also, miraculous powers; and those, either of a more excellent kind, or in a degree superior to that of the other Christians.

I have intimated, above, that all, which the Apostles, or any other Christians, had communicated unto them, in the working of a miracle, was only an impulse, upon their minds, that, upon their speaking, or acting, so or so, a miracle would be worked; and that the miraculous power did not reside within them, like the spiritual gifts: but proceeded from our Lord Jesus Christ, upon their invoking him, or pronouncing the person healed, in his name:

And, that such an impulse of the Spirit, upon their minds, might be very

* See F. Simon's Critical History of the New Testament, Part III. p. 10. And Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. on 1 Cor. xiv. vol. 2. of his works, p. 783, &c.
The miraculous powers,

An. Chrifti very properly reckoned among the gifts of the Spirit. — But, as miracles onely prepared men for a careful and due attention, and conveyed no knowledge; as they disposed men to think, that they, who were possessed of extraordinary powers, might, very probably, have extraordinary illumination; as they were mere acts of power, I say, which onely made way for a more successful use of the spiritual gifts, there is a sufficient foundation for treating of the spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers, separally, and under distinct heads. And, as we have already considered the former, we now procede to treat of the latter.

I. "The apostles had a power of striking bold and daring offenders, with some temporal punishments, and even sometimes with death itself." But, of this, we have already treated at large. And, therefore, shall not here repete what hath been said.

II. "Upon the effusion of the Spirit, the apostles were indued with a greater degree of fortitude, than any other of the christians had; or than they themselves had before." Hereby, they had a door of utterance, or a proper resolution to speak freely; and to deliver even harsh and ungrateful truths; before the greatest personages, or most august assemblies.

Our Savior had ordered the twelve, when they should be brought before kings and rulers, not to be anxious what they should say, because the Spirit should teach them, at that very time, what to say. And that this power was now given them, appeared planely, by the effects of it. For, though a maid-servant had terrified St. Peter, and made him meanly deny His Lord; and all the apostles had, before this, kept close, in their upper room, with the doors bolted, for fear of the Jesus; yet now they were no longer afraid; but opened the doors, and appeared publicly, and preached christianity, to a vast concourse of Jews, who came together, upon the report of what had happened. For it was, at the time of a very high, and solemn, festival. And there, in the midst of enemies; and (very probably) before some of the persons, who had procured the crucifixion of Jesus, they declared him to be the Messiah, with the greatest openness, and most undaunted fortitude. Nay; and even charged the Jews with murdering so great a person. The composure and fortitude of the two apostles, Peter and John, surprized the Jewish sanhedrim; and they could not account for it, till they had recollected that they had seen them in company with Jesus.

conferred upon APOSTLES.

[Acts iv. 8, &c.] And, though some of the company seem to have been a little daunted, upon the first attack of persecution; that is, when the Sanhedrim had apprehended, and threatened, the two leading APOSTLES; yet we find, that, upon their return to their own company, and praying, the upper room, the usual place of their assembling, was again shaken; and they were favored with a second effusion of the Spirit. And, then, they again spoke the word, or preached the Christian doctrine, with boldness. [Acts iv. 31.]

When all the APOSTLES were afterwards apprehended, and treated more roughly, by the Jewish Sanhedrim, PETER, with great reason and bravery, said: “We appeal to you, whether it can be right, in the sight of God, to regard you, more than God! For, God hath bid us preach Christianity; and you, who are only men, have forbid us. We, therefore, are resolved still to proceed.” And, when they had scourged them, and farther threatened them, they dismissed them. Upon which, it is said, they departed from the Sanhedrim; not dejected, but even rejoicing, that they were accounted worthy to suffer such indignity, for the sake of Christ, or upon the account of propagating the Christian religion.

When the persecution raged against the Christians, about the time of St. Stephen’s martyrdom, the twelve APOSTLES, with great resolution, continued at Jerusalem, to support the distressed cause of Christianity; and to consult how their affairs might be managed, to the best advantage, in such dangerous and discouraging circumstances.

When PAUL and BARNABAS began to preach to the idolatrous gentiles, it is observed that they waxed bold; and of St. Paul, that he preached, in his own hired house, at Rome, with all boldness. And he took notice of it himself, that this fortitude proceeded from an extraordinary assistance. [1 Thess. ii. 2.] The different conduct of Paul, while he was only a Christian prophet, and after he became an APOSTLE, was very remarkable. That great APOSTLE of the gentiles would go, from a place, where he had been imprisoned, and scourged in a most severe and ignominious manner; and yet would begin to preach, in the next place that he came to, with as much resolution and cheerfulness; as if he had, every where, met...
The miraculous powers,

An. Christi met with the greatest incouragement, and kindest treatment imaginable.

Tiber. 19.

Every observing person knoweth, very well, how poverty depresseth men's spirits, and how abject it commonly rendereth them. With what hesitation and diffidence doeth the poor, friendlesse, man speak and act? And with what contempt and prejudice is he heard; especially when accused, and in the midst of enemies? But such calmness and resolution of mind appeared, in the words and actions of the poor, friendlesse, apostles; even before the greatest personages, and most august assemblies; that it took away the contempt, and baffled their judges. Nay; they made even governors, and great men, to tremble, at their discourses.

The apostles did, indeed, stand the most exposed to difficulties and dangers. And, therefore, with very great propriety, God indued them with superior fortitude.

Whether this their superior resolution and firmness of mind proceeded from their clear knowledge of the whole scheme of the gospel, their perfectly comprehending the scope and design of the law and the prophets, and their full assurance of the success and duration of Christianity, notwithstanding all difficulties and obstructions; together with the miracles, which God enabled them to work, in testimony of their mission and doctrine;— whether their fortitude, I say, proceeded from their superior spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers, or was itself a distinct miraculous power, is not very material. Though I am apt to suspect that it was partly both. However; it is evident, that none of the christians had it, in a degree equal to the apostles.

III. Though the healing diseases, and doing other mighty works, miraculously, was common to the apostles, with many other of the christians; yet the apostles had something different, and even superior, in this respect, also: that is, "They had a power, either to do greater miracles, or to do common miracles in some superior manner."

(i.) The apostles had an ability to do greater miracles. And, particularly, the raising persons from the dead, seemeth to have been peculiar to them. St. Peter and St. John cured a man, who was forty years old, and had been lame from his birth. St. Peter raised Dorcas from the dead. And St. Paul raised Eutychus. But we find no instance, in the new testament, of any of the inferior christians doing so.

(ii.) The
conferred upon Apostles.

(2.) The Apostles could do common miracles in some superior manner. The very shadow of St. Peter, as he passed along the streets, cured many. And, when handkerchiefs and aprons, which had touched St. Paul's body, were carried to sick persons, at a distance, they were immediately freed from their diseases.

These were the special miracles, which God worked, by the hands of the Apostles only. Nay; we find no instances of any of the Apostles doing such extraordinary miracles, except St. Peter and St. Paul.

iv. One of the most distinguishing miraculous powers, which was communicated unto the Apostles, was, "their ability to confer, "upon others, either some spiritual gift, or miraculous power, by "the laying on of their hands." And they seem to me to have done this, to all the adult christians, wherever they came. Though what particular gifts, or powers, they should impart, to any person, was not at their choice; but entirely according to the will and direction of the spirit; who knew best what was proper, both for particular persons, and for the common interest of christianity.

This power, of conferring the holy spirit, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, was, probably, what our Lord referred to, [John xiv. 12.] when he promised them, that they should not only do such miraculous works, as he had then done; "but greater "works than these shall ye do (saith he) because I go to my father."

In confirmation of which, it may be observed, that he had not then poured out this plenteous effusion of his spirit. In extraordinary cases, and where the choicest and the greatest plenty of gifts and powers were given, the holy spirit fell down, from heaven, immediately, and without the laying on of the hands of any man. And, perhaps, such an effusion was always accompanied with the appearance of a glory, like a flame of fire.

The spirit appeareth to me to have been poured out, seven times, in this manner. (1.) Upon our Lord, after his baptism; when he came up, from the river Jordan, and the voice from heaven proclaimed him the well-beloved son of God. (2.) Upon the hundred and twenty, on this memorable day of pentecost. (3.) Upon the hundred and twenty again, when they prayed for fresh assistance, and the house was shaken. And they are said to have been all filled with the holy spirit. [Acts iv. 31.] (4.) Upon the eunuch, whom Philip converted. [Acts viii. 39.] But, as that depended upon a different reading, we will defer laying any more about it, till we come to consider the history of his conversion. (5.) Upon Saul, immediately.
The miraculous powers,

An.Christ immediately after his baptism. (6.) Upon the first-fruits of the devout gentiles, to prepare the way for their being baptized with water, and received into the christian church. [Acts x. 44.] (7.) The first-fruits of the idolatrous gentiles, at Antioch, are said to have been filled with the holy spirit. Which is the phrase made use of, when the spirit was poured out. And there seemeth to have been as much reason, for an effusion upon them, as upon the first-fruits of the devout gentiles. I, therefore, suppose that St. Luke designed to intimate the manner, in which that divine gift was given, to those first-fruits of the idolatrous gentiles, by saying, that they were filled with the holy spirit.

But, in most cases, the spiritual gifts and miraculous powers were conferred, by the laying on of the hands of the apostles, and of them alone. Thus, when Philip, who was only an evangelist, had converted the samaritans, by preaching and working miracles; Peter and John, two of the apostles, went to them, as a thing of course, to confer upon them the holy spirit, by the laying on of their hands. And all the churches, where any of the apostles had been, were blessed with that amazing gift. Nay; St. Paul longed to go to the churches, where no apostle had been, that he might impart unto them some spiritual gift.

Chrysostom, speaking of the apostolic age, saith, "Miracles were then very common, and gifts of the spirit were bestowed upon all believers in general." [See Dr. Lardner’s credibility, &c. part 2. vol. 10. p. 317; 382, &c.]

From what hath been said, I think it plainly appeareth how well qualified the apostles were, for such an extraordinary undertaking, as that of demolishing the false religions, which had been so long in possession, and planting knowledge and righteousness, instead of idolatry, ignorance, and wickedness. — An undertaking so uncommon, and so arduous, that they would never have engaged in it, or even thought of it, if they had not been so qualified, and ordered to engage in it! For mere men were insufficient, of themselves, to have thought of any such thing, as of themselves, or in their own strength; but their sufficiency was of God; who made

Some may, perhaps, inquire, "Whether the spirit was not poured out, again, upon Saul, when he was made an apostle?" I think not; because he was then taken up into paradise, and the third heavens; and received the word from the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Acts xiii. 52. 2 Acts xvi. 4. and iv. 31. 3 Rom. i. 17, 12.
The persons who assisted the apostles.

Tmable ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: that is, not of the law of Moses, but of the gospel of Christ. [2 Cor. iii. 5, 6.]

Book I.

Chap. I.

CHAP. I. SEC. VI.

The spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, bestowed upon other christians, besides apostles.

In the two preceding sections, it hath been shown, how well qualified the apostles were, for their difficult and useful office. But, if it be considered, how much the world wanted a reformation, how much ignorance and idolatry, superstition and enthusiasm, vice and immorality, prevailed; and that there were only twelve apostles of the circumcision; and (at the most) only two of the gentiles, or uncircumcision; it will be deemed highly reasonable, that they should have several assistants, to bear part of the burden with them; though invested with gifts and powers of an inferior rank, or in an inferior degree.

It may not, therefore, be improper, in this place, to take a brief view of their furniture, also; that we may see that the cause was not unequal to the amazing effect.

We may consider both the persons, and the gifts and powers.

The persons, who assisted the apostles, to plant and water christianity, were either such as had the care of the churches in general, (as the apostles themselves had, in the highest degree,) or such as were fixed in particular churches.

It is true, there were no persons of the last sort, till some churches were planted. But, as the apostles had power to appoint such, and to impart gifts unto them, for that purpose; and, as the considering the gifts and powers together, will better illustrate the subject, by placing them in one view; it cannot be improper to anticipate a little, and treat of them in this place.

1. The extraordinary persons, who assisted the apostles, in the care of the churches, in general, were either,

(1.) The highest order of prophets. Or, (2.) evangelists.

I cannot find that either of these sorts of persons had the word of wisdom. On the contrary; they appear to have learned all, that they knew,
The persons, who assisted the apostles.

An. Christi knew, both of the scheme of Christianity, in general; and of those mysteries, or grand prophecies, which related to the future state of the Christian church, entirely from the apostles.

But, the superior prophets seem to me to have had the word of knowledge, or a comprehensive view of the scope and design of the law and the prophets. For so St. Paul's ranking the gifts of the spirit, and the persons, who had the gifts, leadeth us to suppose. [1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10. compared with verses 28, 29, 30.] And St. Stephen's speech, [Acts vii.] is (I think) a remarkable proof, and instance, to this purpose.

Some, indeed, have ascribed, to the superior prophets, the having the revelation of the grand mysteries, which I have placed under the word of wisdom; and which I take to have been peculiar to apostles. And I must not omit to take notice of Eph. iii. 5. where it is asserted, that "the mystery of Christ, concerning the terms of taking the gentiles into the church, had been hid from former ages; but was now revealed, to Christ's holy apostles and prophets, by the spirit." Here is, I must confess, one instance of a mystery's being said to be revealed to the prophets, whom I take to have been the superior prophets, in the Christian church. But, then, I take this one mystery, in particular, to have been included under the general head of the word of knowledge. For, without understanding the mystery of God's taking in the gentiles, how could they possibly have had "a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the scope and design of the law and the prophets? or a thorough understanding of the confirmation, which the old testament gave to Christianity?"

For, the taking the gentiles into the number of God's people, under the Messiah, was frequently predicted, in the old testament. Nor is this the only instance, where the same spiritual gift may be properly ranked, either under a more general, or more particular, head.

(2.) The evangelists assisted the apostles, in the care of the churches in general. Some of the superior prophets were evidently evangelists; particularly Philip, who was full of the holy spirit, and who did the work of an evangelist, when he planted a Christian church, in Samaria; and preached the gospel, in all the towns, from Azotus to Cæsarea. [Acts viii. 5, &c.] And, accordingly, he is expressly called an evangelist. [Acts xxi. 8.] And a superior prophet was (I think) generally, if not always, an evangelist. This might be one reason, why St. Paul hath not mentioned evangelists, 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. But, as evangelists were not all of the highest order of
The persons, who assisted the apostles. St. Paul hath properly made a distinction between them.

None of the evangelists were apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, but only assistants to the apostles. For they had neither the apostolic illumination, nor the apostolic powers. They, sometimes, went along with the apostles, and assisted them, in planting, or watering, the churches. At other times, the apostles left them behind them, or sent them to churches at a distance; to set in order the things which were irregular, to perfect what was deficient, to carry letters, or messages, and to bring back an account of the state of the churches. And, sometimes, the evangelists themselves planted churches: as appeareth, not only from the case of Philip, which hath been already mentioned; but from the cases of the churches of Antioch in Syria, Rome, Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis, and other churches; which were planted, before any apostle came thither.

II. The persons, who assisted the apostles, in taking the care of a particular church, were the elders, or first-converts; who appear to me to have had the care of particular churches, upon their being first planted: or the bishops and deacons, who were chosen, out of the first-converts, to be the fixed officers of a church.

But, besides the elders, or bishops, and deacons, (who may be looked upon, as the presidents, or leading men, of a church,) all the adult christians, in churches, planted by the apostles, did greatly assist, in propagating Christianity; as they had (in general) some spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers. Among these, were the doctors, or teachers; the persons, also, who could heal diseases, or work other great miracles; helps, governments; such as had the gift of tongues; and others, who had the gift of the interpretation of tongues. But we shall more particularly describe these persons, from their peculiar gifts, or powers.

The spiritual gifts, which were conferred, upon other christians, besides the apostles', were,  

1. The word of knowledge; which we have already defined, and shown to extend to superior prophets, as well as apostles.

II. The

* There were certainly superior, as well as inferior, prophetic gifts. Such, as had the superior gifts, I have all along called superior prophets; and such, as had the inferior gifts, inferior prophets. That there were some prophets greater than others, appears very plainly, from what our Savior said, concerning John the Baptist: [Matt. xi. 11.] namely, "That he was greater than all the former prophets; but inferior to the apostles, and Christian prophets."
The miraculous gifts, bestowed

The discerning of spirits. This, in all the three branches of it, appears to have been granted to inferior christians. (1.) As it signified the trying, by what spirit any man spoke, who pretended to the gift of prophesying; — it is plainly supposed, that even the inferior prophets, among the christians, had it, by the directions, which the apostles gave them, concerning the use of it. (2.) As it signified the discovering the secret thoughts of men’s hearts, St. Paul plainly supposed it to have been common, among the inferior christians. (3) As discerning of spirits signifieth a being able to point out, what persons would be fit for particular offices and stations in the churches, — others had this gift, besides the apostles. For it was, by the mouth of the prophets, at Antioch in Syria, that the holy spirit said, “Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work, unto which I have called them.” And, very probably, Timothy was pointed out, to St. Paul, by some of the christian prophets, as a person proper to be an evangelist. And, I am apt to think, that the holy spirit directed Timothy, which of the elders, at Ephesus, he should ordain to be the bishops of that church.

One of the gifts of the spirit, communicated to other christians, besides apostles, was a steadfast belief, and firm persuasion of performing what they were going about.

But, as the spiritual gift of faith, is, 1 Cor. xii. 9. placed the third in order, and answereth to doctors and teachers, ver. 28, 29. I take it there to signify that satisfactory evidence, and full persuasion, in preaching the christian doctrine, which became doctors, or teachers. Such a steadfast belief, and full assurance, of
of their teaching, agreeably to what they had learned of the apostles, as that they could teach with authority, and without hesitation. That did, very probably, proceed from the spirit’s strengthening their faculties; and, particularly, their memory.

iv. Prophecy, in the inferior degrees of it, was common to other christians, as well as the apostles.

Though the prophets were not favored with immediate revelations, concerning the grand revolutions, which were to happen in the church, and in the world; yet they foretold some lesser events; which do not seem to have been revealed, but by their mouths, even to the apostles themselves. Thus Agabus prophesied of an approaching famine, to the great relief of the christian church; and foretold that St. Paul should be bound, at Jerusalem.

The apostles had, indeed, this spiritual gift of prophecy, in this lower branch of it. But, from what hath been said, it appeareth not to have been peculiar to apostles.

These predictions were not unlike the discoveries, which were made to Deborah; to Eli; to the man of God; to Samuel; to Nathan; and to many other of the inferior old testament prophets.

(2.) As prophecy hath frequently, in scripture, another signification, besides foretelling future contingent events; it is proper to consider it in that view; and to show that other christians had it, as well as the apostles. St. Paul hath defined it to be “a speaking unto men for edification, or exhortation, or comfort,” that is, a speaking, to such purposes, by immediate inspiration. For I have never found prophecy used, either in the old or new testament, for an uninspired person’s explaining the scriptures; and, very rarely, if ever, for teaching without inspiration.

In

1 Cor. xiv. 3.

By prophesying, seems to be meant “singing, or playing upon the harps, and other musical instruments, those psalms, or hymns, which had been composed, by such as were under a prophetic impulse.” For we can hardly suppose, that all the sons of those three principal men, among the Levites, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, were prophets, or constantly inspired, whenever they played upon musical instruments; or sung the praises of God, in the temple-service. But, as the prophets played upon musical instruments, sometimes, when they prophesied, or celebrated the praises of God; [1 Sam. x. 5; 10.] so these uninspired sons of the principal Levites are said to prophesy; especially as they sung prophetic compositions, or divinely inspired hymns. — All words are apt, in process of time, to deviate from their original signification. Thus, Exod. xix. 6. The whole nation of Israel is called a-king.
The miraculous powers, bestowed

In the sense, now given, prophesying sometimes included a variety of particulars under it. For instance,

1. A doctrine; that is, "some particular truth, delivered by immediate inspiration, which related either to faith, or manners; and which was peculiarly suited to the state of a particular church, or to some particular persons there." And perhaps it might be "delivered, also, in some more clear, forcible, and convincing, manner."

2. A psalm, [1 Cor. xiv. 26.] which is called singing in, or by, the spirit, [ver. 15.] By which, we may understand, that they either had both the matter and the manner immediately dictated to them; or sung, what had been composed in private, by prophetic impulse, in such a manner as the spirit then directed.

We have many instances of the former, in the old testament. And, perhaps, 1 Sam. x. 5, &c. may furnish us with an instance of the latter. However; it is evident, that singing the praises of God, was the principal part of what is there called prophesying; though some prophetic discourses and actions seem to have accompanied that singing the divine praises.

By this gift, some proper truths were delivered, in poetical expressions, and in a tunable manner; whereby God was glorified, and the Christians might be edified.

3. Prophesying did sometimes include the praying in, or by, the spirit. Not only the matter of their prayers, but even the order and expressions seem to have been, most commonly, dictated by the spirit.

There were, also, some other particulars, included under this general head of prophesying; such as discerning of spirits, interpretation of tongues, and the like. But, as we have already treated of some of these, under distinct heads, and shall so treat of the rest, we will say

a kingdom of priests; though the bulk of the people neither ruled as kings, nor sacrificed as priests; but were only admitted to great honor and dignity, as a free, and highly-favored, people; and to approach near the sanctuary, or the royal and divine presence, in acts and offices of religious worship.

The sum of the matter, is, prophesying (like other words) might, sometimes, be used, in a quite different sense from its original intention. But St. Paul, in treating of the prophetic gifts, would hardly use it, in any other, than its strict and original significations.

3 Rom. viii. 26, 27. 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Jude, ver. 19, 20.
Upon christians in general.

Say no more of them, in this place; but proceed to show how the persons, who had some of the last-mentioned gifts, and particularly the gift of discerning of spirits, and of prophesying, came to be called [helps and governments,] as the Apostle hath styled them. [1 Cor. xii. 28.]

(1.) It will be plain to any, who will take the pains to compare ver. 10. with ver. 28. that prophesying answereth to helps, according to the order of ranging the gifts, and the persons who had the gifts. And it is as evident, that the persons, who could foretell future events, and deliver discourses, sing psalms, and hymns, and pray, by inspiration, were great helps to the christians; especially in the carrying on of their religious worship. For, in the infancy of the church, the books of the new testament were not written: nor any prayers, psalms, and discourses, suited to the worship of a christian church, drawn up, either for common, or private, use. Without such helps, therefore, in such circumstances, what could the christians have done, in most of the churches, towards the regularly carrying on of their religious worship. [See the dissertation, annexed to 2 Timothy, second edition, p. 616, &c.]

(2.) Governments. — This, by comparing ver. 10, and 28. will easily appear to answer to discerning of spirits. For ἐνεργεῖν doeth, in the literal acceptation, signify the steering of a ship; and, by a beautiful figure, the governing, or directing, in any affair. If, therefore, it be remembered how the discerning of spirits was explained, it will be easy to make these two agree*. For they, who could discern spirits, could inform the churches, whether such, as pretended to prophesie, spoke by inspiration, or no. Whether a stranger came into the christian church, as a spy, out of mere curiosity, or with a desire to be instructed: And who were proper persons, for particular offices, and stations, in the church. And whoever could discern men's hearts, so as to do any, or all, of these three things, were et to sit at the helm, and steer, or direct the church how to behave.

v. Several of the christians, besides the apostles, had the gift of tongues. What that gift was, hath been already explained. And that other christians, besides the apostles, had it, is evident*. But it may not be amiss to observe, that the apostles could speak more languages than the other christians*: And that they, who spoke:

* This is represented, more at large, in the dissertation, annexed to 2 Timothy, p. 612, &c. second edition.
* Acts x. 46. and xix. 6. 1 Cor. xii., xiii., and xiv.
* Acts ii. 6, &c. 1 Cor. xiv. 18.
The miraculous gifts bestowed, &c:

An. Christispoke, in an unknown language, did, commonly, at the same time, prophesy; or deliver, by inspiration, some useful truths, as well as speak in an unknown tongue.

Book I. Chap. I. Sect. VI. Some of the inferior christians had, likewise, the gift of the interpretation of tongues.

But, besides the spiritual gifts, many of the inferior christians had, also, miraculous powers. They had fortitude, to propagate christianity; and to suffer for it, rather than betray it. This fortitude is particularly ascribed to Apollos, who was no apostle; though none of the christians seem to have had it, in a degree equal to that of the apostles. The inferior christians could, also, work some miracles; and, particularly, could heal diseases. But we have no instances, in the new testament, of their curing persons, at a distance; or raising the dead; or conferring the holy spirit, upon any, by the laying on of their hands.

However, by preaching the scheme of christianity, which they had learned of the apostles; by communicating the particular revelations, which were made to them; and by working many miracles, though of an inferior kind; they were greatly helpful to the apostles; especially, as their numbers were so very great, and they were dispersed into so many, and such distant, countries.

When the apostles, and their assistants, were thus supernaturally and divinely qualified: they might, upon much better grounds, promise themselves success, than any politician can, from the wisest and best concerted scheme, that was ever laid.

Having, therefore, taken a summary view of them, in their several ranks and orders; and inquired into their instructions and qualifications;— we now proceed to,
WHEREIN the APOSTLES are considered, as setting about the mighty and glorious undertakeing. Acts ii. 5, — to the end of that chapter.

SECT. I.

The first period of the conversion of the Jews, at Jerusalem. Upon the news of the effusion of the spirit, great multitudes came together. St. Peter answereth their inquiries. Affirteenth Jeusus, who was lately murdered there, to be the Messiah. The APOSTLES worked miracles; converted three thousand, that day; who were baptized; and afterwards received the holy spirit.

WHEN the hundred and twenty found these effects, from that amazeing effusion of the holy spirit; when they found their minds, so suddenly, and so very much, inlarged; and all, at once, filled with knowledge; when the APOSTLES, in particular, found, that, by this sudden illumination, they understood the whole scheme of the christian doctrine, fully and clearly; that they could deliver it, in a variety of languages, readily and intelligibly; that they could support it, by the prophesies of the old testament; that they could work miracles; and communicate spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, unto others, by the laying on of their hands; and that they had such fortitude, as not to fear the face of men: — When they found themselves, all at once, I say, under such an uncommon, and immediate, divine influence, their upper room was shut up no longer; but they throw open the doors, with an undaunted heart. And, being big with the heavenly inspiration, and full of matter, the spirit within them constrained them; their belly was like wine, which hath no vent; but is ready to burst the bottles. They, therefore, sought to speak; that they might be refreshed; and to open their lips, that they might give a vent to the fulnesse of their hearts.

And an happy opportunity they had, for communicating their new light. For the city, Jerusalem, was, at that time, crouded with strangers and foreigners, who were Jews, or professes of righteousness.

Ver. 5. Job xxxii. 18, &c.
The apostles preach on the day of pentecost.

An.Christine, that is, Jews by religion, though not by birth. Those foreigners were come, from many distant countries; some to worship, in the courts of the temple, at that great feast of pentecost, and others, to Book I. fix at Jerusalem; possibly, from an expectation that the messiah would Chap. II. shortly appear.

Seck. I.

Suetonius and Tacitus, two heathen authors, have intimated, that the rumor of a great king's arising out of Judea, about that "time, had spread, far into other countries; and that it had taken "it's rise from the antient books of the priests;" that is, most probably, from the prophecies of the old testament. But the Jews, in a more particular manner, were daily looking when the kingdom of God would appear. And their expectations were so far just. For the time of reckoning, from Daniel's famous prophecy of the seventy weeks, [Dan. ix. 25, &c.] was now quite run out.

At the time of that high festival of pentecost, and upon that signal day of the year, in which the law is thought to have been given, from mount Sinai; — early in the morning, and before the concourse of the people was gathered together, at the temple, — the apostles opened the doors, in order to admit all that would come and hear them. And, to as many as did come, they addressed themselves, in their own languages; declaring the resurrection of Jesus, and that he was the promised, and long-expected, messiah. — Perhaps, the apostles had not, before this, taught any thing, but what they had heard, from the mouth of Jesus. But, now, they spoke, from an inward fund of knowledge, or as the spirit gave them utterance. And it doeth not appear that any, but the twelve, preached to that large audience. For, upon the apostles, Christ had determined to found his church. And the rest of the hundred and twenty had not yet so fully learned the scheme of the christian doctrine, from them, as to be able to teach it clearly, and without hesitation.

By their beginning, in this place, was a most noted prophecy fulfilled; which is twice mentioned in the old testament, and that almost in the same words: "Out of Sion shall go forth the law," "that is, of the messiah's kingdom) and the word of the Lord "from Jerusalem." For, (as hath been already observed) the house,
The multitude hear the apostles, &c.

In which was their upper room, stood upon mount Sion*. "There was the standard of Christ first erected, as an ensign to the nations. And from thence went forth the rod of his strength, by which he ruled, in the midst of his enemies; and, (from that time, or) in that day of his power, the willing nations submitted to him cheerfully; and numerous, like drops of morning dew." Acts ii. 6,

The news of this wonderful effusion of the Spirit soon took air. The crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, in that very city, for his pretending to be the messiah and the rumor of his miracles and resurrection, were yet fresh in the minds, and frequently in the mouths, of every body. And now, that his followers took courage, and so openly and boldly declared him to be risen again, and to be the messiah, — amazed them all; especially, when persons, whom their old acquaintance could testify to have been, most of them, poor and illiterate fishermen of Galilee, spoke, in the audience of the foreigners, their several languages, distinctly and intelligibly, and upon such great and sublime subjects. For, the testimony of their old acquaintance, and of the foreigners, compared together, made the miracle clear and unquestionable. And it caused still greater crowds to flock round them, to see, and hear, and satisfy themselves. Some seemed well-disposed, and honestly confessed the surprize.

"Are not all these men, who speak thus, illiterate Galileans? How comes it to passe, then, that they speak so many languages, so readily and intelligibly? Here are now present, Parthians, Medes; and Persians, of the province of Elymais; natives of Mesopotamia, (or of the country, which lieth between the Tigris and Euphrates;) and of Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, and the provinces of Paphlagonia, &c."

Ver. 6. * See the note on chap. i. 13. Upon mount Moriah the temple stood, and the city of David upon mount Sion. Between these two mountains, there was a deep valley; over which there was built a bridge, for the more easy communication. It is true, these two mountains are, sometimes, both included under the general name of Zion; and the temple is intimated to have been built upon Sion. But, as the apostles are not here said to have gone out to the temple, when they began to preach; as they are expressly said to have done, chap. iii. — as the two mountains were generally distinguished; and the tradition, mentioned by Epiphanius, is not improbable; — I choose rather to consider them as here distinguished; namely, that mount Sion, strictly speaking, is here to be understood; and not, as in it's more general and lax signification, it included mount Moriah also.

Ver. 8. * That Judea signifies not only what we call a different dialect, or a different way of speaking the same language; but, also, a different tongue, or an entirely distinct language: — See the passages taken, by Raphelius, out of Polybius and Plutarch.


Ver. 10. * That Elam signifies not only what we call a different dialect, or a different way of speaking the same language; but, also, a different tongue, or an entirely distinct language: — See the passages taken, by Raphelius, out of Polybius and Plutarch.
The apostles preach, in divers languages.

In Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, Egypt, and of the parts of Tiber. 19. And yet we, none of us, need an interpreter, to understand these Galileans. But we, each of us, hear our own languages spoken, perfectly, and distinctly. And their discourse is not about mean and trifling things; but they treat of subjects of the greatest dignity, and of the highest importance; namely, the wonderful works of God; or the several dispensations of God to mankind, in the successive ages of the world; and particularly, concerning the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, and of the Messiah's kingdom. What can this mean? Illiterate Galileans could never have arrived at such skill, in subjects so difficult and sublime; and at such an amazing perfection in so many languages; by common means, and in the natural and ordinary way. Men attain not to such a treasure of knowledge, and to such a readiness in the speaking of so many tongues, by the help of the best education, the greatest genius, and a life spent in a long, close, and laborious study!

Thus they expressed their doubts one to another. Others, who were more gay and thoughtless, would have made them their sport and diversion. Most probably, they were the Jews, who lived at Jerusalem, or in Judea, and who (because they understood only their own native language) knew not that the apostles spoke any language at all; but, perhaps, took their speech for a mere confused gibberish. And having, likewise, a most sovereign contempt for Jesus, and his followers; they scoffingly answered the dubious, and the surprised: "Would you know what is the matter with these Galileans; and why they make such a noise, and seem so full of zeal? We know them well enough; and are sure, that they can speak in no language but their own mother tongue. What you take for so many languages, we look upon.

Ver. 11. "The Jews said unto Peter, "Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech betrayeth thee." "If the apostles, on this day of Pentecost, had expressed themselves improperly, or with a bad accent; as most people do, when they speak a living language, which is not natural to them, the hearers, who, at that time, were not converted to Christianity, would have suspected some fraud; would have taken notice of such faults, and cenured them. Which, since they did not, it is to be supposed that they had nothing of that kind to object." [See Mr. Jortin's remarks on ecclesiastical history, vol. 1. p. 20.]"
upon to be nothing but an unintelligible jargon, and sounds with- An.Christi
out any meaning: And this pretended inspiration of theirs pro-
ceeds only from the fumes of sweet wine, In plane terms, they are intoxicated this morning. And, thereupon, they phan-
tom themselves under the divine inspiration, and that they have (we do not know what) knowledge; and are able to speak such a variety of languages, as the most learned men, and the greatest geniuses, do not pretend to.

So they, among themselves, in pleasant vein, Stood scoffing.

When the apostles, by their joint labors, had raised the curiosity and attention of the multitude, they gathered together in a body, and the crowd stood round about them, with silence and admiration. Upon which, St. Peter, (to whom were committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven; who was the rock, upon which the church was to be founded; and who is generally mentioned, as the first and leading man, among the apostles of the circumcision: — St. Peter, I say,) standing up, with the eleven apostles, as their president, or speaker, first answered the scoffers; and then gave an account of their illumination; to satisfy the dubious, and convert the well-disposed. Exalting his voice, with a tone of authority and fortitude, he thus addressed himself, to that great multitude who had, many of them, lately, consented to, or procured, the death of his great Lord and Master, "O ye Jews of Judea; and ye, who now sojourn at Jerusalem, give audience, and a fixed attention, to the important truths, which I am now about to deliver. Some among you have supposed, and scoffingly asserted, that such of us, as have spoken foreign languages, are drunk with sweet wine; but let me assure you, that such an insinuation is highly injurious. For, it is yet only about nine o'clock in the morning. Whereas, they, that are drunk, are drunk in the night.

Ver. 13. k Though there was no must or new wine at Pentecost; yet, if they preserved the wine cool, it kept sweet a long time, and tasted like must. Which is, indeed, the proper signification of τύχων. So Plutarch. Quæst. Natur. p. 328. ταύτα ἐν ᾧναι ἄπρωται ἤκαθησαν, γλυκόν δειμένον, αὐλών χρίνον. Must, if a vessel be kept in a cool place, will continue sweet for a long time. [Vid. Beza, Elstner. & Wetsten. loc.]

Ver. 15. l Such of the Jews, as imitated the heathens, and got drunk at their festivals, did not use to take such criminal liberties, 'till after the sacrifices were offered, and the oblations made. And the morning-sacrifices were not now offered; to which, as some think, St. Peter might allude. [See Spencer. de legibus hebraeorum, edit. Chappelew. p. 716.]
And, upon our sabbaths, and solemn festivals, we are not wont to eat, or drink, any thing, so early in the day; as you very well know: which custom we have, this morning, very carefully observed. But, such a groundless reflection scarce deserveth any answer. For, the foreigners can satisfie you, that their languages were spoken, planely and intelligibly. And the discourses, which they heard, were so sublime and coherent, as that men must be sober, to talk so well. However; to take away all ground of cavil; and to give you all reasonable satisfaction; I will inform you, what illumination this is, and from whom it procedeth. — You have, indeed, among you, a maxim, “that the divine majesty dwelleth not, upon persons, out of Palestine, nor upon any poor persons, as men-servants, or maid-servants.” But, in Joel, is found a remarkable prophecy, to this effect: "And it shall come to pass, in the last days, (of Jerusalem, and the Jewish state), when the Messiah’s kingdom shall begin to be erected) that I will pour out of my Spirit, faith God, upon all flesh, (that is, upon persons of all nations, and of all conditions of life;) your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your young men shall see visions; and your old men shall have divine inspiration, communicated to them, in dreams. And, upon my men-servants, and my maid-servants, I will pour out of my Spirit, in those days; and they shall prophesy. But, for the terror and condemnation of such, as will not submit, upon sufficient evidence, I will show prodigies, in the air above,

Ver. 17. = In Joel it is [27 יָלָל, akaree cheen, After these things, Joel ii. 28, &c.] Which expression, the Jews understood, as St. Peter hath expressed it. And R. Kimchi, in particular, hath this note, upon that text, in Joel: And it shall come to pass, after these things, is the same (faith he) with, [And it shall come to pass, in the last days.] See Dr. Lightfoot’s works, vol. ii. p. 645.


Josephus [de bell. Jud. l. 6. c. 5. § 3.] faith, that (before the destruction of Jerusalem) a star hung over the city, like a sword; and a comet continued visible for a whole year, darting its fires, and illuminating the skies. — That, (before the war broke out) when the people were assembled, at the passover, on the eighth day of the month Xanthicus, at the ninth hour of the night, such a radiant light shone, round about the altar and the temple, for the space of half an hour, that the night was as bright as day. — That, at the same feast, when the priest was leading a cow to the altar, for a sacrifice, the brought forth a lamb, in the middle of the court of the temple. That one of the gates of the temple, which was made of brass, and of an huge weight, and which twenty men could scarce shut, did, nevertheless, appear to open, of it’s own accord, about the sixth hour of the night; when it was barred and bolted, in the strongest and firmest manner. And, when the keepers of the temple had notice of it, they could scarce shut it again. And farther: — A few days after the passover, such a prodigy (he faith) happened, as would have exceed belief, had
it not been testified, by them, who had actually seen it; and the miseries, which followed, been answerable to the signs, or prognostications. For, before the fam-sigaret, there appeared, high in the air, all over the country, chariots, and armed troops, moving swiftly in the clouds, and throwing up trenches round cities.

At the feast, which is called pentecost, when the priests went, by night, into the inner temple, to officiate, according to custom, they said that they heard first a motion, and a confused noise; but afterwards the voice, as of a great multitude, saying aloud, [Let us go hence.]

And the story of Jesus, the son of Ananus, is very remarkable; who, for seven years together, cried out, [Woe to Jerusalem, and the temple, &c.] and could be deterred from it, by no scourging, nor cruel treatment. Josephus speaks, also, elsewhere, of such dreadful tempests, thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes, that the whole frame of nature seemed to be disordered: — So that any one might guess, that these were signs of no small calamities. [De Bell. Jud. I. 4. c. 4. § 5.]

From all which, and more to the fame purpose, Josephus very justly observeth, that the Jews had fair warning from God; and perished, entirely by their own folly and wickedness.

As to these, and like prodigies, which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, see: Tacit. Hist. 1. 5. c. 13. And how remarkably, and exactly, the whole prophecy was accomplished, see Mr. Chandler's dissertation, annexed to his commentary on Joel.

Math. xxiv. 6. 7. — [Vid. de Bell. Jud. I. 4. c. 4. § 5.] where Josephus faith, "that the state of the universe seemed disordered, at the slaughters of men.” And, [c. 5. § 1.] “that eight thousand and five hundred men were found slain, in Jerusalem, and, more especially, about the temple.” And, § 2. “that, afterwards, the idumeans killed all they met.” And, [§ 3.] “that twelve thousand of the best quality perished, by the cruelty of the Zealots and the Idumeans.” And [c. 6. § 3.] “that the massacre was so great, that heaps of dead bodies lay piled up, in the high ways.” And, [c. 7. § 4.] “At Bethemarbas, numbers of Jews were destroyed.” And, [§ 5.] “The Jews were forced to engage in a battle; in which fifteen thousand were slain, and an infinite number forced to leap into the river Jordan.” [§ 6.] “All the country was full of slaughters; Jordan could not run, but was choked up with dead bodies; and the lake Asphaltis filled with carcases.”

[Antiq. 1. 18. c. 9. § 1.] The Jews at Babylon were slain, in such numbers, as never any history before had mentioned. And, besides several former slaughters, there were slain, in Sестиaca, above fifty thousand of them, at once. [ib. § 9.]

[Lib. 20. cap. 6. § 1.] Eleazar, a robber, plundered and burned some of the samari- tan villages. And Camaeus killed many of the Jews.

It were endless to quote all, that Josephus hath related, in his seven books of the wars of the Jews, concerning the numberless slaughters of the Jews, which happened, all over Judea, (as well as other places) by the Jewish factions; and, by the Romans, before the destruction of the city and temple. The English reader may find the account, in the translations of Josephus. And, therefore, we shall refer to no more places.

Ver. 20. Some take the sun's being darkened, and the moon's being turned into blood, to denote the destruction of the government, both in church and state. Others take them,
So St. Peter's speech, in which will happen the final destruction of the Jewish polity, both in church and state, and even of the nation itself, together with the city and temple. But, amidst all these dreadful appearances, and great disasters, whoever shall heartily and sincerely call upon the name of the Lord, and imbrace the religion of his anointed son, the Messiah, he shall be saved, from all these impending evils, however dangerous, or formidable. This day, is this prophecy begun to be remarkably fulfilled. And, as you may very naturally inquire, who is the Messiah, that is to save you? And what is the religion, which you are to imbrace? I answer, by declaring (what may, perhaps, surprise you, Jesus; and especially such of you, as have been concerned in his death: but it is what claimeth your particular attention; and I am obliged to declare it; namely, that Jesus of Nazareth was a man, whom God made conspicuous among you, and fully manifested to be some great and extraordinary person; by the miracles, wonders, and signs, which God, by him, worked among you, openly, and evidently, as you yourselves know very well.

You do, indeed, expect a triumphant Messiah; and despise one, that comes first, in an humble, afflicted, condition. But the prophets have prophesied, that the Messiah should first be afflicted, and suffer death; and then be raised, and exalted to universal dominion. And, accordingly, this great and glorious person was delivered into your hands; (not without the divine foreknowledge; nay, even according to the scheme pitched upon, for the redemption of mankind. — For God had determined to let him fall into your hands, and to leave you to yourselves, to follow the dictates of your own wicked hearts; and he knew, before hand, that,

them, in general, to denote the approach of some very great calamities; as they seem to do, Ezech. xii. 2. Isai. xiii. 9, 10. and xxxiv. 4, &c. and li. 6. Ezech. xxxii. 7, 8. Joel ii. 1, 2, 3; 10; 30, 31. Amos vii. 9. Rev. vi. 12. and viii. 12. and ix. 2. I have here taken them as literally intended; because both our Saviour's prophecy, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, this prophecy of Joel, and the accomplishment, according to Josephus, seem all to be literal; and but a very few figurative expressions seem to me to be intermixed.


As to the difference between miracles, signs, and wonders, see on 2 Thess. ii. 9.

St. Peter's speech.

"that, in such circumstances, you would put him to death."

And, An. Christi

Tiber. 19.

Book I.

Chap. II.

Sect. I.

Acts ii. 23, &c.

that it was predicted, so it came to pass. For, when you had him

in your power, you, partly through ignorance, and partly through

envy, got him crucified, by means of some of the sinners among the

gentiles*.

But God hath raised him again from the dead; having

loosed the bands of death. For, though death hath con-

quered its thousands; yet, as he had no sin, it had no power to

detain him. And this, king David, (his great progenitor,) speak-

ing, in the name of the Messiah, hath prophetically described;

[Psal. xvi. 8, &c.] "I have the Lord always in my view, and

my dependence is upon his power and continual aid. Therefore,

I am so far from being depressed with fear, that (on the con-

trary) my heart is glad, and my tongue cannot forbear uttering

my joy. For, (let my enemies do their worst) thou wilt not

leave me in the state of the dead, neither wilt thou permit thine

holy one to see corruption. But wilt (by raising me from the

death) shew me the path of life, and immortality. And then, in

thy presence, I shall have fulness of joy; and pleasure, at thy

right hand; and that for evermore."

Brethren; permit me to speak freely to you concerning the great

patriarch David. For, he is both dead and buried; and his sep-

ulchre (where his body continueth, and is corrupted,) is com-

monly known, by us all, at this very day*. These words are

not, therefore, in their literal sense, applicable to his case. But

he, being a prophet, and knowing that the most high God had,

once and again, sworn solemnly unto him, that the Messiah should

descend, from him, as to the flesh; that he might sit upon the

throne of that kingdom, which had been so often promised unto

the house of David: Foreseeing this, I say, and perforating his

Vol. I.

M

great

* Δαμας, without strength, ἀδικοὶ, ungodly, ἔχθροι, enemies, and ἄνθρωποι, sinners,

were terms, which the Jews used to apply to the Gentiles in general. [See Locke on

Rom. v. 6, 8. and Gal. ii. 15.] And, it is evident, that ἀφιέναι must be so understood

here. For, it was, by the hands of the Gentiles; that is, of the Romans, that the Jews

procured Jesus to be crucified. And a like phrase is used, Matt. xxvi. 45. Mark


with Matt. v. 46, 47. and xi. 19. and xviii. 17.]

Ver. 25. * ἄκτις ὀλίγα τῶν ἀτέλειῶν ἐκ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. For David speaketh concerning him.] So ἐκ

signifeth, Eph. v. 32. Else where upon this place, and Gataker upon the title of Marcus

Antoninus his book, (which is ἐκ οἰκίας, concerning himself) hath produced many

places, from some of the best Greek authors, where ἐκ is understood, in the same sense.

Ver. 29. * The sepulchres of the Jews, in general, were without the city. But, the sepulchre of David, and his sons, was within the city: and is shown to travellers, even unto this day. [See Maundrell's travels, third edition, p. 76.]
great descendent; he, in a just and lively manner, described the resurrection of the messiah, in these words; Thou wilt not leave me in the state of the dead, neither wilt thou suffer my flesh to see corruption."

"Jesus of Nazareth, I say, whom you lately murdered, is that very person. And him hath God actually raised from the dead. Of the truth and reality of which resurrection, we ourselves are witnesses. For, we knew him very well, before he died; and we saw him, after his resurrection, once and again: talked with him; eat and drank with him; handled his body, and had all the satisfaction and evidence, which we could desire. We saw him also ascend up to heaven; where, being exalted to the right hand of God; and all power committed unto him, both in heaven and upon earth; and, particularly, having received, of his father, the promised gift of the holy spirit, he hath shed down this plenteous effusion upon us: Some of the effects of which, ye now, see and hear.

"His ascension, also, was prophesied of, in words, which are not applicable to David's case. For, he is not himself ascended into heaven. But he thus prophesied of Christ's ascension. [Psal. cx. 1.] "The Lord said unto my Lord, [the messiah,] sit thou, on a throne, at my right hand; [or, possesse thou all power,] 'till all thine enemies be subdued.'"

"To conclude: The miracles of Jesus, whom you crucified; and, particularly, his resurrection from the dead; this amazeing effusion of the holy spirit, manifested in so many extraordinary gifts and miraculous powers; and the predictions of your antient prophets; — all conspire to convince the whole house of Israel, that God hath made that very Jesus of Nazareth, the messiah; that is, the anointed king, and Lord of all."

Such a conjunction of most close and affecting arguments; and such an home charge of their guilt, in murmuring so great and glorious

Ver. 31. * These words [κρίαναν αὐτῷ, his soul,] are not found in the Alexandrian, Cambridge, Barb. 1. Vulg. mss. nor in Irenæus, and the vulgar and syriac versions. [See Dr. Mill.] Some, therefore, have been for rejecting them, though others have been for retaining them. The principal argument for retaining them, is, that both κρίαναν and αὐτῷ are found in the sixteenth psalm, from whence this passage is taken. [See Wolfius on this place.]

Ver. 35. * Until thy foes be made thy footstool. This is an allusion to a very antient custom. For, the conquerors used to set their feet upon the necks of the persons, whom they conquered. [Josh. x. 24, 25. 2 Sam. xxii. 40, 41. Psal. xviii. 40.] Vid. Ellner. & Wolf. in loc.
Three thousand converted to Christianity.

thous a person, pierced them to the heart. Under which remorse An. Chri and perplexity, the penitent and well-disposed applied themselves unto St. Peter, and unto the other apostles: "Brethren, what can we; what shall we do, in this case?" St. Peter replied: "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus, as the Messiah; and you, also, shall receive some extraordinary and miraculous powers. For the promise of the gift of the holy Spirit extends unto you, and to your children; and to persons, at the most remote parts of the earth; even unto all, who shall have the gospel preached unto them, and who shall accept of that divine call.”

This is the sum and substance of what St. Peter then said: though he taught them much more particularly; principally designing to prove Jesus to be the Messiah, that he might induce them to believe in him. And he laid before them, at large, the nature of their [the apostles] testimony; exhorting them, by all means, to comply with his advice; and so save themselves from the infidelity of that perverse generation; and from those divine judgments, which would come upon them, for their disobedience, and amazing wickedness.

His discourse, joined with the labors of the other apostles, had so good an effect, as to convince about three thousand; who joyfully embraced the Christian doctrine, and were baptized, that very day, in the name of Jesus, as the Messiah. For, they already believed in God, the Father; and were going to be added unto such as had the gift of the holy Spirit.

And there is no reason to question, but that, after baptism, the apostles laid their hands upon them all, and imparted unto them the gifts of the Spirit; not only as an evidence of the truth of Christianity, in general; but as the Spirit of adoption, unto them, in particular; or a proof and assurance, that God would pardon and accept them, even after they had been guilty of that crying sin, of confessing to the murder of the Lord of Life and Glory.

And those three thousand converts did, afterwards, constantly attend upon the teaching of the apostles; holding fellowship and communion with the other disciples; frequently eating and drinking together, especially in the Lord’s supper; as well as offering up their united prayers and supplications unto God.
The benevolence of the first Christians.

The observation of what passed, struck an unusual awe and amazement, upon the whole city. Nor did any person as yet attempt to crush the rising sect. And (considering how inveterate one sect and party are generally against another; — how commonly they all join to crush a rising sect; — and how much hated and despised the name of Jesus was, then, at Jerusalem) this argued the care of a watchful and extraordinary providence over them; and that God would not suffer them to be molested, till they had made some progress, and their numbers were augmented.

There were, also, such convincing evidences attended their mission and doctrine, that it required some thought and contrivance to make any tolerable evasion, in order to elude the force of their arguments; or to allege any specious pretences, for apprehending, or punishing, the apostles, and their associates.

But, what still augmented their success, was, that they not only preached in divers languages; but, also, worked many other plane and unquestionable miracles; and preserved, among themselves, the most beautiful harmony, and inviolable concord. Nay; so ardent was their zeal, and so warm their charity, that such of them, as had goods and possessions, sold them for a common bank; that, while they continued together at Jerusalem, their poor fellow Christians might partake, as any of them should have occasion. A noble and eminent instance of that disinterestedness, self-denial, and benevolence, which the gospel was designed to produce, in the minds of men. And this is, indeed, the true Christian spirit; which is carefully to be cultivated, by such as profess themselves to be the disciples of Jesus, in every age and nation; though they are not obliged to exert it, in the same kind, or degree.

Hitherto, those Christian converts, none of them, neglected the Jewish worship; but frequented the courts of the temple, daily, at the usual hours of prayer and devotion. For they, most probably, reckoned that they were only to superadd Christianit} to Judaism; and that both the religious and civil parts, of the law of Moses, still continued obligatory.

Remark-


Ver. 44. See Christ's prayer for the unity of his disciples, John xvii. particularly, ver. 21. where he prays, "that they might be one, even as his Father and be were one."
Some reflections upon the first period.

Remarkable was their joy, upon their having repented, and acknowledging Jesus as Messiah. And their mutual affection was sincere and unmixt. Christian converse, and praising of God, was their daily business, and entertainment. And they spent their lives, in so pious and virtuous, so patient and modest, a manner; that they had hitherto the favor of all the people. And, every day, upon the evidence, which the Lord Jesus Christ gave, of the truth of his religion, there joined themselves, unto the Christian church, numbers of the Jews, who were now saved, or entered into the sure way to mercy and salvation.

These were the first-fruits of the conversion of the Jews, at Jerusalem; and the first period of their conversion.

CHAP. II. SECT. II.

Reflections upon some circumstances, which attended the time and manner of the things already related.

Before we proceed to the second period of the conversion of the Jews, at Jerusalem, (which was the great harvest there; and gathered in, before the gospel spread any farther,) we would briefly take notice of the following circumstances.

As the Messiah was to fulfill all righteousness, and to answer all the figures, and prophecies, which went before, concerning him; at the time of the Jewish passover, Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us. And, as the sheaf (or first-fruits of barley-harvest) was offered up unto God, on the first day of the week, next after the passover.

Ver. 47. *The saved, were those, who were recovered from the common degeneracy and wickedness of the Jews. [See ver. 40. where St. Peter advised them, *save yourselves from this untoward generation.*] A reformed harlot is said to be called [σωστημα, one that was saved,] in one of Sophocles his tragedies. But I have not yet met with that passage. *Priceus* [in loc.] quotes the table of Cebes, as uising the word, οι σωστηματα, for the reformed. The abandoned, or incorrigibly wicked, are called [the lost, ἀπωλομένοι, 2 Cor. iv. 3.] The reformed, or well-disposed, are here called [the saved, ἡσομαι.] These two sorts of persons are set in opposition to one another, 1 Cor. i. 18. 2 Cor. ii. 15. Those, who are saved, or recovered from vice to virtue, will, also, be admitted unto eternal salvation. But the word, σωστημα, seems here, to denote their being saved from vice, reformed, or well disposed for a reformation.
Some reflections upon the first period.

An. Chri. over*; so, on that very day, did Jesus Christ arise from the dead, as the first-fruit of them that sleep the sleep of death; that he might offer himself up, unto his Father, a most acceptable offering; and might become the resurrection and the life, unto all the righteous, at the last day.

The feast of Pentecost was to be fifty days after the passover; and it was instituted, in commemoration of God's giving the law, from Mount Sinai: Which giving of the law was, according to Maimonides, and, indeed, according to the reason of things, the great end of God's bringing Israel out of Egypt. And, at that feast of Pentecost, the first-fruits of wheat-harvest were to be offered up, unto God, in two loaves, for the use of the priests; upon which loaves, (as upon all the meat-offerings,) oil was poured. And, after that offering, they began to gather in the wheat-harvest; and to complete it, with all possible dispatch. And, finally, that feast, in particular, was accompanied with great joy and rejoicing. — Agreeably to these circumstances of the shadows, not only Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us; but, fifty days after his resurrection, the Holy Spirit was poured down, upon his Apostles, and their company; to teach them the Christian law, and to enable them successfully to spread it in the world. And, on that very day of the year, on which the law had been delivered, from Mount Sinai, they began to preach the gospel, upon Mount Sion; and that word of the Lord, which was to issue forth from Jerusalem. And they, having received the first-fruits of the Spirit, gathered in, that day, three thousand souls; whom they presented (or offered up) unto God and the Lamb; hallowed, or anointed, with theunction of the Spirit, as a kind of first-fruits of the new creation. Nor did they want the feasting, and the joy. For the rich, among them, sold their possessions, and their goods; and raised a plentiful fund, for the common benefit of the Christians, while they kept together, at Jerusalem. And they, with harmony and unanimity, not only frequented the temple-worship, every day; but feasted, also, together, in their upper room; with gladness and sincerity of heart; praising God, in the most joyous and affectionate manner, and having hitherto the favor of the multitude. And then they proceeded, to gather in, and complete, their great harvest, at Jerusalem.

* Lev. xxiii. 10.—14.  b Lev. xxiii. 15.—21.  See the note b and 4 ver. 1.

Ver. 46.  a Kar' σιναπε, may either signify, from house to house, or in the house; that is, in the house, where they had their upper room. When it is used in the former sense, it is generally kar' σιναπε.
St. Peter and St. John go up to the temple.

C H A P. III.

The second period of the conversion of the Jews, at Jerusalem; which was the great harvest there.—Acts iii, iv, v, vi, and vii. chapters.

S E C T. I.

The two apostles, Peter and John, go up to the temple; miraculously cure a man, who was forty years old, and who had been lame from his birth. Peter's speech to the multitude, which flocked together, upon that occasion. Acts iii.

It hath been, already, observed, that the three thousand new converts persevered; that the Christians had time to form themselves into a body, and to raise a common fund; that they constantly frequented the temple-worship; that they continued, for some time, to have the favor of all the people; and that their number increased every day. — From all these circumstances, I would gather, that the miraculous cure, of which St. Luke is here, going to give us an account, was some considerable time after the conversion of the three thousand. And, as there was such a great concourse of people, it is highly probable, that it was at the time of one of their great festivals. For, at other times, few, besides the priests, and the stationary men* frequented the courts of the temple. Perhaps, it might be the first passover, or the second pentecost, after our Lord's ascension; or some feast in the succeeding year. Though we cannot determine, with any certainty, at what particular feast it might be.

Among the many miracles, which the apostles worked, here followeth one, which was in itself great and remarkable; and much more so, as it gathered together a large assembly, and conducd to bring in a very considerable number of converts.

Among

Ver. 1. * The stationary men. were a number of men, who were chosen to be constantly at the temple, to represent the whole congregation, by laying their hands, on the heads of the sacrifices, instead of the people. [See Lightfoot's works, vol. 1, p. 924, &c.]
The lame man miraculously cured.

Among the Jews, there were three stated hours of prayer, every day; at which times, some went up to the temple, and others prayed, in their own houses, with their faces turned towards the temple. The first of these three hours was at nine a-clock in the morning, which was the time of their offering the lamb, for the morning sacrifice; the second was about twelve a-clock at noon, which the Jews used to call the time of the minchab gedolah, or great meat-offering; and the third was about three a-clock in the afternoon; which was the time, when they offered the lamb, for the evening sacrifice.

St Peter and St. John, (two of prime note among the apostles; the one called the beloved disciple, and the other distinguished by his zeal, and forward affection to his Lord; those two primary apostles, I say;) went up together, to pray, at the temple, about three a-clock in the afternoon, the time of the evening sacrifice, and the last of the three stated hours of prayer. And they went into the court of the women, through the gate; which, for its richness, and curious workmanship, was called beautiful; and, by Josephus, the Corinthian gate. — About one hundred and eighty years before this, the city Corinth had been taken, and burnt, by Lucius Mummius, the Roman proconsul; because of their insolence to the Roman ambassadors. And, in the burning of the city, multitudes of statues and images, of brass, gold, and silver, being melted down, and running together, they made that mixture, which was from thence called the famous Corinthian brass; and which the ancients valued above gold, or silver. The gate, on the east side of the temple, (which led out of the Cheł, as you went westward, from the court of the gentiles, into the court of the women,) was made of that famous Corinthian brass; and exceeded the other gates, in its dimensions, and in its workmanship; as well as in the richness of the metal; though most of them were covered over with silver, or gold. — As the two apostles were going to enter in at that gate, they saw a poor man sitting and begging. For he had been lame from his birth. And, as he was poor, and unable to provide himself a subsistence, any other way, his friends brought him daily, and laid him, at that beautiful gate, to beg alms of such charitable and devout persons, as went up to the temple, to worship God. As the two

1. The first and last of these hours are referred to, Exod. xxix. 38, 39. Numb. xxviii. 3, 4. The second is referred to, Acts x. 9. The third is referred to, Dan. ix. 21. And they are all three mentioned, Psal. lv. 17. Dan. vi. 13. Ver. 2. a De Bell. Jud. I. 5. c. 5. § 3. b L. Flori, I. 2. c. 16. Plin. I. 34. c. 2.
The lame man miraculously cured.

Two apostles drew near the gate, the man began to importune them for their charity. Upon which, looking intensely upon him, and perceiving his good disposition of mind, they bid him attend to, and observe them. The man did so, hoping to receive an alms from them. But, when they had engaged his attention, St. Peter said: "We have no silver, nor gold, to bestow, but such good things, as we have, are ready to communicate. [And, perhaps, you will not reckon our gift less grateful, or less valuable.] In the name of Jesus, who is the Messiah, and by a power derived from him, I order you, and give you strength, to rise up, and walk."

Then, taking the man by the right hand, he helped him up. And immediately his legs and feet became strong, and perfectly found. So that, springing up, he found himself able to stand, and leap, and walk. [All which he did, in a kind of transport and unusual joy, upon his suddenly receiving perfect strength and soundness; of which, before that, he had never had any experience.] And, going along with the two apostles, into the second court of the temple, which was commonly called the court of the women, because the women were permitted to go so far towards the sanctuary itself, and no farther. — As the man, I say, was there exercising his new power, in walking and leaping about, in the most rapturous manner; and giving praise unto God; as well as showing himself grateful to the two apostles; — the multitudes, which were then come up to worship, began to take notice of him. For, he was well known, from his begging, daily, in so public a place; and was known, also, to have been always a cripple. But, how this great and sudden alteration happened, was what astonished them all. — The man still hung about his two benefactors; as fearing, perhaps, that he should lose the use of his limbs again, if he parted with them. For he could scarce yet, for joy, believe his own sense, and experience. And, therefore, when the apostles went back again, out of that court, into the court of the gentiles, he went along with them. And a great multitude followed after them.

The area of Mount Moriah was too small for that magnificent structure, the temple; and the several courts, which were to surround it.

Ver. 6. The charitable fund, (if it was still continued,) was devoted to the public use of the Christians. And, therefore, was not St. Peter's property; that is, to give away to strangers, as he pleased.

Ver. 8. It was prophesied, that the lame man should leap as an hart, &c. Now was that prophecy fulfilled; as well as by our Saviour's curing multitudes, that had been lame.
St. Peter's second speech,

King Solomon, therefore, had (with incredible labor and expense) raised a vast terrace, about two hundred yards high, from the deep, subjacent valley, on the east-side of the temple; which addition he made, with very large white stones, strongly cramped and jointed together. And this was the only work of Solomon's temple, which remained till this time. From that addition to the area, the portico, (or cloyster,) built upon it, still went by the name of Solomon's portico. In that very portico, which was in the outer court, or the court of the gentiles, did a large concourse of people gather, about the two apostles; and the man, whom they had miraculously cured. And they were very much astonished, at so great, so sudden, and, withal, so perfect, a cure.

When their attention was thus engaged, St. Peter made a speech to them, to this effect: "As you are the descendents of Israel, you have in your hands the sacred scriptures, which speak of the miracles, worked by persons sent from God, in former ages; and prophecy of the coming of the great king, the Messiah: so that you are, now, daily, looking when his kingdom will appear. And, in his reign, you expect the effusion of the Spirit, in that most plenteous manner, which the prophets have predicted. — Have you never seen, nor heard of, the many and evident miracles, done, lately, among you, by Jesus of Nazareth? And, if you are acquainted with, and know, these things, why do you wonder, so much, at this one miracle? Or why do you look so intently upon us; as though, by our own power, or piety, we had enabled this man to walk? Know you not, that the true God, (that God, in whom both we and you believe, and acknowledge; under the title of the God of our renowned ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; unto whom he promised, that, of their seed, the Messiah should spring: — Know you not, I say, that this only true God) is the original source of power and goodness; and that he communicateth them, unto men, as he himself pleaseth? This instance of his power and goodness hath he communicated, unto this man, by us. And the way and occasion of conveying such a power, unto us, was, by glorifying his son, Jesus, whom you, lately, apprehended; and delivered into the hands of Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator; before whom, you accused him, as the vilest of malefactors; though Pilate himself would have released him, as finding no fault in him; nay, as plainly perceiving, that, through envy, you had delivered him into his hands.

But, you would not acknowledge that holy and righteous person to be the Messiah; notwithstanding the many and evident proofs; which he gave, of his having a just title to that character. And, when even Pilate, a gentile, thought him unjustly accused, and would have released him, according to his custom, of annually releasing the prisoner, whom the people should desire; you, at the instigation of your rulers and elders, refused Jesus; and petitioned, that Barabbas, a most infamous person, who was the author of a sedition, a robber, and a murderer, might be released, much rather than him. And the holy and innocent Jesus you persecuted to death; though he (instead of a murderer) was the Lord and author of life itself. — But, though men treated him thus, God hath amply vindicated his character, in raising him from the dead. Of the truth and reality of which resurrections, we all are living eye-witnesses; fully convinced ourselves, by many infallible signs and proofs. And, to excite others to inquire into, and fairly consider, the truth and validity of our testimony, he hath given us this extraordinary power. For, by faith in his power, have we perfectly cured this man, whom you see, here, before you; and who is so generally known among you, that you may be easily and fully satisfied, both of the greatness, and certainty, of the cure.

But, in as much as you have treated the Messiah thus, my brethren, through ignorance, and grosse prejudice; (which was, also, in a great measure, the case of your rulers); there is room for your being pardoned and accepted, upon your sincere, speedy, and unfeigned, repentance. Nay; and you may farther behold the wisdom and the goodness of God, who hath so over-ruled your ignorance and wicked designs, as that the prophecies, concerning the sufferings of the Messiah, have been thereby accomplished. And, as there is ground for hope and encouragement, let me beg of you to repent, and immediately accept of Jesus, as Messiah; that your sins may be blotted out, and the happy and refreshing times may come upon you, from the presence of the Lord.

I speak not, concerning the safety and consolation, which embracing Christianity will at present afford you; but of the approach of that glorious time, when he shall send, again, this same Jesus, who

Ver. 18. Compare with this place, Gen. xlv. 5. and I. 20. Acts xvi. 27; &c.
St. Peter's second speech,

Christi is appointed before-hand to be the judge of the world, and your savior, if you believe, and obey, him. I know you expect a temporal Messiah, to reign, in this very age, among you, here upon earth; and to free you from your present subjection to the Romans. But, in vane do you expect it. For, the heavens have received him; and there he must continue till the grand time of the restoration of all things. Nor do I speak of things, wholly new, and unheard of. For, these things run through the prophets, in general; from the beginning of the Mosaic dispensation, unto the sealing up of prophecy, at the death of Malachi.

In the first place, Moses, our great prophet and law-giver, (like unto whom, there hab not, 'till our time, risen a prophet, in Israel,) did plainly prophesie of the coming of such a prophet, as Jesus of Nazareth hath proved himself to be. For, when the people of Israel, our fore-fathers, were terrified, with hearing God speak the ten commandments, in so pompous, terrible, a manner, from mount Sinai; they desired, that Moses might speak, unto them, the words of God, for the future; and that they might not any more hear God himself, speaking unto them, in so tremendous a manner, lest they should die with fear. Moses, in compliance with their request, thus answereth, in the name of God, and prophesieth: Deut. xviii. 15.—19. The Lord your God will raise up, unto you, a prophet, from the midst of you, of your brethren, (who shall introduce a new dispensation, or be a savior, and law-giver,) like unto me; unto him shall you hearken. According to what you yourselves desired, of the Lord your God, in Horeb, [or Sinai,] in the day of your assembling there: Saying, Let us not hear any more the voice of the Lord our God; neither let us see this great fire, any more; lest it consume us. And the Lord said unto me, They have said very well; and desired nothing, but what is wise and reasonable. "I will

Ver. 20. There is such a general consent of the mss. versions, and fathers, cited by Dr. Mill and Mr. Wetstein, in reading προσεχθήσαντι, [fore-appointed,] instead of προσεχθήσαντον, [preached before-hand,] that I think the former to have been plainly the original reading. [Compare Acts xviii. 31.]

Ver. 21. τὰ ἀρχαῖα, all,] is not in Dr. Mill's best mss. and versions, nor in some of the fathers.

'As' αἰώνα, from the beginning,] of what they usually called; the age then present; that is, of the Jewish dispensation. In opposition to which, the kingdom of Christ was called αἰών μέλλων, the age to come. [See on 2 Tim. iv. 10.] To confirm this, it may be observed, that he here begins with Moses; and faith nothing of the patriarchs before Moses; and, particularly, nothing of Abraham. No! when the writers of the new testament run up as high as Abraham, then the phrase is, ἡ πατριαρκικά, before the times under the law. [See note 1, Tit. i. 2.]
before the people.

"I will raise them up a prophet, from among their brethren, (who An.Christi 34.
shall be also a savior, and a law-giver; or one, that shall introduce, Tiber. 25.
a new dispensation,) like unto thee. And I will put my words into
his mouth; and he shall speak, unto them, all that I shall command him. Book I.
And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my
words, which he shall speak, in my name, I will call him to an ac-
count; and be shall suffer accordingly. Thus plainely did Moses 34., &c.
prophetie of the things, which are now fulfilled, in Jesus of
Nazareth. Yea, and Samuel, also; and even all the succeeding
prophets, as many of them as have spoken of the days of the
messiah, have all, with one voice, foretold what is now come to
passe.

"Be convinced, therefore; and act, like the faithful subjects of
the messiah. Methinks, I should be exceedingly concerned, to see
you refuse. For, though, considering your crying wickedness,
you might expect to be treated, as the worst of enemies; yet, in
as much as you are still regarded, as the children [or disciples] of
the prophets, and are actually the natural descendents of Abra-
ham; unto whom (if you be obedient) that covenant, which
God of old made with our fathers; and, especially, with Abra-
ham, doeth primarily belong; by which covenant, it was expressly
promised, that, in Abraham's seed, all the nations of the earth
should be blessed. — According to the gracious appointment of
God, unto you, Jews, the first offers of mercy are to be made.
Nay; unto you, of Jerusalem, (though his crucifiers, and mur-
therers,) God, having raised up his Son Jesus, (as the great pro-
phet, of whom Moses prophesied) hath sent him to bless you,
with the highest blessings; namely, to save as many of you, as will
comply, from your greatest enemies; that is, from your sins,
and from the deserved punishment. For, that is the grand
end and design of our present message, and of the christian re-
velation."

Ver. 24. * That there was no prophet between Moses and Samuel, see Dr. Wotton's.
Misna, vol. i. p. 50.
Ver. 26. * 'Amos does not, here, refer to the resurrection from the dead, (as
it generally does, in other places;) but to 'Amos, ver. 22. raising him up, as a pro-
phet, in Israel.
* See Wolfius on the place, who applies the last sentence of this verse, to the Jews;
and would understand it thus, [upon your turning, every one of you, from your iniqui-
ties.] See, also, Dr. Doddridge.
The temper of the Sadducees.

CHAP. III. SECT. II.

The two apostles, Peter and John, imprisoned. The christian converts were five thousand. The two apostles brought before the sanhedrim. St. Peter's defence. They are dismissed, with a charge to preach no more, in the name of Jesus; with which they refused to comply. Acts iv. 1—22.

This great miracle, being so commonly known, and believed; and their immediately proceeding to preach the christian doctrine, to such a large concourse of people; and that, so openly and undauntedly; alarmed the Jewish sanhedrim; and, especially, some great men of the sect of the sadducees.

Josephus hath described "the sadducees, as remarkable for a fierce and cruel temper; and, particularly, that, when they were in judgment, they were much more rigorous and severe upon criminals, than the pharisees." And, no wonder. For, as they placed all their hopes of happiness, within the compass of this present life, they must have reckoned the disturbers of it to deserve the severest torments; that they might deter men from giving them any uneasiness. Besides; they had no expectations of being called to an account hereafter, or of suffering, in a future state, for the cruelty and severity, which they had exercised, in this world, upon any of their fellow-creatures. These were the Jewish infidels, or sceptical bigots; who were as ready to persecute, when they had power, as any religious, or enthujiastic, sect whatsoever. And, as the christians agreed, in so many points of doctrine, with the opposite sect of the pharisees; and, particularly, as to the grand article, of the resurrection from the dead; the sadducees, generally, from this time, proved their bitterest enemies.—We find no converts to christianity, from among that sect; except the false apostle at Corinth, whom I suspect to have been a scribe of the sect of the sadducees; as he had persuaded some of the christians, of that city, that there would be no resurrection from the dead. And he, indeed, was rather an enemy, and a corruptor of christianity, than any honor, or advantage, to it.

The two apostles imprisoned.

The Romans allowed the Jews a captain, among the Levites, to keep watch, in the courts of the temple; in order to prevent tumults, and disturbances, among the vast concourse of people, which sometimes came thither. That captain, with his men, were animated, by their superiors, and particularly by the priests, and the leading men among the Sadducees, to go, that very evening, and, by violence, apprehend the two apostles, as they were preaching, to such a numerous assembly, in Solomon's portico. And, having laid hold of them, late in the evening, away they hurried them to prison, or into private custody; where they left them, that night. For they were exceedingly offended, at their preaching, as public persons; and without any licence, or authority, from them; and, particularly, because they declared, that Jesus, whom they had so lately crucified, was risen from the dead; and that he was the Messiah; and would, finally, raise all mankind, by the same mighty power. But, notwithstanding the discouragements, which the apostles met with, from the leading men, among the Jews; many of the people, who had seen the lame man, after he was healed, and who had heard St. Peter's discourse, were convinced of the truth of his doctrine; and openly embraced the Christian religion, to the number of five thousand. It is doubted, by many, whether these five thousand were all converted, at this time; or only two thousand, added to the three thousand, who were converted, on the memorable day of Pentecost? Of the two, I think it more probable, that these five thousand were all converted, upon this occasion. For the historian seemeth to be, here, speaking, only of what followed, upon this great miracle; and doth not say, that these new converts, added to the former, made up the number to five thousand. Nor doth he say any

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b Dr. Lightfoot hath made it evident, I think, that the Jews had such a captain, among the Levites, who kept watch, in the courts of the temple. [vol. ii. of his works, p. 471.] And Josephus hath mentioned two persons, who were each of them the sons of a high-priest, and captain of the temple: σαρνωθων, vel σαρνωθως, τω ιερω; the very phrase, made use of, here. [Vid. Antiq. i. 20. c. 6. § 2. collat. cum lib. 2. c. 12. § 6. de Bell. Jud. Vid. etiam de Bell. Jud. 1. 2. c. 17. § 2. Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. ed. part 1. p. 83; 222,—225. Gratius on Matth. xxvi. 45. Dr. Whitby on Luke xxii. 52.] But, I cannot believe, as some have done, that the guard, mentioned Matth. xxvii. 65. was of this sort: because we find the soldiers, who guarded our Lord's sepulchre, were afraid of saying, "that they had slept, when they should have been upon the watch; for fear the Roman governor should have punished them." Whereas; the Levites were not (I suppose) so immediately accountable to the Roman governor, in such a case.

Ver. 4. c When did the philosophers succeed so gloriously, in making converts to such doctrines, as were calculated to promote truth and virtue, piety and humanity?

See this point cleared up, more at large, in the Appendix.
The Jewish sanhedrim convened.

any thing at all, in this place, about the former converts, Besides; if this was at a considerable distance of time, (as I think it was,) it is highly probable, that many of the three thousand, who were converted, at the first pentecost, were gone home to their respective countries. And it will not be thought wonderful, that they should, now, make a more numerous conversion; if it be considered, that they had continued to work several miracles, one after another, for so long a time; and had thereby made their divine mission much more plane and evident. When the weight of all their former miracles was added to this late evident and extraordinary cure, it was enough to strike a whole nation; and to convince numbers of the well-disposed and attentive.

The next day, after that great miracle, and numerous conversion, the sanhedrim was convened, the supreme court of the Jews nation. It consisted of the rulers, or chief-priests; the heads of the twenty-four courses; the elders of the other tribes; and the scribes, who were doctors of the law, most commonly of the tribe of Levi. That great council of the nation sat at Jerusalem. And, with them, Annas, who had formerly been high-priest; but was ejected, by the Roman procurator; and Caiaphas, (son-in-law to Annas,) who was now high-priest. The very persons, who had procured the death of Jesus Christ! And, therefore, thought themselves highly concerned to suppress his disciples, and their doctrine. And, along with them, there were John and Alexander, two persons of distinction, in that age. And other great men of the high-priest's kindred.

It was the custom, for the sanhedrim, to sit, almost, in a circle, or oval; and to set the prisoners in the midst of them. St. Peter and St. John, being so placed, the court demanded of them, "By what power, human or diabolical, angelic or divine, have you cured this man? Whose name have you invoked, to the working of this miracle? Or, from whom had you your authority to preach, so publicly, unto the people? From us, you had it not; though

Ver. 7. * Josephus speaketh of the Jews working cures, by invoking the name of Solomon. [Antiq. Jud. 1. 8. c. 2. § 5.] And, (de Bell. Jud. 1. 2. c. 8. § 7.) that the Essenes preferred the name of angels: — perhaps, to cure diseases, or work miracles, by them. The Talmud relateth some ridiculous stories, of working miracles, by the tetragrammaton, or the unutterable name; that is, by mentioning the word Jehovah. The seven sons of Sceva, the Jewish priest, had the same opinion, of working miracles, by the mention of a name; when they pretended to cure a possessed person, by invoking the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached. [Acts xix. 13, &c.]
St. Peter's speech, before the Sanhedrim.

Though we, alone, have the authority to give a commission to any man to do so.

Then St. Peter, being filled with the holy spirit, or inspired with wisdom and fortitude to give a proper answer, before that assembly, which, by the Jews, was accounted the most august and venerable,—replied: "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel; We are willing to acknowledge your authority, as far as God and conscience will permit us. And, seeing that we are now apprehended, and brought before you, as malefactors, to be judicially examined, concerning this beneficent action; and, particularly, by what means, this man was so suddenly, and perfectly, cured; we are ready to give you all possible satisfaction. And, therefore, desire you, and all the people of Israel, to take notice, that, by invoking the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and by commission and power from him, we have miraculously cured this man. Yes; I say it again, in the name of that very Jesus, whom you, lately, crucified; but whom the God of our fathers hath raised from the dead; even, by his power, this very man, who, some hours ago, could not so much as stand, can now walk as well as any man; and, is, this moment, standing before you, sound and well.—This Jesus is the stone, who, though he was despised, and rejected, by you, who pretend to be the builders of the church and temple of God; is, nevertheless, become the chief corner-stone. For God has actually exalted him to the greatest honor and dignity. And, by him, shall the church of God (gathered out of all nations) be united, and joined together, as the two sides of a building are united, and held together, by the chief corner-stone. Neither is there salvation, by any other person. For, there is no other name, known among men; by which, we, who are acquainted with the nature of the gospel, and, with the evidence of it, can rationally expect to be saved."

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Ver. 12. "Jesus Christ is, undoubtedly, the only mediator between God and man. And his is the only name, by which we can attain to eternal salvation.

But this truth (as some think) ought to be deduced, from other texts, and not from this. For  is the word made use of, by St. Peter himself, to intimate the miraculous cure of the lame man, ver. 9. And it will be evident to any, who can observe the connection, that and are made use of, concerning the same miracle, and in the continuance of the same discourse. Though, I am fully persuaded, that  or  and , are, several times, in the new testament, to be understood of eternal salvation; yet, in the following texts, they refer only to miraculous deliverances, or cures: Matth. viii. 25. and ix. 21, 22, and xiv. 30. and xxvii. 42. 49. Mark v. 23; 28; 34. and vi. 56. and x. 52. and xvi.
The two Apostles confound the Sanhedrim.

The Sanhedrim, observing the composure, wisdom, and fortitude, of the two apostles; and, knowing them to be unlearned, and only private men; who could not be thus bold, upon the account of their own wisdom, and authority, or skill in the Jewish learning;—they were quite amazed. However, they recollected, that they had formerly been seen in company with Jesus, in whose name, they now declared, that they had worked this miracle. The matter of fact was so plain, and the force of truth so powerful, that they could not immediately make the two apostles any answer. Nevertheless, they were resolved against embracing their doctrine; though they could neither deny, nor stifle, the miracle. They, therefore, ordered them to go out of the court. And then, they laid their heads together, and conferred thus: "What shall we, what can we, do in this case? There is no such thing, as denying the fact; it is so exceeding plain: nor can we stifle it. For it is known, through all Jerusalem, that this miraculous cure hath been done, by them. But, notwithstanding, lest their doctrine should spread, any farther, among the people; and the number of their disciples still increase; let us severely threaten them, for what they have said."


And, if the verb be so often used, for a temporal salvation, why may not the noun be so used, also? Especially, as it is apprehended, that the sense and connection of this place plainly points to this interpretation. — And this is not the only place, where it ought to be so understood. [See Mr. Locke on 2 Cor. i. 6. See, also, Acts vii. 25. and Raphaelius on this place.] In the same sense, Horace hath used the verb, seruo, to save, [Hor. ep. ii. l. 11. 138.] where he introduces one, that had been cured of a pleasing phrenzy, saying to his friends, "Truly, my friends, you have killed me, you have not [saved, or] cured me, &c."

— Pol, me occidistis, amici,
Non seruasti (ais.) cui se xorsita voluptas.

So far have I argued, in favor of Dr. Whitby's interpretation of this text. But, as it may be objected, that St. Peter has said, "There is no other name, — by which we must be saved." And it cannot, reasonably, be supposed, that all the persons, then present, were laboring under bodily disorders; and had occasion for, or reason to expect, a miraculous cure: therefore, it is most probable, the apostle is not speaking of a temporal, but of eternal salvation. — To this I would answer, it is possible that St. Peter might use the word [Jesus], ver. 9, for the miraculous cure of the lame man; and the word [salvation], ver. 12, for everlasting salvation. In which case, I would understand St. Peter, ver. 10, as ascribing the miraculous cure of the lame man, to the power of Christ. And then, ver. 11, 12, as rising higher, or enlarging his view, and saying, "Though the leading Jesus had defiled our Lord; yet those, to whom the gospel was preached, with sufficient evidence, could not expect eternal salvation, in the name, or by the power, of any other person."
They are threatened, and dismissed.

They are threatened, and dismissed. 99

They are threatened, and dismissed. 99

When they had come to this determination, they called in the two apostles. And, having severely chid them; they concluded, with charging them, never to speak one word again, or teach any more, publicly or privately, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. To which, the two apostles bravely and reasonably replied: "We appeal to your own consciences, whether it be right, and could be justified, in the sight of God, to obey you, rather than God himself! For God hath appointed us to publish what he hath revealed to us: and we are under strict engagements to do so."

In the end, they released them, only adding farther threatenings. Indeed, they knew not how to have answered it, to the people, if they had inflicted any punishments upon them. For all the people took the matter right, evidently perceiving that it was from God; and giving him the praise, for this beneficent miracle. For, a miracle it was, no doubt; and no trick, nor delusion; the man himself being present in the sanhedrin, and well known to most of them, from his having begged, daily, in so public a place. And, he was, now, above forty years old, and had been lame from his birth. So that it was an inveterate disorder, incurable (very probably) by any medicinal art; which made the cure the greater, and the more remarkable.

CHAP. III. SECT. III.

The apostles returned to their own company, where they unanimously prayed for fortitude, and an ability to work more miracles. The place, where they were assembled, was again shaken; and a second effusion of the spirit granted. Christianity still gained ground, and the numbers of the disciples increased. Acts iv. 23,—31.

The two apostles, being dismissed by the sanhedrin, went unto their own company; perhaps, the christian church, at Jerusalem, or the rest of the apostles. — And there they related all that had passed. Upon which, the whole company lifted up their voices with one accord, saying, or singing, to this effect: "Lord — GOD
The apostles prayer for fortitude, &c.

GOD almighty, creator of heaven and earth! Thy providence is over all thy works; and thou (who knowest the end from the beginning; and, from ancient times, the things, which have, or shall, come to pass) hast described the vane malice and opposition of the enemies of thine anointed son, [Psal. ii. 1, 2.] saying, Why do the heathens rage, and the people [of Israel] imagine a vane thing? The governors of the earth have set themselves to oppose him; and the rulers have conspired, against the LORd, and against bis CRIST, [or anointed.] And, accordingly, hath it happened. For, as the wicked did formerly confine against thy servant David; so, lately, in this city Jerusalem, both Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee b, and Pontius Pilate, together with the romans and jews, have conspired, against thy holy son JESUS; whom (as soon as he had been baptized by John) thou didst anoint with theunction of the holy spirit; that he might do, whatsoever thou, in thine infinite wisdom, fore-ordained to be done by him. — And now, LORd, take notice of their threatenings; and grant unto us, thy faithful servants, all steadiness and fortitude, in publishing the CRISTIAN doctrine; and assist us, by thy power, to heal diseases, and to work more signs and wonders, in the name of thy holy son JESUS.

Ver. 27. * These words, [in της ἡμερησίας της Πέντεκόστης] in this city,] are found, in many of the ancient manuscripts, versions, and fathers. [See Dr. Mill.]

* If the nominative case be placed before the verb, according to the natural construction, this is the true order of the words. And then, what GOD is here said to have determined before hand, is not, what those wicked persons were to do to CHRIST; but what CHRIST himself was anointed, with the holy spirit, to do; that is, to go about, doing good, or to preach, and work miracles. [Acts x. 38. Vid. Limborch. in loc. and the essay for a new translation of the bible, part 1. p. 80.]
A paradisaical community restored.

rage infused, and farther miraculous powers conferred; to assist them in their work, and to enable them to proceed cheerfully, and with an undaunted steadiness and resolution.

Their fear and concern, before the first effusion of the spirit, hath been taken notice of, already. As, likewise, with what fortitude, they, immediately after the spirit was given, ventured, even in Jerusalem, to declare Jesus of Nazareth, who had, lately, been murdered there, to be the Messiah. Upon this first attack of persecution, they seem to have been (some of them) a little discouraged. And, therefore, they prayed, for more fortitude, and farther divine aid. Their prayer was heard; farther aid was immediately granted. And, upon that, they went on bravely, and successfully. And, by an extraordinary divine assistance, did the apostles give the most clear and convincing evidence, of Jesus his being the Messiah; particularly, by testifying his resurrection from the dead. And, great success attended their labors; though the Jewish rulers, both in church and state, were, generally speaking, their avowed enemies.

CHAP. III. SECT. IV.

A paradisaical community was restored. The five thousand followed the example of the three thousand. Barnabas, one of the greatest contributors. Ananias and Sapphira attempted to abuse, and pervert, that charitable design. They were detected, and punished. Which struck an awe upon the rest. Acts iv. 32, — v. 11.

IN those first favors, a paradisaical community was restored. And great favor was shewn to all the christians. For, as the whole multitude was of one heart, and of one soul; the five thousand, lately converted, followed the example, which the three thousand had, formerly, set them; and no longer claimed any peculiar property, in their own possessions; but gave them up, for the public service. So that, while they continued together, at Jerusalem; there was not one indigent person, among them. For, as many as were proprietors of houses, or lands, sold them, and laid down the money.
The liberality of Barnabas.

Money, at the apostles feet; that they might distribute it, according to the necessity and exigency of the christians. Among the rest of the contributors, was Jose, (whom the apostles surnamed Barnabas; that is, the son of a prophet, who was qualified, both to exhort, and comfort;) He is, by many, thought to have been the same with Joseph called Barsabas, Acts i. 23. But I look upon them to have been distinct persons. For the character of Barnabas is, here.

Ver. 35. Orobio, the jew, [in his friendly conference with Limborch, p. 134.] has insinuated, that it was no small advantage, to poor fishermen, to be treasurers of so considerable a bank. And, some of our late infidels have, in a more indecent manner, taken occasion, from hence, to asperse the apostles of our Lord; as if their conduct was influenced, by worldly motives, and temporal views. And, as if they greatly advanced their circumstances in life, by turning apostles. — But their whole character, their upright, generous, and disinterested, behavior; their readiness to sacrifice their lives, for the sake of truth, and the welfare of mankind: shews that they were far above falsifying such a trust as this, for the sake of a little money. Accordingly; they, very willingly, transferred the management of this affair, to other hands. Acts vi. 2, &c. — But we ought to take the whole story together. And, then, (besides the honorable testimony, given to them, by St. Luke, in this very text; namely, that they distributed, unto every man, of that charity, according as he had need;) we must farther consider, that God continued to them, the power of working numerous, astonishing, and beneficent, miracles: and that he enabled one of them to strike two of the christians dead upon the spot, for treachery and dissimulation, with relation to this very charity. — What! would God continue to show such peculiar regard to men, that would embezzle part of a public charity, or make any bad use of any part of it. [See Dr. Doddridge in loc.] I must confess, it raises, in me, a just indignation, to fee such ungenerous reflections, thrown out, against the apostles of our blessed Lord, who patiently endured poverty and reproach, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, bonds, scourgings, and imprisonments, and (after all) a violent death, to promote truth and righteousness in the earth. — One can hardly help suspecting, that they themselves are men of bad hearts, who are so ready to charge others, upon all occasions, with dishonest designs, and corrupt views: and it seems to intimate, what some men would have done, upon the like occasion. — Name me the infidel, who ever gave such proofs of his honesty, as the apostles of our Lord. — We know, that our modern infidels have, generally, fallen in with the established religion; and have not chosen to suffer any thing, for their particular and well-known sentiments; how contrarysoever to those of professed christians around them.

Ver. 36. Barnabas, [Bar-nabi,] signifies the son of a prophet. Some would translate it από τον ἀποστόλον, here, the son of consolation, and, others, the son of exhortation. The greek is capable of both the senses, as well as the hebrew. And it is not easy to decide, with certainty, which was principally intended. If Jose had this surname, of Barnabas, given him, by the apostles, upon the account of contributing to generously to the charitable fund; I should think, we ought to interpret it, the son of consolation; because he greatly comforted the christians, by his liberally providing for their poor, during the time, that such a number of them kept together, at Jerusalem. But, if they gave him this name, afterwards; or, upon the account of what was eminently his talent, as a prophet; I am inclined to think, it ought to be translated, the son of exhortation. For, Barnabas was remarkably fitted to exhort; as appeareth from Acts xi. 23.

* See the note on Acts i. 23.
The liberality of Barnabas

here, given, as if he had been no where mentioned before. For, he is, here, said to have been full of the holy spirit, as well as those, who had it poured out, immediately from heaven. And he was, afterwards, sent out, to Antioch, as a superior prophet.

It is deservedly taken notice of, to his honor, how much he denied himself, to turn christian, as being a levite; that is, one, who served under the priests; and was maintained, by the revenues, which belonged to that tribe. And how generous he was, after he became a christian. For, (though he could not sell what belonged to him, as a levite, in Canaan; the paternal estates of the levites, there, being unalienable; yet) he might have a title to some estate, in J udea, which did not belong to the levites; and, possibly, he sold that, to augment this public charity. Or, being a native of Cyprus, perhaps, he sold some lands, which belonged to him, in that island; and so contributed, largely and remarkably, towards raising that common fund, for the christians; and was, probably, the first, who sold lands, for that purpose, out of Palestine, or at any considerable distance from Jerusalem.

Among the christians, there was one Ananias, who (as if he had intended to equal the zeal and liberality of Barnabas) sold a possession of land, towards raising, or supporting, that charitable fund. But, after he had sold it, he conspired, with his wife Sapphira, privately to keep back part of the price, and yet publicly to deliver in the remainder, as the whole price; that so they two might be maintained, out of the common stock; as persons, who had given up all that they had. St. Peter, who had the gift of discerning spirits; or of knowing some transactions, that were carried on, in secret; immediately detected this lying and deceitful behavior. And, upon Ananias his coming, without his wife; and delivering in part of the money, with a pretence, that that was all; — he said: "Ananias, why have you complied with so monstrous and daring a temptation, as to attempt to deceive the holy spirit? Amazement thing!

* Lev. xxv. 34. * Deut. xxxiii. 29. Isai. lxiv. 11. with which compare 2 Kings iv. 16. And, for testimonies from profane authors, see Stephan. Grotes, Wolfius, Wetstein, and others. But, * ψευδωνυμια, with a dative case, signifies to deceive a person; as, ver. 4. and, frequently, elsewhere. — That Ananias might, in scripture-phrase, be said to deceive the spirit of God, when he only desired, or attempted, to do it; — see on 2 Thess. ii. 4. and Wolfius on this place.
Ananias and Sapphira struck dead,

that you should phantasy it possible to escape the all-seeing eye of God, when you came to deliver in a part of the money, and yet would have it passe for the whole price of the land! What, in the name of God, could move you to sell it; unless you had designed honestly and charitably? It was your own property, before it was sold. And so was the price of it, after it was sold, and intirely at your own disposeal. No body insisted upon your devoting it to the public service. But you, yourself, under the color of a noble and voluntary charity, have entertained a vane-glorous and covetous design. And, to accomplish this, you have acted, in a fraudulent and hypocritical manner. In acting thus, you have lyed; not onely, unto us, men; but, unto God, who hath imployed us, and given us so plenteoufly of his spirit. Ananias, finding that he was detected, and hearing the sharp and aweful reprimand, was instantly struck down, by a divine judgment; and expired, at St. Peter's feet. — The report of so remarkable and exemplary a punishment, cast a terror, into the minds of all, who heard of it. And some of the young men, there present, wound him up, in the best manner they could; and, carrying him out of the city, they buried him.

About three hours after, his wife came in, but without knowing any thing, of what had befallen her husband. And St. Peter put it home to her: "Tell me, (faith he) whether you sold your land, for just so much money, as your husband pretended, and no more?" "No, (faith she,) we, really, had no more for it." To which, St. Peter replied: "What is the reason, that you have conspired together, in so bold, so wicked, and so perilous an undertaking; as to attempt to deceive the spirit, which the Lord Jesus hath so evidently given unto us? Behold! I hear, even now, at the door, the sound of the young men's feet, who are returning, from burying your husband; and who shall, shortly, do the same office for you." The divine power did, a second time, accompany St. Peter's words. Upon which, she, also, instantly, fell.

Ver. 4. This, planely, showeth, that contributeing to that charitable fund, was, not a matter of necessity, but purely voluntary. Nor was it of the nature of a vow, which they fould obliged to perform. [See Numb. xxx. 2. Deut. xxiii. 21, 22, 23.] Ananias' his crime was not sacrilege; but grofle hypocricie, or prevarication; telling a notorious and deliberate lye, unto the Apostles, who had the holy spirit, in an extraordinary degree. To them, he pretended, that he brought, into the charitable fund, the whole price of the land, when he was conscious, that he brought in onely a part of it. That is, what the sacred text, most evidently, reprefents as his crime.

Ver. 6. The Jews do, now, interr their dead, within twenty-four hours, at farthest, from the time of their death. And, generally, much sooner.
which greatly alarmed others.

fell down at his feet, and died. And the young men, coming in, and finding her dead, wound her up; and, carrying her out also, buried her by her husband. Thus did St. Peter; not out of a spirit of passion, cruelty, or revenge; but, by a prophetic spirit; not by the sword of the magistrate, nor by any power of his own; but by a miraculous and divine power; punish the first lie; which was made to tempt (or try) the holy spirit, in the beginning of his economy, or dispensation. Thus was the dignity of the spirit of God vindicated, and the honor of the apostles of our Lord maintained. For, hereby, it was plane, that they had the spirit of truth and of power; by which they could easily detect, and punish, the spirit of falsehood; and that they made no pretensions to the spirit, in which the spirit would not bear them out. This was exercising the apostolic rod; concerning which, I have; already, observed, that the power was our Lord Jesus Christ's; and that the apostles had only an impulse of the spirit, upon their minds, by which they were enabled to foretell such extraordinary and divine judgments.

Such severity, in the beginning of Christianity, was highly proper; in order to prevent any occasion, for like punishments, for the time to come. Thus, Cain, the first murtherer, was most signally punished, by the immediate hand of God, as was Sodom and Gomorrab; which were, in the early ages, distinguished for their filthines and abomination. Thus, upon the erecting God's temporal kingdom, among the Jews, Nadab and Abihu were struck dead, for offering strange fire, before the Lord. And Corah, and his company, were swallowed up alive, by the earth, for opposing Moses, the faithful servant of God. And the two hundred and fifty men, who offered incense, upon that occasion, were consumed, by a fire, which came out from the Lord. And, lastly, Uzzah, for touching the ark, fell, by as sudden and remarkable a divine judgment, when the kingdom was going to be established in the house of David; to teach Israel a reverence for God, and divine things. Nay; in establishing even human laws, a severe punishment, upon the first transgressors, doeth often prevent the punishment of others; who are deterred from like attempts, by the suffering of the first criminals.
More miracles. The high-priest incensed.

And the effect, in the present case, was accordingly. For a great dread, and unusual awe, fell upon all the Christian church; and not upon them alone, but upon all others also, who saw, or heard of, what had happened: so that no more hypocrites dared to join themselves to the Christians, merely with a view to share in the community of goods; lest they should fall under the fate of those two notorious dissemblers. Though, (probably) without such a seasonable detection and severity, they would, in a short time, have been crowded, and over-run, with such impostors.

CHAP. III. S E C T. V.

More miracles worked. The high-priest, and his company, (who were chiefly Sadducees) incensed. They apprehend all the twelve apostles, and put them in the common prison. An angel delivereth them: and sendeth them to preach, in the courts of the temple. The sanhedrim surprized. St. Peter's defence. Gamaliel prevailed to have them dismissed, and not put to death. The sanhedrim ordered them to be scourged; and then dismissed them. Acts v. 12, to the end of the chapter.

THOUGH the remarkable death of Ananias and Sapphira made many of the Jews to reverence the apostles, at a distance; yet it did not deter the sincere and well-disposed from becoming their converts. For multitudes, both of men and women, openly imbraced the Christian faith. And, in the piazza, (or portico,) called Solomon's, used they to assemble, with the greatest harmony and unanimity. And, no wonder that Christianity gained ground; that new converts were brought in, and the old ones confirmed, and established. For, by the hands of the apostles, many miracles were worked, and that before multitudes of the Jews. And, indeed, their fame was spread, so far and wide; and their character was raised so high; that the people were ready to expect every thing from them, which could reasonably be expected, from persons induced with an extraordinary and divine power. And St. Peter, par-
The apostles imprisoned; but delivered.

particularly, (who was honored above all the apostles of the circumcision) was looked upon, as excelling in his miraculous operations; insomuch, that they laid out many diseased persons, upon beds and couches, in the streets, in order to their receiving the benign influence, from his shadow, as he passed along, by them. And multitudes from the neighboring towns, brought in their sick and lunatic persons. And they were all healed.

So many uncontested miracles, and such diligence in preaching, made the christian doctrine to spread, through Jerusalem, with a rapid swiftness: Which alarmed Caiaphas, the high-priest, and his creatures, yet the more. He had, by his unwearyed application, procured the crucifixion of Jesus; and had made one effort, before this, to crush the christian religion; and to discourage the two apostles, who were the most active in spreading it. But, when he saw, that it still gained ground, and that their teaching, and miracles, had made such a number of disciples, in that capital city; it awakened the envy, zeal, and indignation, of that high-priest, and his accomplices. So that they were resolved (if possible) to crush christianity, before it spread any farther. His associates, upon this occasion, were, most of them, sadducees; who, as they denied the resurrection from the dead, and a future state of rewards and sufferings, were the most constant and implacable enemies to christianity. And, consequently, the most severe upon them, who attempted to spread it. In the warmth of their zeal, they now apprehended all the twelve apostles, as being the ring-leaders of the sect of the christians, and away they hurried them, for that night, to the common prison. And, there, shut them up, in close custody. But one, stronger and mightier than the whole fanbedrim, even the lord Jesus Christ, whom they so vigorously opposed, dispatched an angel, that very night, who opened the prison-doors, and brought out the apostles: with all ordering them, notwithstanding the opposition of the sadducees, and leading men among the jews, to go and preach, the next morning, publicly, in one of the courts of the temple; and there assert the resurrection from the dead, and that life and immortality, which (however denied by the sadducees) is brought so clearly to light, in the gospel. In obedience to the heavenly message, the apostles, with an undaunted heart, did go to

Ps. 2

Ver. 17. * The sadducees are charged with receiving none but the five books of Moses, but that is a mistake — [See F. Simon's Crit. hist. of the old testament, p. 108, &c. Mr. Jortin's Appendix to the second volume of remarks on ecclesiastical history, No. I.]
The apostles found, preaching in the temple.

It is a wonder, that we hear nothing of Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, all this while. But it is possible to account for his silence, and passive behavior. For, having been cruel and tyrannical in the beginning of his reign, he had rendered himself odious to the Jews. And, therefore, stood in awe of them, as fearing, that they would accuse him of male-administration, before Cæsar, the Roman emperor; and so procure his confinement, banishment, or, (perhaps) even his death. Over-awed by the dread of this, he permitted them, by mere clamor, to prevail to have Jesus crucified. And when they found that they had prevailed, in one instance, and had him so much in their power, it is no wonder, that they proceeded to act as they pleaded, in other instances; and that they harassed the apostles and disciples of Jesus. However, we shall find, in the sequel, that, notwithstanding all Pilate's base compliances, they procured his banishment; just as Flaccus was accused, by those very Egyptians, whose tool he had been so long, and so notoriously.

Though the apostles were preaching, in one of the courts of the temple, according to the command of the angel, who had miraculously delivered them; the high-priest, and his company, supposed that they had them still in safe custody. And, as restless to persecute and suppress them, they called together the sanbedrim; that is, the whole senate of the children of Israel. And then sent men, to bring them out of the prison, and present them before them. The officers, whom they sent, quickly returned, and told their masters; "We found the prison shut, indeed, with all imaginable safety; and the guards, keeping watch, before the doors, with all care and fidelity; but, when we went in, we could find no prisoners."

This report struck a strange and unusual damp upon the whole court. And, when they found themselves baffled so often, the greatest enemies of the apostles began to doubt about the event. They had obstinately held it out, against all the miracles, which Christ himself had worked, and the many evidences of his divine mission; and were continually plotting his death; as satisfied, that that would put an end to all trouble, from that quarter. But, when they found that, after his death, his disciples carried on the same design; and worked miracles, also, in his name, to support their mission and doctrine; they saw no end of the affair, and were at a loss what
They are brought before the sanhedrim.

what course to take next. And, (which greatly added to their sur-
prise,) while they were in this consternation, there came one into
the court, who told them; "The very men, whom you imple-
soned, yesterday, are now teaching the people, in one of the courts
of the temple."

Besides the garrison, which the romans kept, in the tower of
Antonia, the jews priests kept watch, in three places of the temple; 24, &c.
and the levites, in twenty-one places more. Over every one of these
watches, there was a captain. And the captain of the temple seemeth
to have been the chief captain over them all. He was called, by the
jews, the ruler of the mountain of the house. For, (as hath been
observed above,) the romans allowed him to keep the peace, and
prefere decorum, in the courts of the temple. And, as he, and the
guards, which were under him, were at the beck of the sanhedrim,
they were the officers, whom they sent to fetch the apostles. As
the people were attending, upon the preaching of the apostles, in
great numbers; and highly reverenced and respected them; the of-
ficers dared not to bind them, or use any manner of violence to-
wards them, lest the people should have stoned them, for abusing
persons, who gave the most evident proofs of being sent of god,
and miraculously assisted by him. It is strange, indeed, at first view,
that those very people, who had, not long ago, voted for the cruci-
fition of christ, should now show so great an affection for his
disciples. But, if we consider that the common people do, in many
cases, judge, without those fixed, and inveterate, prejudices; which
intangle the minds of their superiors; and how much the beneficent
and uncontestable miracles, worked by the apostles, must have
affected them; the wonder will be much lesse, at this so great and
sudden a change. Especially, if it be, also, considered, how vehe-
mently they longed to throw off the roman yoke, and regain their
antient liberty; — a passionate concern for which, they still retained;
notwithstanding they had so often been baffled. From the many
evident miracles, worked in confirmation of our lord's resurrection,
and ascension; and the strong proofs there were, of his being
the messiah; they (very probably) were still ready to hope, that he
would, some way or other, bring about the deliverance, which they
so much expected, and desired. And, therefore, they over-awed
their superiors, from putting the apostles to death; or doing them
the harm, which they would, otherwise, have done them.

As soon as ever they appeared in the open court, the high-priest began to exclaim against them, in a very passionate manner: "It is but a little while ago, that we called two of you to an account, (faith he,) threatening, and strictly chargeing, you, not to teach the people any more, in the name of this man, this contemptible master of yours. And, yet, contrary to our expresse injunctions, you still proceed; and have, already, filled this large city, Jerusalem, with your doctrine. Nay; and you endeavor to incense the people against us, by throwing upon us the guilt of the murder; as if he had, by our means, been unjustly put to death."

St. Peter, (as the mouth and president, and with the consent and approbation, of the other Apostles,) replied: "It is reasonable that we should obey God, rather than men. The God of our fathers; that God, whom you and we both worship, hath actually raised again Jesus of Nazareth; whom you, not long ago, apprehended; and unjustly brought to the cruel and ignominious death of the cross. Him, I say, hath God raised up, to universal power and dominion; having exalted him, even to his own right hand, as a prince, and a savior, to bring men to repentance; by proclaiming, with sufficient evidence, the doctrine of pardon, and acceptance with God; and giving, unto the descendants of Israel, space to repent; and full assurance, that, upon their repentance, he will grant them full remission of sins. And you, even you, who have been his betrayers and murthers, may, yet, upon your repentance, find pardon at his hands. Nor do we say these things, without proof. For, of the truth and reality of these things, and, particularly, of his resurrection from the dead, we are witnesses. And so, also, is the Holy Spirit, which God hath most graciously given, unto all, who are obedient to this divine doctrine. And the promise extendeth to all, who will yet comply."

This answer (as might be expected, considering their rooted prejudices, and inveterate malice,) cut them to the heart; and put them upon

Ver. 29. "When Socrates (the glory of the heathen world) had made it his busi-ness to teach youth their duty, in a manner far superior to all around him, his enemies so far prevailed against him, as to try him for his life; and get him condemned to drink the fatal cup of poison; — when he was upon his trial, among other things, he was commanded to do no more. To which he bravely answered, "O ye Athe-nians, I do indeed, most affectionately love you. But I will obey God, rather than you." [Vid. Plato. in Apol. Socrat. p. 12.] Gloriously said, indeed! but not more gloriously, by Socrates; than by St. Peter."
Gamaliel's advice to the sanhedrim: 

upon plotting and contriving the death of the twelve apostles, as An. Christi the only effectual way to prevent the farther spread of christianity. And this, indeed, is the common method of wicked men and bigots; when they are armed with power, and engaged to oppose plain truth, and clear evidence! But, as God, by his wise and over-ruuling providence, had hitherto protected the apostles, and was concerned for their farther successful progress; he gave a turn, in the following manner, to the vile proceedings of that wicked confederacy. One Gamaliel, a great Rabbi, or doctor of the Jewish law, (who is said to have been the son of good old Simeon, that took up our Saviour in his arms, and then desired to die in peace, because his eyes had seen the Messiah; Luke ii. 25, &c. and who was actually the master to Saul of Tarus, that was afterwards the famous St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles; — this great Rabbi, I say,) stood up; and, ordering the apostles to be had out of the court, he spoke to the sanhedrim, to mitigate the ardor of their rash zeal.

His influence was much greater, as he was of the sect of the Pharisees. For that was the popular sect, and the body of the Jewish nation were, in sentiments, Pharisees. They were much more friendly to the Christians; not only as they were, generally, milder, and more merciful; but as they (in opposition to the doctrine of the Sadducees) held the resurrection of the dead, and a future state of rewards and punishments. As this Rabbi, therefore, was so great a man with that popular sect, it is no wonder that the following speech had so great an influence upon the sanhedrim; more especially, as he fell in with their sentiments, and plainly intimated his expectation of the Jews regaining their liberty. "Ye rulers of Israel, (said he,) be cautious what you do with these men under examination. You know very well what befell Theudas, who rose some time ago, and gave..."
Gamaliel's advice to the Sanhedrim.

An. Christi gave out, that he was a person of eminence and distinction; sent to deliver our nation from the power of the Romans, and to make them a free people. Upon which pretence, about four hundred men joined him. But he himself was slain; and his followers, also, were either slain, or dispersed; so that his pretensions came to nothing. After him, rose up Judas of Galilee; when this land of Judea was reduced to a Roman province; and the taxes, which are paid to Caesar, were first levied. And a multitude of the people followed him. But neither did he effect our deliverance. For he himself was put to death, and all his followers dispersed. Yet, as we still expect deliverance; and these men have already worked great and evident miracles; it is my advice, that you would permit them to go on, without molestation; as not knowing how much their attempt may end in our favor. For, suppose this their design be no more than an human contrivance; and they are not the persons, who are to deliver us, you will, in a little while, see it all fall to the ground. But, if it should prove, that they are employed of God, in this matter; they may yet, some way or other, bring about what we so ardently desire. And, therefore, have a care of attempting any thing, against their lives; as you would not be found to resist the will of God, who is the only king of Israel; and who hath promised, in his due time, to redeem his people.

This they attempted it, under various heads and leaders: — Even many more than he hath particularly mentioned. [Antiq. l. 17. c. 10. § 4, &c.] However; that Jewish historian hath mentioned no less than three Simonis, who were impostors. [Antiq. l. 17. c. 10. § 6. l. 20. c. 5. § 2. & c. 7. § 2.] And two Judas’s, besides Judas of Galilee, who disturbed Judea, in a very short time. [Antiq. l. 17. c. 10. § 5. & de Bell. Jud. l. 1. c. 33. § 2.—4.] It is, therefore, not improbable, that there should be two Theudas’s engaged, within a few years, in the like bold and desperate undertaking. And Origen against Celsus [1. c. 6. p. 44. edit. Spencer, 4to. Cantab.] hath expressly told us, that the Theudas, mentioned in the Acts, and that mentioned by Josephus, were two distinct persons. [See this particular handled, at large, by Dr. Lardner, in his Credibility of the gospel-history, part 1. edit. 3. p. 921, &c. See, also, Cæsareon. in Baron. annal. exercitat. 2. n. 53. p. 178, &c. Grorius, Hammond, and Whitsby, on this place: Pearson. lect. in Acta apostol. p. 49.]

Miy-av is added in many of the antient manuscripts, versions, and fathers. [See Dr. Mill and Mr. Wetstein.]

Ver. 37. * Josephus hath called him, Judas the Gaulonite. [Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 1. § 1. But he hath called him the Galilæan. [Sect. 6. of the same chapter; & de Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 8. § 1.] Perhaps, he was borne in Gamala, a city of Gaulonitis, and educated, or lived, in Galilee. Otherwise, these two different accounts of Josephus can hardly be reconciled; unlefe we should suppose, that, in one of the places, there is a mistake in the reading. For, Gaulonitis, and Galilee, were distinct countries.

Ver. 39. * Eikene μονος Ιουδας τον γαλατικον ιπι μαχεσαν. [Hom. II. c. 606.]
The apostles scourged, and dismissed.

This speech of Gamaliel, seemeth, to me, to have been made, partly, in opposition to the Saducees; partly, out of policy, to fall in with the popular sentiments, at that time, concerning the apostles; that the people might still keep up their veneration for him, and for the other leading men among the Pharisees. But, he seemeth to have spoken, after that manner, chiefly, from an expectation of a temporal deliverance; and a strong desire to see it accomplished, by the apostles of Jesus, rather than not at all. Had he made such a speech, out of a love to liberty, and free inquiry, he must have gone upon the generous principles of Christianity; and have been, as some have represented him) at least, secretly, a friend to the christians. But, he appeareth to have had no such favorable sentiments of the christians; nor any such concern for the cause, in which they were ingaged. For he is said, to have made, or, at least, to have approved of, a prayer against the christians; which the Jews, to this day, retain in their liturgy; and in which the christians are called heretics, and God is petitioned to destroy them. From what principle, or view, soever, Gamaliel made it, his speech had so good an effect upon the sanhedrim, as that, instead of putting the twelve apostles to death, they called them in, and only ordered them to be scourged. I suppose, it was the inflicting upon them, what St. Paul calleth the forty stripes, save one. For, the Romans did, then, allow the Jews, to make use of that punishment, as they saw proper. And, after the apostles were scourged, the sanhedrim repeated their farther threatenings; "strictly charging them, not to preach any more in the name of Jesus." And, then, they released them.

They (brave and excellent men!) departed from the sanhedrim; not at all dejected; but rather rejoicing, and accounting it an honor, nor less, than to have suffered such a punishment, in the presence of the highest, and most venerable, court, among the Jews; and suffering great shame and indignity, in the esteem of the whole nation.

Ver. 40. "See this, and such like persecutions, prophesied of, Matt. x. 17. and xxv. 35. and xxiii. 34. Mark xii. 5. and xiii. 9. Luke xx. 11."

34. Tiber. 20.

Ver. 41. "See Matth. v. 11, 12."
At Christinor, publicly, to suffer such indignities, as a testimony of their affection for their great Lord and Master; and of their zeal to obey him, in the midst of all discouragements. But they ceased never the more, to preach daily, in the courts of the temple; as well as in the house, where their upper room was; that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised and long-expected Messiah.

CHAP. III. SECT. VI.

Some of the christians, hebrews; and others, hellenists.

The widows of the latter are neglected, in the daily distribution of the charity. Hence seven deacons, or treasurers, were chosen. The apostles proceed in making converts. Acts vi. 1,—7.

There is not all the light, that one could wish for, concerning the distinction of the Jews, into hebrews and hellenists, or graecifs. But the following appeareth to me the most probable account. The Jews, who inhabited Judea, and those of the eastern dispersions, did generally retain the Syro-Chaldaic, which, in the new testament, is called the hebrew language. But, those of the western dispersions, generally, made use of the greek; which was, then, a language, that prevailed, more universally than the French tongue, now, prevails. The former were called hebrews; and the latter, hellenists, or graecifying Jews. And of this sort were most of the Roman, Graecian, and Egyptian Jews; as well as the proselytes of righteousness, of the western dispersions.

After the time of Ezra, the scriptures of the old testament were read, to the Jews, in their synagogues, in the original hebrew; and interpreted in Chaldee: because the common people had forgotten the original hebrew, by living so long in Chaldea. But the Jews, who were planted at Alexandria, in Egypt, seem, generally, in process of time, to have forgot both the hebrew, and the Chaldee. And, by conversing so much in a Graecian city, to have fallen into the use of the greek language. Hence, a translation of the scriptures, for the use of the common people, became necessary. And part of the version,

Ver. 42. = Kar' tou. See the note on chap. ii. 46.
version, which goeth under the name of the septuagint, was made, An.Chrifti
by some of the learned men, among the jews, there; and is thought
to have been first made use of, in that city, instead of the chaldee.
This opinion was first mentioned, by the very learned Scaliger a, Book I.
And herein he has been followed, by other learned men; namely, bishop Walton b, father Simon c, Dryfius, Grotius, Hammond d, Pri-
deaux e, and others. There is a passage in Justin Martyr, and anoth-
er in Tertullian, from whence Scaliger, and his followers, have
attempted to prove, that the hellenistical jews read the scriptures of
the old testament, in the septuagint version, publicly, in their syna-
gogues. But Vitringa f has shown, that the passages, alleged from
Justin Martyr and Tertullian, imply no such thing: And that the
jews did not, any where, at that time, read the scriptures, in any
other language, than the hebrew; though they had, commonly, an
interpreter, who spoke the interpretation in chaldee; but was not
allowed to read it, out of a book. It is true, that, in Justinian's
time, there was a dissension, among the jews, about reading the
scriptures, in the synagogue, in greek; (I suppose, after they had
been read, in the original hebrew.) That caused great divisions and
disturbances, among the jews. Upon which, they appealed to the
emperor Justinian; who, thereupon, published a decree, which is
still extant among his novel constitutions g; whereby he ordained,
that the jews might read the scriptures, publickly, in greek; or in
any other language; according to the country, in which they
should dwell." That decree was made, about the middle of the
sixth century. And, suppose the custom of reading the scrip-
tures, in greek, had been introduced, by some hellenistical jews, a
century before; yet, the other jews, evidently, opposed it, as an in-
novation. It comes, therefore, too late to prove, what was the
custom, in the days of the apostles. Indeed, it does not appear,
ever, to have prevailed. And the custom of the jews is, now, what
it seems, generally, to have been; namely, to read the scriptures, in

in Canon. Ifagog. 278. Crellium in 1 Pet. i. 1. Scaliger. in Johan. xviii. 31. verius
fin.
* In biblia polyglotta, prolegom. ix. p. 60.
* Critical history of the old testament, b. ii. p. 120. b. iii. p. 173, 174. and of the
* In loc.
* Prideaux his connection, &c. vol. 2. p. 45.
* De synagoa vetera, l. 3. part 2. c. 27. p. 954, &c. Bafi prolegom. ad septua-
gint. p. 5.
* Novell. 146. Photii Nomocanon. xii. 3. Prideaux his connection, &c. vol. 2.
p. 50.
Some of the christians, hebrews;

An.Christi their synagogues, in the original hebrew onely. — Upon the whole;

I am inclined to Dr. Lightfoot's opinion; namely, that, by the hellenists, we are to understand the jews of the western dispersion, many of whom lived among the greeks; and who, in general, used the greek language, as their mother-tongue; by way of opposition to the jews of Judea, and of the eastern dispersion; who spoke the syro-chaldaic, which was, then, commonly called the hebrew, tongue.

Onely, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence, of the hellenists reading the scriptures in greek, publicly, in their synagogues; though it is highly probable, that many of them valued the septuagint version, and read it, in private.

Hence, very probably, those jews were called hellenists, or græco-seizing jews; because of their using the hellenistic, or greek, language, in their common conversation. And, by that name, they came to be distinguished from the hebrew jews, who used onely the hebrew tongue. Those different customs are said to have made a sort of schism between them. In allusion to which, St. Paul seems to have mentioned it, among the jews, that he was an hebrew of the hebrews; that is, a descendent of that sort of jews, who were most highly esteemed, upon the account of their using the hebrew language. And Josephus plainly intimateth, that the greek tongue was contemned, by the jews, of Judea, particularly. For, speaking of himself, and his ability to write the jews antiquities, in greek, he says, "I diligently applied myself to the understanding the greek language, after I had made some progress in the rudiments of grammar. Though a custom of our country hindered me, from attaining to the exact pronunciation of it. For, our nation little esteems those, who have learned the languages of several nations."

That this was the distinction, which St. Luke here designed, may, I think, be supported, by the following arguments: (1.) Not only Chrysostom, Occumenius, and Theopphilus; but (according to Grotius,) the syriac version, also, hath rendered ἰλλατίνων, the jews, who understood, or spoke, greek. Now, that version is, by some, reckoned to be very antient and might, possibly, be made, while that distinction was still known, and kept up, among the jews. Nay; it might have

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a See Lightfoot's works, vol. 1. p. 279; 777, &c. vol. 2. p. 558; 659, 660, 661; 783, 784; 787; 798; 802, &c. 810.

b Phil. iii. 5.

and others, hellenists.

have been made, while that distinction was continued: and yet not An. Christi
be so antient, as it is, by some, supposed to have been.

(2.) Numbers of the jews, both of the eastern and western dif-
persons, came up to Jerusalem, to worship, at the great festivals. Book I.
[Acts ii. 5, &c.] And, therefore, it is no wonder, that there should
be several converts to christianity, among each fort. (3.) Though
some have apprehended, that these hellenists were proselytes of righ-
eousness; I can hardly think, that the proselytes of righteousness were
so very numerous, as these hellenists appear to have been. (4.) St.
Paul, (who thoroughly understood the distinctions, which pre-
vailed, among the jews, in his time,) doeth plainly intimate, that
there was a difference between an hebrew and an Israelite; by af-
ferring, that he himself was not onely an Israelite, but an hebrew,
also. For, a person might be descended from Israel, and yet not
be an hebrew, but an hellenist. And he, likewise, intimates, that
there was a difference between both of them; and one, who had
not descended from Abraham, but was a proselyte of a foreign extrac-
tion. For he adds, to his being an hebrew, and an Israelite; that
he was, also, of the seed of Abraham. The same distinction he
hath repeated, [Phil. iii. 5.] where he saith, that he had been cir-
cumcised, the eighth day from his birth; and was descended, not
only of the stock of Israel, and, particularly, of the tribe of Ben-
jamin; but was, also, an hebrew of the hebrews. Whereby, he ap-
peareth, to me, to have plainly intimated, that a man might be
of the stock of Israel, and of the tribe of Benjamin; and, yet, not
be an hebrew of the hebrews: but that, as to himself, he was, both
by father and mother, an hebrew; or of the race of that sort of
jews, which were, generally, most esteemed by their nation.

It may, possibly, be objected, "that, according to the above-
mentioned distinction, St. Paul must have been an hellenist, and
not an hebrew. For, he was borne, at Tarus, in Cilicia, which
was a greek city; and he himself spoke the greek language."

Answer. His parents might, both of them, be hebrew jews, who
had removed into a grecian city; and, yet, retained the use of the
hebrew language; especially in their religious exercises, both private
and public. Though, as living in a greek city, they might, also,
learn that language; and, frequently, use it, in their common dif-
course. Their giving their son an education, among the hebrew
jews.

1Compare, with this place, Acts ix. 29.
2 See Mr. Locke's paraphrase on 2 Cor. xi. 22.
A difference between

An. Christ. 34.
Tiber. 20.

It is evident, that Saul understood the Hebrew language, before he was a Christian. For, at his conversion, our Lord spake unto him, in the Hebrew tongue. [Acts xxvi. 14.] And, by his answer, he showed, that he readily understood what was said to him. Whereas we have no such express proof of his then using the Greek language, supposing he did then understand it; — which I am, indeed, inclined to think he did. Again, [Acts xxvi. 14.] he spake to the Jews, at Jerusalem, in the Hebrew tongue. And, when they heard that he spake to them in Hebrew, they were the more silent. [Acts xxii. 2.] That circumstance procured him a greater regard: They were so much prejudiced in favor of the Hebrew tongue. Though, if he had spake Greek, the generality of them could have understood him.

If St. Paul's parents were Hebrews, (and such he himself asserteth them to have been,) it is no wonder, that they should educate their son, in the same way. For it cannot be questioned, but that many Hebrews of the eastern dispersion, removed into the west; and many of the western dispersion, into the east. And, yet, they, who were so tenacious of the most minute customs, in which they had been educated, would scarcely alter them, immediately, upon changing their climate.

Had the distinction been the same, in this place, with that, Acts ii. 10. it is probable St. Luke would have called them Jews and proselytes, here; as well as there. And the objection, taken from Acts xi. 20. appeareth to me to be wholly groundless. Because I take the reading, there, to be, not ἴλλανίς, belenists, gracists; but ἴλλανις, Greeks, or uncircumcised Gentiles; according to the Alexandrian manuscript, and the vulgar, syriac, arabic, and athiopic versions; and even according to the series of the history itself. But,

(5. and lastly,) What putteth it out of all doubt, with me, that those belenists were not all of them proselytes of righteousness, is St. Luke's observation, [ver. 5.] that Nicolas was a proselyte, of Antioch. Possibly, it may be hence inferred, that some of the belenists were proselytes of righteousness. But, as he alone, of all the seven deacons, is said to have been a proselyte, it is very unlikely, that all the belenists were such. For, it is highly probable that others, of the seven deacons, were belenists, as well as Nicolas. Whereas; by saying, that Nicolas was a proselyte, St. Luke seemeth to have intimated,
The Hebrews and Hellenists.

That all the other six deacons were Jews, by birth, as well as religion; though some of them might be Hellenists; and others, Hebrews.

While Satan's kingdom fell before the preaching of the gospel, swiftly, like lightening from heaven; and the number of the Christians increased exceedingly; the Hellenists (or Graecizing, Jewish, Christian) complained of the Hebrew Christians; because, in the daily distribution of the charity, their widows, who were poor, or sick, or burdened with the care of children, were either wholly neglected; or, at least, not made equal with the widows of the Hebrews. It is highly probable, they esteemed the widows of the Graecists, lesser worthy, and honorable. And, perhaps, no land had been seed, out of Palestine, to raise, or support the fund, but what Barnabas, had sowed, in the island Cyprus. And, therefore, they might think, that the Hellenists had not an equal claim; as the Hebrews had been the chief contributors.

Upon this occasion, deacons were first chosen, in the Christian church. Which office consisted, in serving tables, or taking care of the poor, out of the common bank of the church's charity. Though those first deacons, (who had learned the Christian doctrine, from the Apostles; and had, themselves, extraordinary gifts and powers,) did, also, assist the Apostles, in planting and watering the Christian religion, in the world. And, indeed, any person, who understandeth, and is willing to teach, Christianity, may, still, do it. But, the Diaconate itself consisted only in serving tables. The seven, who were now chosen, were, probably, of the number of the hundred and twenty; upon whom the Holy Spirit had fallen, immediately, from heaven. For, they are said to have been, already, full of the Holy Spirit. [ver. 5.] They, therefore, might (possibly) have some gifts, (as well as sagacity and prudence of their own,) which might more peculiarly qualify them to discharge that office, with wisdom, propriety, and success. The Apostles had, hitherto, had the care of this distribution; as far as their preaching, working miracles, bringing in new converts, and confirming the old, would permit them. And it doeth not appear, that any deacons would have been appointed; had not the contention, between the Hebrews and Hellenists, occasioned it. And, indeed, after these seven were appointed, I do, by no means, look upon them, as the fixed and stated deacons of the church, at Jerusalem; but only as extraordinary officers; appointed to take care of the management of the charitable fund, as long as that great body of Christians kept together.
The seven deacons chosen.

An. Christ. 34. Tiber. 20.

Where they continued, I suppose, for some time, to learn the scheme of Christianity, from the apostles, for their own instruction; and, perhaps, that they might, also, spread it, in their respective countries. These seven are never called deacons, in scripture; though divines have often called them so; nor did they always continue, at Jerusalem, to discharge that office, in that church; as deacons, who were some of the fixed officers of a particular church, were required to do; but are (some of them, at least,) represented, as leaving that service, and travelling to spread the gospel, in other places. And Philip seemeth to have fixed his residence at Caesarea. — Though, therefore, the deacons of particular churches might be, in some measure, formed, according to this pattern; yet, they must have been a distinct sort, as to some circumstances; and, particularly, as to their residence, in one particular church.

As Moses, the great Jewish law-giver, when he was burthened with judging Israel, himself, did (upon the wise advice of Jethro, his father-in-law) choose, from among all Israel, such men, as feared God, men of truth, and who hated covetousness; to bear the burthen with him; to rule over the people, and to be judges, in smaller matters; that he might apply himself, more closely, to the more difficult cases, and more weighty affairs; so did the apostles of our Lord, upon this disorder and complaint. For, when the number of christians, who resided, then, at Jerusalem, was exceedingly increased, so that they amounted to some thousands; and this disorder happened, unavoidably, through the multiplicity of affairs, which ingaged the care and attention of the apostles; they found themselves unable to attend to that, and their superior work, too; with the care and exactness, which the thing required. Assembling, therefore, the christians, (and, probably taking the synagogue for their model,) they proposed the matter, unto the multitude of the disciples, who are here the first time called, brethren. "Seeing it is improper for us, apostles, (said they) to leave the preaching of the gospel, and take up our time, in serving tables; we would have you look out, from among yourselves, seven men, full of the holy spirit; persons of approved fidelity, and an established reputa-

It must be owned, that ἀρατεία is the word made use of, ver. 1. and ἀρατοσθήνα, ver. 2. But they are never called [ἀρατεία, deacons.] Though it is evident, [from 1 Tim. iii. 8. &c. and Phil. i. 1.] that there were stated officers, in the christian church, of somewhat the like nature; who, afterwards, had the name of deacons.

Acts xxii. 8.
The seven deacons chosen.

reputation for wisdom; that, to them, we may safely commit the management of this affair. But, as for our parts, seeing the number of the disciples is so much increased, and such difficulties happen; we find our selves incapable of managing both. And, therefore, we will devolve this inferior trust, upon others; and we (as constituted the prime ministers in Christ's spiritual kingdom; and the only persons, to whom Christ hath, by his spirit, immediately revealed the whole scheme of the christian doctrine) will give our selves up, wholly, to prayer; and to the teaching the great and excellent doctrine of the gospel. The proposal was highly pleasing to the whole multitude of the disciples. And, proceeding, immediately, to the election, they chose Stephen (who had the gift of faith, in an eminent degree; as well as several other of the gifts of the spirit) and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas; and lastly, Nicolas, who had been

Ver. 5. Nicolas.] The sect of the Nicolaitans, in the primitive church, are said to have taken their denomination, from this man. "Those were the Continentes, who placed their religion in abstinence from marriage; and abandoned their wives, if they had any." Upon comparing the several accounts, I cannot but think that this Nicolas himself (if he was the head of that sect) was a much better man than his followers, and held better opinions; tho' they were such as cannot, by any means, be vindicated. "As to himself, he is said to have had a beautiful wife; and that, the apostles taxing him with jealousy, he abandoned her; and permitted her to marry whom she pleased; saying, That we must abuse the flesh. And thenceforward, he (and his children also) lived a single life, in continence." [Vid. Clem. Alex. Strom. 3. laudat. ab Eusfb. Hist. E. l. 3. c. 29.]

This was, indeed, an excessive and outrageous zeal, in him and his family; and an enthusiasm in morality, which neither reason nor christianity requires of us. But his followers are said to have perverted his words to a quite contrary meaning. For, whereas, Nicolas himself intended, that the flesh ought not to be indulged, but kept under, and mortified, and even denied all sensible pleasures. In consequence of that doctrine, he no longer cohabited with his wife: and his son and daughters always remained in perfect virginity.

But his followers interpreted his words, so, as if Nicolas had commanded every one, to abuse the flesh, with all manner of voluptuousness and lasciviousness. [Vid. Vales. in Eusfb. hist. eccles. l. 3. c. 29.] They, therefore, not only abstained from marriage, but most impudently gave themselves over to fornication; holding the lawfulness of a community of women; and doing such things, as it is a shame to mention. [Vid. Iren. l. 1. c. 27.] And, to this doeth exactly agree, the account, which St. John hath given us, [Rev. ii. 6, 15.] when he, by an order from our Lord Jesus Christ, commended the church of Ephesus, for hating both the doctrine and the deeds of the Nicolaitans; which Christ also hated. Those Nicolaitans, or Continentes, who, under a pretence of angelical and extraordinary purity, were many of them debauched, and lead pernicious, did, afterwards, embrace the doctrine of Æons, and of ghosts, male and female; and were generally avoided and abhorred, by the christian church, till the fourth century. But then, their doctrine came in, like a flood; and greatly
The seven, recommended to God, by prayer, &c.

An. Chr. 
Tiber. 20.

A proselyte of righteousness; that is, a Jew, by religion, though not by birth; and he was also a native of Antioch in Syria. It is highly probable, that some of the seven, at least, were grœcians. For they had gœcian names. And the last is expressly said to have been a proselyte of righteousness, from Antioch, in Syria; where the Greek language was much in use. The reason of the thing, also, may teach us as much. For, as it was, upon a complaint of the grœcians, that the seven were chosen, it was proper, that they should have a proportionable number chosen, out of their own body; that their widows might be, no longer, neglected, in the daily distribution of the charitable allowance.

When the multitude had made choice of these seven, they presented them, to the apostles; who recommended them, to God, for his blessing, by prayer, accompanied with the laying on of their hands. But there was no occasion, for the apostles, to impart, unto them, any more spiritual gifts; because they were, before that, full of the holy spirit. Thus qualified, and commissioned, they took care of that branch of the public affairs. They could give, to every one, what the case required; and prevent any, from robbing the church of its treasure; or fraudulently growing rich, thereby; as Ananias and Sapphira thought to have done. When the fund was managed, with such wisdom, fidelity, and vigilance, poor and loathful hypocrites would be afraid of intruding, for the sake of a maintenance. And, in that tender infancy of the church, it was highly requisite, upon many accounts, to commit its weighty affairs, to men of such great prudence and strict integrity.

The body of the christians being thus made easy, again; and the apostles now having more leisure, for attending their main work; the christian doctrine spread apace, and the number of converts in Jerusalem still increased: Among which conversions, it was remarkable, that a great number, even of the priests, and levites, imbraced the christian religion.

greatly prevailed, by means of the mad, phanatical, fondness for coelibacy, and monsttery, which was exceedingly hateful to our blessed Lord, as he himself declares. [Rev. ii. 6; 15.] This made way apace for the grand apostacy. [See Sir Isaac Newton on the prophecies, p. 197, &c. and Mr. Thomas Moore, on the first vision of St. John, p. 28, &c.]

Ver. 7. Vide Mill. in loc.
St. Stephen's zeal raiseth him fierce and cruel enemies; who suborned witnesses against him. His speech, before the sanhedrim. The zealots put him to death; devout men bury him. Acts vi. 8,—viii. 2.

Above the rest of the seven deacons, St. Stephen was one of eminent and distinguished zeal and fortitude. He abounded with the gifts of the holy spirit*, and miraculous powers; which he would not suffer to lie idle, or unimproved. For, to promote christianity, he performed great wonders, and worked many and incontestable miracles, openly, and before great multitudes of people; as well as publicly preached the christian doctrine.

There was a great number of synagogues, in Jerusalem, not only for the natives, but for the Jews of the different dispersions. And, upon this swift progress of christianity, in that large city, some of the Jews of the foreign synagogues, particularly the libertines; (that is, such Jews, and proselytes of righteousness, as had been Roman slaves, and had obtained their freedom; or the descendants of such freed-men; the Cyrenaics, the Alexandrians, and such as came from Cilicia; (among whom, perhaps, Saul was one) and such as came from Asia Minor; entered into debate, with St. Stephen, about religious matters: and, as we may reasonably suppose, more especially about those points, in which they apprehended the Christians to contradict the Jews; and by which, they thought, they subverted their antient religion. But they were unable to manage the dispute, with one, who had such extraordinary gifts; and who spoke with such clear and convincing evidence. And, when they were baffled, in the dispute; and yet resolved not to yield to his arguments; they betook themselves to
St. Stephen falsely accused.

An. Chri 34.

Tiber. 20.

Book I. Chap. III.

Sect. VII.

Acts vi.

St. Stephen had, probably, hinted something of our Saviour's prophecy, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem; and, particularly of that famous structure, the temple, which they so much idolized; and declared, that the most acceptable way of worshipping God, was to worship him, according to the Christian rule, in spirit and in truth. But it was more than the apostles themselves, as yet, clearly and fully understood, that the ceremonial law was to be abolished; and that the rites and customs should be changed, which Moses, their great law-giver, had delivered unto them. It is, therefore, very unlikely, that St. Stephen, who was inferior to the apostles, should have so great and distinguishing a revelation, so early made unto him. But, whatsoever he might say, of the destruction of the city and temple, and of the excellence of worshipping God, in spirit and truth; he, certainly, expressed himself, with all due veneration, both towards the great God; and towards Moses, the Jewish law-giver. However; as Christianity still spread, so very much; though the Sanhedrim had first threatened two of the leading apostles, and had afterwards imprisoned and scourged all the twelve; they were resolved, if possible, to put a stop to it's progress; and, at all adventures, to make an example of some of it's most distinguished votaries. They were afraid, that the people, in general, should be turned away, from them; and follow the apostles; whereby they should lose all their credit and authority: Or that the Romans should call them to an account, for the murther of so remarkable, and so innocent, a person, as Jesus. But, above all, they were greatly provoked to hear persons, whom they looked upon, as so much their inferiors, so frequently, and so publicly, charging them, with the murther of him, whom God had sent, as the great and long-expected Messiah. When, therefore, they had, in vane, tried to stop the progress of Christianity, by severe threatenings, imprisonments, and scourgings, they suborned witnesses; who laid, to St. Stephen's charge, the uttering railing speeches, and reproachful expressions, against the great God, and against his servant Moses, their celebrated law-giver;—persons, whom, of all others, the Jews had in the highest veneration! Such a charge, against one, who was, himself, of the Jewish nation, put the people in a commotion; together with the elders, the chief men of the state; and the scribes, their learned doctors and rabbies. Upon which, in a sudden and violent manner, they apprehended him, and hurried him before the Sanhedrin; whose
His speech before the sanhedrim.

who's minds they seem to have known, very well; and who were An. Christi (very probably) apprized of the design, if not the chief contrivers of it. And, along with St. Stephen, they presented the false witnesses; who affirmed, that that man (pointing to St. Stephen) was always uttering blasphemous and reproachful words, against that holy place, [the temple] and against the law of Moses. “For we our selves (said they) have heard him affirm, that Jesus, 12, &c. the Nazarene, that contemptible master of his, will destroy this sacred place; and change the rites and institutions, delivered unto us, by Moses.”

St. Stephen stood up, to make his defence. And all the court, looking steadfastly upon him, observed an extraordinary brightness, upon his face; reembling that of Moses, when he came down from conversing with God, on mount Sinai;—even that Moses, in whom they gloried, and against whom they had falsely accused St. Stephen to have spoken:—or as if it had been the face of an angel.

But what avail signs and wonders, among the obdurate and incorrigible? For, notwithstanding the goodness of his cause; the miracles, which had been worked, to support it; and the lustre, with which he now appeared; no sooner had the false witnesses given in their evidence, and laid such grievous crimes to his charge, but the high-priest, as the mouth and president of the court, asked him: “Have you heard what is laid to your charge? Are you guilty, or not guilty?”

To which, St. Stephen answered, in a long, noble, and affectionate speech, to the following purpose.

St. STEPHEN'S SPEECH.

My brethren, and fathers:

If you will permit me, without interruption, I will tell you, with all faithfulness and sincerity, what I have said. And (by giving you a brief summary of past dispensations, from Abraham, to this day) the charge, which hath been alleged against me, will appear to be groundless, among all reasonable and unprejudiced persons. For I own, and acknowledge the same God with you; and have as great a veneration, as you can possibly entertain, for all the revelations of his mind and will, which were made to our fathers, by Moses, and the succeeding prophets.

And,
St. Stephen's Speech.

"And, (1.) As to changeing of positive rites and institutions; and paying acceptable worship, in one place, as well as another; I have this to allege: That, in different ages and circumstances, positive and external rites have been different; and holiness was not originally confined to one particular place. For, when a great part of the world was over-run with idolatry; even Terab's family not quite free from it; and Abraham, himself, either an idolator; or, at least, in danger of being infected, by that spreading contagion; then the true God appeared, in the cloud of glory, to that great ancestor of ours, while he was in Ur of the Chaldees, which lieth in Mesopotamia, or between the Tigris and Euphrates; that is, before he dwelt in Charran. And (that the knowlege and worship of the true God might be preferred, in one family, at least) the Lord said unto him, Get thee out of thy native country, and from among thine idolatrous kindred; and go, into the land, which I will point out, to thee. Upon which, he departed, from Chaldea; and dwelt, for some time, in Charran; his father Terab accompanying him thither. And, after his father's death, he had a second order, from God, to remove; and then he came into the land, which you now now

Ver. 2. * Josh. xxiv. 2. The fathers, who dwelt on the other side of Euphrates, are said to have worshipped other gods. And Abraham's father is particularly mentioned, as one of them. But, [Rom. iv. 5.] St. Paul goeth farther, and calleth Abraham, *viro sancto, an ungodly person, or an idolator. For that is the word, by which he usually intends to signify an idolator.  

Ver. 4. * Gen. xi. 31, 32. and xii. 1. and xv. 7. Josh. xxiv. 2, 3 Nehem. ix. 7.

* Gen. xi. 31, 32. compared with chap. xii. 1; 5. It has been objected that St. Stephen's account, in this place, is inconsistent with what is said, Gen. xi. 26; 32. For, as Terah was but 70 years old, when Abraham was borne; and Abraham but 75, when he departed from Charran; these make up no more than 145 years. But Terah lived to be 205, and so must have lived, 60 years, after Abraham left Charran. Whereas; St. Stephen affirms, that Abraham did not go from Charran, till after his father died. * Answer. I would pass over the indecent reflections, which some have made, upon this speech of St. Stephen's; and the forced solutions, which others have given, of this difficulty: and would offer two solutions; either of which will remove the difficulty. The one, is, that, according to the Samaritane copy, Terah lived only 145 years, and then died in Charran. [See the Polyglott on Gen. xi. 32.] The other, is, that Abraham was not Terah's eldest, but his youngest, son; tho' by way of honor and distinction, Moses has mentioned him, the first of the three; as being the great patriarch of the Jewish nation. Gen. xi. 26, 27. In like manner, Shem is mentioned the first of the sons of Noah, [Gen. v. 32 and vi. 10 and vii. 13. and ix. 18. and x. 1.] tho' Japheth was Noah's eldest son. [See Abp Usher's annals, in the year of the world, 1556; 1558.] For Haran was Terah's eldest son, who died in Ur of the Chaldees, his native country; and who left a daughter, called Milcah, old enough to be married to her uncle Nahor, her father's brother.
now inhabit. (In all which places, he was equally acceptable to God, if equally holy. And, therefore, bolliness, and acceptancewith God, do not depend upon families, times, and places.) But God gave him, not one foot of this land of promise, into present possession. For, even there, he bought a burying-place, to bury his dead out of his sight. Yet God promised the land, as an inheritance, unto him; and that it should be possessed, by his seed, after him; though then he had no son. But God promised him, also, a son; and, from him, a numerous issue; and foretold that his seed should sojourn, as strangers, in a strange land, where they should be brought into a long and cruel bondage: And that their wandering about, as strangers; and their being under that heavy oppression, should be for about four hundred years; that is, including their primitive unsettled state, in Canaan; their evil treatment, from the birth of Isaac, who was brother. When, therefore, Terah was 70 years of age, then was Haran borne, being his eldest son. Nabor, his 2d son, was borne, some years after. And Abraham, his youngest son, was borne, 60 years after his brother Haran; and when his father, Terah, was 130 years of age. Now 75, added to 130, makes up 205; the age, at which Terah died, in the land of Charran. [See Abp Usher's annals, anno mundi, 1948, See, also, Wolfius, Dr. Doddridge, and Wetstein, on this place. Ludovici Capellii crit. facr. i. 3. c. 20. § 12. p. 209. Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. 2. p. 666.]

1 Probably Canaan was, then, not so universally given to idolatry, as Chaldea. For there, Abraham met with Melchisedec, who was a worshiper of the true God. And, as he was a king, very likely his subjects were not idolaters. But, in Chaldea, idolatry must have had a large spread, when Terah's family was infected. And, therefore, the calling Abraham, into Canaan, at that time, was a likely mean to keep him from idolatry; as it removed him, from his kindred, who would have been apt to have tempted him, more than strangers; and as he was directed to a land, where idolatry had not then spread so much. Nay; yet farther to deter Abraham, God intimated to him, that, in some future generations, that very land of Canaan should become notorious for idolatry; and then God would take it, from the inhabitants; and bestow it upon his seed. e Gen. xxiii. 3,—16. a Gen. xii. 7. and xiii. 14. &c.

Ver. 6. 1 Gen. xv. 13. Some think, that this is said, in opposition to their fo-journing, as strangers, in the land of Canaan, [Heb. xi. 9.] which was not a strange land; but theirs, by divine promise. But God, himself, teaches us, otherwise, Exod. vi. 4. where he calls Canaan the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they [that is, Abraham and his descendents] had hitherto been strangers. For they were not, as yet, possessed of it, tho' they had a good title to it. [See, also, Gen. xii. 10. and xvii. 8. and xxvi. 3. and xxv. 27. Ps. cv. 11. 12.] This is proper to be taken notice of, in order to explain what immediately follows. [See Wolfius, Dr. Hammond, Dr. Whitty, and Dr. Doddridge, in loc. Bp Patrick on Gen. xv. 13. Ludovici Capellii Critic. facr. p. 210; 281.]
was the first of them, and heir of the promise; and their long
bondage and slavery in Egypt. [And from the cruel treat-
ment of righteous Abram's more immediate descendents, you
may observe, *that temporal prosperity; and the favor of the mul-
titude, are not always the lot of the people of God.*]

But, besides the *prophecies*, concerning their afflictions, God,
likewise, assured Abram, that the nation, which would so much
oppress them, should, at last, fall under great and remarkable
divine judgments; and that then, his seed (in about four gene-
rations, from their going down, into Egypt) should come out,
from thence; and serve him, [*the true God,*] in this promised
land of Palestine. * In confirmation of all which *predictions,
and promises, God gave, unto Abram, the positive rite of circum-
cision; as a seal and token of the truth of what he had declared,

And, accordingly, afterwards, when Isaac (the *son of the promise*)
was borne, he also was circumcised, the eighth day from his
birth.

But, our great progenitor, *Abram*, was in the favor of God, be-
fore circumcision was instituted. Whence it plainly appeareth,
that the divine favor is not confined, through all ages, to the ob-
servation of any one sort of positive institutions. *

From Abram, the promised blessing descended, to Isaac;
from Isaac, to Jacob; and, from Jacob, to the twelve patriarcbs,
the heads and fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. And the
*prophecies*, concerning the oppression of our fathers, in a strange
land, was thus accomplished. The other patriarcbs, envying
their brother, *Joseph*, (for the *predictions*, which God had dif-


Ver. 8. *If St. Stephen had denied the charge; as there were two witnes-
ses, who swore against him, he had been condemned, immediately. If he had owned
the charge; he would, likewise, thereupon, have fallen under immediate condemnation.
If he had gone about directly to have defended the truth of what the witneses had
alleged, against him, the sanhedrim would not have had the patience to have heard
him. As it was, he proceeded the only possible way to be heard, so long, as till he
had vindicated himself; *that is*, by laying down the premises; and leaving them to
draw the proper inferences, from what he said. Just as *our Lord*, in like cases,
and for the very same reason, had often spoken in parables.

I have, indeed, all along, drawn the *inferences*, which follow from St. Stephen's
premises, and assertions; and which he seemeth plainly to have pointed at. But, if he
himself had attempted to have mentioned them, before that incensed audience; they
would pretently have interrupted him, and suffered him to go no farther: as they
actually did, when he came to draw the general conclusion, from all that he had
said.
St. Stephen's Speech.

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covered, to him, in dreams, concerning his future grandeur,) An.Christi.

fold him, to some Midianites; who carried him, into Egypt, and.

fold him, there, for a slave. [From which instance, you may learn

to abate your hard thoughts of Jesus of Nazareth; whom you, in

like manner, through envy, delivered into the bands of strangers

who dealt cruelly with him. And, farther, from the treatment,

which virtuous Joseph met with, you may see, how holy and good "

men may be treated, in a cruel and unjust manner, by men; and, at

the same time, be highly in the favor of God. And, therefore,

it behoveth you, in the present case, to examine carefully, and

to judge with candor. And, finally, I would have you learn,

that holiness, and acceptance with God, are not confined to any one

particular country. For God showed favor to Joseph, in Egypt,

amidst an idolatrous and wicked people; delivering him, out

of all his afflictions; and induing him, with such wisdom and

excellent qualifications, that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, preferred

him, to the highest place, in his kingdom, next to himself.

And God hath, yet more eminently, distinguished Jesus of

Nazareth; whom you crucified; by raising him from the dead,

exalting him to his own right hand, and committing unto him,

all power, both in heaven and upon earth. After Joseph's ex-

altation, a famine happened, in Canaan; which occasioned our

fathers, Joseph's brethren, to go into Egypt, to buy provisions;

first without Benjamin, their youngest brother; and, a second time,

with him. Then Joseph discovered himself to them, and ac-

quainted Pharaoh with their coming. And then, he also sent

for his father Jacob, and all his nearest kindred; who (besides

Jacob, if we include the eleven wives of his sons) amounted to

seventy-five persons. So Jacob went down into Egypt, and

died; as did also his sons, the twelve patriarchs. But their bod-

ies were removed from thence; and Jacob was buried in


Ver. 10. = Gen. xli. 39, 40. and xlv. 8. and l. 20.


Ver. 16. = It is not improbable, but that the bones of the other eleven patriarchs

might be carried, along with the bones of Joseph, when the children of Israel went

out of Egypt; [Exod. xiii. 19.] and be afterwards buried, along with his bones,

when Israel came into Canaan. There was the same reason, for them, to desire to

be buried there, as there was for Joseph; that is, their firm belief, that God would,

in due time, fulfill his promise, in giving Canaan, unto Israel, for a possession. [Gen.

i. 25.
St. Stephen falsely accused.


the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham had bought, of Ephron, the Hittite, and where both Abraham and Isaac had been buried, before him. But the bodies of the twelve patriarchs were carried over, into Sichem, and buried there; in the sepulchre, which Jacob, the descendent of Abraham, bought of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sichem.

And, accordingly, some of the antient Jews affirm, that the bodies of the patriarchs were carried, and buried along with Joseph. [See Dr. Lightfoot on this place, vol. 1. p. 781, 782. and vol. 2. p. 668.] And Jerome, also, [in epitaphis Paula] affirmed, that the twelve patriarchs were buried at Sichem. [See Mr. Wetstein in loc.]


This is a text, upon which critics and commentators have exercised their skill, for some ages. All, that I can do, will be to offer something to alleviate the difficulty; or show how the alteration might possibly happen. For, I think it evident, that there hath been some alteration, made, from the original reading; as this account does, at present differ from that of the old testament.

In the first place, [and were carried over into Sichem] must be referred to [our fathers,] the nearest antecedent, or nominative case. And, then, it will agree with what hath been observed, from Jerome, and some of the antient Jews.

(2.) Without a great many ellipses, there can be nothing fairly deduced from this text, concerning the burial of Jacob. Though I have inferred an account of it, from the old testament. [Gen. xliv. 30, 31, and l. 13.] (3.) The main difficulty, is to show how Abraham came to be mentioned, here. For Abraham bought the burying-place, (where he himself, and Isaac, and Jacob, were buried,) of Ephron the Hittite. [Gen. xxii. 7. &c. and xliv. 30.] Whereas; Jacob bought a parcel of ground, of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sichem. [Gen. xxxiii. 18. 19.] And there, Joseph was buried: [Job. xxiv. 32.] and probably, all the other eleven patriarchs along with him; as hath been hinted already.

To reconcile St. Stephen's speech therefore, with the old testament-history, we must either, (1.) Suppose, that Abraham was here designed for the genitive case, as it is Matt. i. 1. and that the word, [the son or descendent,] is here understood, and ought to be supplied. And, then, the words would run thus; [In the sepulchre, which the son, or descendent, of Abraham bought, for a sum of money, of the sons of Emmor, the father of Sichem.] To confirm this, it may be observed, that 'Abel' must be looked upon, as a genitive case, [Heb. xii. 24.] though the article, is not there prefixed. However; I confess, that Σωσί, or τὰ, doth there precede the word, Abel. Whereas; neither Σωσί, nor τὰ, is here prefixed to the word, Abraham.

That father, mother, brother, or son, are often left to be supplied, by the reader, will easily appear, from the following texts. Σωσί Σωσί is, in this very verse, put for Emmor, the father of Sichem. For, [Gen. xxxiii. 19. and Job. xxiv. 32.] Emmor is afftered to have been the father of Sichem. [Luke xxiv. 10. Mark. xv. 40.]

Maria 'laukev, is put for Mary, the mother of James. [Matt. x. 2. 3.] 'laukev is put for Σωσί signifies James, the son of Zebedee; and 'laukev signifies James, the son of Alphaeus. [See, also, Mark ii. 14. Luke vi. 16.] And, [Acts i. 13. compared with Jude, ver. 1.] 'lauev, signifies Judas, the brother of James. As this was to usual a way of speaking, among the Jews; why might not St. Stephen proceed,
St. Stephen's Speech.

"And, when the time drew nigh; the time, appointed, for the accomplishment of that solemn promise, which God had, by oath, confirmed unto Abraham; the people of Israel multiplied exceedingly, and grew very numerous, in Egypt. And, as Joseph had been dead, two or three generations ago; and the kingdom of Egypt transferred, to another family; they had forgot his kind offices, to their nation; and began to envy our kindred, and to treat them cruelly and invidiously; makeing their lives a burthen, through slavery and bondage; and useing them, in the most severe and tyrannical manner. Nay; the Egyptians thought, even to have destroyed them, from being any longer a people, by ordering their male children to be murthered, at their birth; or causeing them, afterwards, to be exposed. In which perilous time, Moses was borne; who was, indeed, a divinely beautiful

by giving them the most brief hints of a fact, with which they, all, were so well acquainted; and do it, by such an ellipsis, as they could easily supply? Especially, as it signified nothing, to the main argument, whether Abraham or Jacob, had bought the lepulchre? But,

2. Bochart hath proposed another way, of solving the difficulty; which would have done much better, than the last, if there had been any antient manuscript, version, or fatherversion, or reader, of the new testament; who thought the verb, wanted a nominative case to it: — that Abraham was the person designed; and that this word, by degrees, crept into the text, and gradually prevailed to be the common reading. [Vid. Hieroz. l. 2. c. 47. Knatchbull has another solution, which does not appear to me so easy and natural.

Le Clerc [in art. crit. part. 3. sect. 1. c. 12. § 4.] imagines "that IAB was writ, by way of contraction, for IAKNE, that possibly the I might be writ imperfectly; or, through length of time, rubbed quite out; and that the transcriber took it, for the beginning of the word, Abraham. So IIA used to be writ for SETHA, IAHM for " "TROTΣΛΛΑΜΗ, and ΔΔ for ΔΑΣΙ." But Wolfius has very justly observed, that the contractions are not of such antiquity, as that such a mistake should thereby creep into the most antient copies. And that, if one transcriber had made such a mistake, it is a wonder that all the antient MSS. versions and fathers should follow him. If it be considered, how antient the books of the old and new testament are; and how often they have been transcribed; it will not be wondered that some difficulties should arise, from the mistakes of transcribers. Though there are very few, or none, but what may easily be rectified, in matters of moment. As to this, which is a fact, upon which neither our faith nor practice, no, nor even St. Stephen's defence of himself and his doctrine, doth at all depend; it is visible, that the difficulty might happen, either of the two ways above mentioned; that is, either by a curt way of speaking, or by a transcriber's adding the word Abraham.] And, therefore, it may be rectified, by either of these two easie and probable conjectures. So that no argument can hence be fairly alleged, against St. Stephen's vindication and apology; and much lose against the christian revelation.

Ver. 19. ' Joseph. Antiq. l. 2. c. 9. § 1.
St. Stephen's speech.

beautiful and engaging child. And, therefore, his parents concealed him, for three months. But when they could conceal him, no longer; and he was exposed, in the river Nile; by a good providence, Pharaoh's daughter happened to come by; that way; and pitying the poor, helpless, infant, she took him up; and adopted him, for her own son. By that mean, Moses had a most liberal education; being instructed in all the learning of the Egyptians; which was, then, one of the most learned nations, upon earth. And (though he could not speak fluently) he became mighty and powerful, both in word and deed; that is, his speeches were solid and wise; and his actions virtuous, honest, and brave.—This instrument of divine providence, thus remarkably preferred, and qualified for the great work; having been instructed in the knowledge of his being an Israelite, by extraction; and acquainted with the principles of the religion of his renowned ancestors; he had his heart touched with the calamities of his brethren, the children of Israel; and was much more intent, upon their deliverance; than upon all the riches, and splendor, of the Egyptian court. And, when he was full forty years old, he was willing to show his own kindred, how ready he would be, to assist them; when the time should come, in which God had promised to work out their deliverance. And, being so much grieved, and so sensibly affected, with their calamity, he left Pharaoh's court; and went to visit the afflicted Israelites, as they were drudging at the brick-kilns. And, there, he happened to see an Egyptian, who had subdued an Israelite; and seemed plainly resolved to take away his life. Upon which, Moses could
St. Stephen's Speech.

I could refrain no longer. But ran to rescue the innocent person. And, in defending him, he happened to slay the Ægyptian. By which vigorous attempt, in their favor, he, in a most evident and affectionate manner, discovered his readiness to deliver them; when the time appointed should come. And he supposed that, by such zealous and kind actions, he should make the Israelites understand, that he was the very person, whom God had designed, for their captain and deliverer. But (though I have the greatest veneration, for this our excellent law-giver; yet) so stupid were they, that they understood not.— That he might convince them of his concern for them, he appeared, among them, again, the next day. And, then, he found two Israelites quarrelling; whom he would gladly have reconciled; arguing thus with them: Why ! you two are brethren; and have other enemies now. Why will you injure one another? But he, who did the wrong, spurned at him, and thus reproached him: What makes you so busy to interpose, as a ruler, or judge, over us? I know your ways, better than you may imagine. Perhaps, you have a design to kill me; as you did the Ægyptian, yesterday. When Mofes found, that his slaying the Ægyptian was known; and that even his own brethren reproached him, with it; though he ran that hazard, in their just defence; he was afraid, it would come to the ears of Pharaoh, and indanger his own life. He, therefore, fled into the land of Midian. Where (though he was a stranger, at his first coming) he soon got acquaintance; and married Zipporah, the daughter of Jetbro, a very great man in that countrey. And there Mofes lived, 'till he had two sons. In all which prudent. But it must be remembered, that according to the history, [Exod. ii. 12.] Mofes used all proper precautions; and looked every way, to see, whether there was any Ægyptian, in sight; before he ventured to rescue his brother, from the hand of the oppressor, and from death. And, had not the Israelites themselves blabbed it; it is highly probable, Pharaoh would never have known it. So that it is easy to vindicate, both the justice, and prudence, of this action of Mofes.

Ver. 25. It doeth not appear, that Mofes had, as yet, any prophesie, to assure him, that he was to be the person, who should deliver Israel. But, knowing that there was a divine promise of deliverance, made to, and retained in, the house of Israel; — that he himself had been extraordinarily preserved, and educated; and that the time, of their deliverance, was approaching; he showed himself willing to run all hazards and dangers, with the people of God, rather than continue in the splendor of the Ægyptian court; and that, when the time should be fully come, he would cheerfully join, and head them, in order to rescue them, from their bondage, and cruel slavery.
which time, he was blessed; and as acceptable to God, as he
would have been, in this land of Canaan.

Forty years after his departure from Ægypt, as Moses was
keeping the flock of Jethro, his father in law, (who was prince
of Midian;) and had, one day, drove the flock, to the back-side
of the desert; he came unto the mountain, called Horeb, or Sinai.

And, there, the angel of the Lord appeared, unto him, in the cloud
of glory, like a flame of fire, in the midst of a bush. And yet the
bush was not consumed. At the first view, Moses wondered at
the unusual sight. But, going towards it, to observe it more
narrowly, the voice of the Lord issued thence, saying, I am the
god of thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; with whom I en-
tered into covenant. And I will faithfully accomplish, all, that I
have promised to them; or to their seed, after them. This unex-
pected admonition struck a terror, upon Moses, and a trembling;
and made him afraid to look again. But the voice added: Put
off thy shoes. For thou standest upon holy ground. I remember
thy concern for Israel. And I will send thee into Ægypt. — And (such was the difference between God's
judgment of things, and that of our fore-fathers; that) the very
person, whom they had rejected, with that scornful insult, Who
made thee a ruler, or a judge, over us? That very person, I say,
did God send, as their leader and deliverer, under the guidance
and protection of the angel; who appeared unto him, in the
burning bush. Moses first worked miracles in Ægypt, to con-
firm his divine mission. And, then, lead all Israel out of Ægypt,
and worked more miracles, at the red sea; and in the wilder-
ness, for forty years together. But, though he was a great prophet,
our celebrated law giver, and the captain of salvation from the
Ægyptian bondage; (upon all which accounts, I greatly reverence
him,

Ver. 31. From Moses his suprise, it seemeth, that he had never seen the divine
glory, before this.

Ver. 34. Seeing, I have seen.] St. Stephen here follows the 70. which
exactly answers to the hebr. Exod. iii. 7. וָרָאתָא רַעַב רַעַב, raab raab. But this paraph-
ology is not peculiar to the hebrews. It is used, also, in greek authors. Σαμωνιονον [Lucian. dialog. 2. Menel. & Proteus, ad fin. See also, Polybius and Arrian, as quoted
by Raphelius. Consult Wulfius; and compare what is said, in a note on James
v. 17.]
St. Stephen’s speech.

“him, and his law; yet he himself hath intimated, that we are not to rest in his law; but to look farther; even unto the messiah; to whom I am now attempting to bring you. For, [Deut. xviii. 15.] a prophet, (said Moses to Israel) will the Lord, your God, raise up, unto you, from among your brethren, like unto me; that is, one, who shall be a savior, and law-giver, or introduce a new dispensation. Unto him you are obliged to attend.—

That Moses, who thus prophesied, was the very person, who was so eminent, in the vast assembly of Israel; and who conducted that numerous, stubborn, people; in their long and difficult march, through the wide wilderness; who had the presence of the angel of the Lord, in a cloud of glory, both for his defence and direction. Which angel journeyed, from place to place, with our fathers; and with which, Moses, at mount Sinai, familiarly conversed; that is, face to face, as a man with his friend. For he had the honor to receive the living oracles of truth; that he might impart them unto us. But, such was the disposition of Israel of old, towards the person, whom God sent, with a revelation of his mind and will; that (notwithstanding all his excellent qualifications; and the clear evidences, which attended his mission) our fathers were rebellious, and disobedient. And, by the most unaccountable stupidity, and most amazing folly, they desired, rather to return to the slavery and idolatry of Egypt; than be conducted, by him, to truth, virtue, and liberty. And, so bent were they upon this egregious folly, that even within forty days, after God had given them the law, from mount Sinai, in so tremendous a manner, they desired Aaron to make them idol-gods, to go before them, and guard them, back again, into Egypt. For, as to Moses, who had brought them out of Egypt, (because he tarried, some days, with God, in the mount, to receive the model of their religion and polity) they pretended, they could not tell what was become of him.” Aaron was so very
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very weak; as to comply with their request. And, as the Egyptians represented their god, Apis, by an image, made like an ox, or a calf; so the Israelites thought to have represented the true god, by such an image; or hoped, that, to that visible representation, they might confine his more peculiar presence. Accordingly; Aaron made an idol, which bore the resemblance of a calf. And, before it, they immediately began to offer sacrifices; rejoicing, and dancing, before that idol mediator; or that symbol of the divine presence; which was the work of their own hands. [You, therefore, are not the first, who have rejected the laws, which came from God; but evidently approve yourselves the children of your wicked fore-fathers.]

The Egyptian worship of Osiris, under the species of a golden bull; and of Apis, under the symbol of a living ox; are said to have been really the worship of the sun and moon, the most glorious of all the host of heaven. As, therefore, your fathers, the Israelites, of old, were so bent upon imitating the idolatry of Egypt, and other neighboring nations; the mind of God was averse to them; and he turned their sin into their punishment; suffering them to proceed, from the worship of him, by images, to worship the host of heaven themselves; that is, the creature, instead of the creator. And thus they stand reprobated, by the antient prophet; [Amos v. 25, 26, 27.] O ye house of Israel, can you think, that your sacrificing slain beasts to me, for the forty years, in which I miraculously provided for you, in the wilderness, could be acceptable? Or can you suppose, that I was ignorant of your unwillingness to sacrifice unto me at all; when you willingly sacrificed to the golden calf, made by Aaron; and afterwards to Baalpeor. You have, serving, that they have used this phraseology. Both Beza and Grotius have represented it as an hebraism. But Raphelius hath shown, that it was made use of, by the best greek writers; such as Herodotus and Xenophon. Which is confirmed by Wolfius in loc.


Ver. 43. There is no account, in the history of Moses, of the Israelites worshiping Moloch, or Remphan, in the wilderness. And here is evidently an end of the question, ver. 42. It seems, therefore, most likely that the prophet, Amos, proceeded to charge them with the idolatries, of which they were afterwards guilty; and for which the ten tribes were carried into a captivity, from whence they never returned. [See Beza, Grotius, and Dr. Doddridge.]
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"have, also, since that, carried about, the shrines, in which were placed the images of your god Moloch, (or the sun ; ) and the star, which represented your god Chiun ; (Remphan, or saturn ; ) which shrines, with their images placed in them, you used to carry about, in a pompous procession, at your festivals ; and before which you used to worship your idol-gods? As a punishment for which Acts vii.

"idolatry, you shall be carried captive into Assyria, beyond Damascus, and even beyond Babylon.

2. "As

* Compare, with this text, Jer. viii. 2. and xix. 13. He is called here Remphan. But he is called Chiun, Amos v. 26.

" Vul-can, I conjecture to have come from a transposition of the vowels of יולכ,Remphan.

Bal-kian, the lord Kiun ; the eastern idol, mentioned by one of the Jewish prophets, and joined with Moloch, whom the Rabbins, with good reason, take to be Saturn. It was customary, among the easterners, to add Baal, or lord, to the proper name of their gods ; as the later added pater, in Jupiter, Mars-pater, Dies-pater, Liber-pater, Fame-pater, &c. [Lucillus apud Laelius. Divin. institut. i. iv. c. 3.] The repetition of it, was so frequent, before their numerous deities ; that our sacred writers generally mention them in the plural number, יוולכ, the Baalim, or lords.—

" Vul-can, saith Herodotus, was, among the oldest and most honored of the Egyptian gods : and, by their neighbors, the Assyrians and Phoenicians, was identified with Saturn and the sun ; because of their similar nature. Lingua Punica, Bal Deus dicitur : apud Africos autem Bel dicitur, & Saturnus & sol : sait Servius, on occasion of Belus, his cup, mentioned by Virgil—Bal-Kiun, Bul-kan, [or Vulcan] is the Lord-fire, the child of the sun ; just as he is in Greek, or rather Syriac, ἰδρας Father-fire. The antients supposed he was transmitted to earth, in a shooting star, which kindled the volcanoes in Lemnos. Upon which, they built the fable, put in his mouth, by Homer. The Orphic initiations, appointing a god, or the attribute of a god, to every sphere, give Periconius to the sphere of Saturn ; which the learned Bochart derives from Kiun, his eastern name. The real wandering Jew, Benjamin, one of the greatest travellers of the east, has this description of the solar worship, in his Itinerary. "There is a people, sais he, of the power of Chus, addicted to the contemplation of the stars. They worship the fun as a god ; and the whole country, for half a mile round their town, is filled with great altars, dedicated to him. By the dawn of morn, they get up, and run out of town, to wait the rising fun ; to whom, on every altar, there is a confeated image; not in likeness of a man, but of the solar orb, framed by magic art. These orbs, as soon as the sun rises, take fire ; and resound with a great noise; while everybody there, men and women, hold censers in their hands, and all burn incense to the sun."

One would suspect those orbs to have been filled with some nitrous composition ; and kindled, by a collection of the rays. It nicely explains, not the shrine of Moloch (which is easily understood to be a portable tabernacle, such as was used by the Egyptians) but the image of Kiun, the star of your gods, which you have made to yourselves. See Amos v. 26. [Confer the Letters on Mythology, p. 89, &c. published by Dr. Blackwall, principal of the college, at Aberdeen. See, also, Spencer de legib. heb. edit. Chappelow, p. 604, &c.]
2. "As to fixed places of divine worship. Besides the hints, which I have already given you; I would farther observe, that, though our fathers were so very prone to idolatry, yet so gracious was God, as to grant unto them a continual symbol of his blessed presence, and that of his own appointing; which resided in the tabernacle, reared by Moses, according to the (model, or) pattern, which God had showed him, in the mount. Which tabernacle, our fathers, afterwards, brought, into this land, under the conduct of Joshua. For God assisted him, to drive out the idolatrous, and abominably wicked, Canaanites; and gave our fathers the possession. But the tabernacle, though built with such care and exactness, was the place, where the symbol of the divine presence resided; and towards which they were ordered to worship; only 'till the time of erecting the temple; that is, 'till a little after the reign of king David; who was a person, that, for his deep repentance of his two heinous sins, and for his main conduct, was highly approved of God; and was desirous to manifest his zeal for the worship of God, by building unto him a most magnificent temple. But, though God was pleased with king David's pious zeal, yet he laid so little stress upon having such a temple, that he would not suffer him to build it; because he had been a man of war. And, therefore, he onely provided materials. And (according to divine direction) the building of the temple was deferred to the peaceful reign of king Solomon, his son.

[And you ought to consider, that, if king David was not fit to build the temple, because he was a man of blood; how much less fit are they, that such a structure should be continued to them, who have murdered the great Messiah, king David's son and Lord? And, farther; it is evident, that king David and the patriarchs worshipped God, as acceptably, before this temple was built. Though I readily acknowledge, that both the tabernacle, and temple, were erected, according to the will and appointment of God. And, when used agreeably to the original design and intention of them, I would be so far from speaking detractingly of them; that, on the contrary, I most highly reverence them.

But, you, certainly, set too great a value upon this temple; when you would confine to it the divine presence, and all accept-
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"table worship. For king Solomon, at the dedication of it, very An. Christi
justly acknowledged, that the presence and favor of the most high
GOD are not confined to any temple made with hands: as, also,
faith the prophet; [Isa. lxvi. 1, 2.] Thus faith the LORD, heaven is
my throne, and the earth is my foot-stool; where, or what, is the
house, that you will build unto me? (or to what particular place
would you confine my presence? Have not I made all things?
And am not I, the omnipresent being, able to shew favor to the
pious and virtuous, in one place as well as another, through-
out the whole creation? Nay; the whole creation is a temple
too narrow for God to be confined to.

Thus have I given you a brief account of the various periods
of revelation, or the several dispensations of God to men; from
the time, in which Abraham, our renowned ancestor, was called,
out of idolatry, to the knowledge of the true GOD, unto this very
day, when the kingdom of the Messiah has begun to take place;
— that seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth
are to be blessed! And what I would have you understand, by
all that has been said, is this: That, in various ages and circum-
stances, God hath made various revelations, and appointed diffe-
rent positive institutions: That temporal afflictions are consistent
with being in the divine favor; and that a temporal Messiah is
not to be expected. But that God, who of old laid the plan,
for the successive dispensations, is now going to introduce the last and
best of them, by erecting his spiritual kingdom, under the Messiah;
who is none other than Jesus of Nazareth. And it is no won-
der, that you should treat him, as you did. For you are a stub-
born, obdurate, people; who, though you boast of the circum-
cision of the flesh, yet you are uncircumcised both in heart and
ears, and incorrigibly bent upon your own wicked ways. You
even reject the very means, which ought to bring you to repen-
tence; refusing the gracious invitations and offers of the spirit
of God, and treading in the steps of your disobedient ancestors.
Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? Nay;
yet they even slew many, who prophesied of the coming of that righ-
teous person, the Messiah; (whom Abraham, Moses, Israel, David,
Solomon, the tabernacle, the temple, the law, the prophets, and all
the past dispensations, did unanimously point at; and some way
T. 2

Ver. 48. 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Chron. vi. 18.

Tiber. 20.
Book I.
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Acts vii.
St. Stephen's Speech.

or other tend to prepare men for his coming. And yet, notwithstanding all this vast apparatus of a long succession of promises, prophecies, shadows, and representations, which God, from age to age, hath given, to prepare you for the reception of him;) You, who ought to have received him with the greatest affection and regard, and protected him, from any injurious treatment from others;— You yourselves, I say, have basely betrayed and wickedly murthered him. And, as your sin is much greater than that of your fathers, who rejected only Moses, and the prophets; you may reasonably expect (unless you speedily and sincerely repent) that the judgments of God, which followed them, will come upon you, to the uttermost. Nor will it be in the least wonderful, if God should depart from you; and, what you have charged me with asserting, should come to pass; namely, that your city and temple should be destroyed; and your nation slain, or carried away into a long and various captivity. I have charged you with despising, and murthering the Messiah. But how should you be supposed to attend to one, who came in so lowly and humble a manner; when the law, in which you so much boast, was published, in an awful, pompous manner, amidst troops of angels; and yet you have not kept it.

The malice of his enemies prevented his saying any more. For, upon this public and home charge of disobedience to God, disrespect to the law of Moses, and murthering the great Messiah, they were cut to the heart; and could not forbear showing it, by gnashing upon him with their teeth. And the clamor and uproar were so great, that it was impossible to proceed.—St Stephen, nevertheless, continued unshaken in mind, and full of fortitude; and, by an extraordinary impulse and assistance of the holy spirit, he looked up; and, in a clear and lively vision, descryed the glory, whereby God manifesteth his gracious presence, in heaven; and Jesus standing at the right hand of that divine glory; namely, in a posture, which intimated,

Ver. 53. k ἀπὸ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἐνταῦθα. among troops of angels.] Vid. Glaßer philolog. sacr. p. 525. and Grot. in loc. Compare, also, with this place, Deut. xxxiii. 2. Psal. lxviii. 17. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2. That is, with an accusative case, is, in several places, put for is, with an ablative, see on 2 Thess. ii. 4. Grotius has well observed that ἀπὸ τῶν ἀγγέλων is a military term. [See Judg. iii. 23. in the 70. 1 Maccab. vi. 35. 2 Maccab. xii. 20.] If the great angel of the covenant delivered the law, from Mount Sinai, attended by troops of inferior angels, it seems to me to reconcile all the texts, which speak of this subject.
intimated, that he was ready to support and receive him. That discovery was made to him, to animate him, bravely to go through, with his approaching martyrdom. And, when the tumult was a little ceased, he cried a loud, and in a kind of transport: "Be hold, I even now see heaven opened, and the son of man standing on the right hand of God." At this, the multitude of his enemies lost all patience; some drowning his voice with their clamor; others stopping their ears, as if he had spoken such blasphemy, as they were unable to bear. And the whole multitude, with one accord, ran furiously upon him; and tumultuously (not upon a judicial trial, and legal sentence; but, after the manner of their zealots,) they hurried him away, out of the city, to stone him. For the execution of criminals, in the wilderness, was to be without the camp. And, in imitation of that, when they settled in Canaan, they used to execute their criminals, without the city.

Stoneing to death was the punishment, appointed, in their law, for blasphemers, and false prophets. And (upon a pretence that St. Stephen was guilty of one, or both, of these crimes) they ventured upon stoneing him. Though the power of life and death, in a legal and judicial manner, was taken from them, and lodged in the hands of the romans only.

If Pilate, the roman procurator, had called them to an account, for such a riot and murder; the leading men among the jews would have been very ready to allege, "that they were going onely to try him, according to their law: but that he spoke such intolerable blasphemy, as that the populace fell upon him, and stoneing him, before they had proceeded to passe any sentence upon him."

Nay, suppose farther, that Pilate would not have been put off, with that pretence; but had punished some of the jews, for putting St. Stephen to death; without leave obtained, from him, upon a legal trial; they would not have failed to have complained, when christianity should afterwards have spread, and made a noise in the world:

Ver. 56. 1 Isa. vi. 1. compared with Dan. vii. 13, 14.
Ver. 57. 2 The jews, about this time, when they apprehended that any person spoke blasphemy, made no scruple of stoneing him, immediately, without any trial. [See John v. 17, 18. and viii. 58-59. and x. 30,—39. and Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c. part i. p. 70. 2d edition; p. 117. 3d edition.]
Ver. 58. 3 Levit. xxiv. 14; 23. Numb. xv. 35. Deut. xvii. 5. i Kings xxi. 13. So Jesus suffered, without the city Jerusalem. [John xix. 17; 20. Heb. xiii. 12, 13.]
4 John xviii. 31. See Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c. part i. p. 69, &c. 2d edition; p. 116, &c. 3d edition.
St. Stephen stoned.

An. Chr. 34.

Tiber. 20.

Book I.

Chap. III.

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Acts vi.

58.

world: "Why! we apprehended some of the most active christians, and endeavored to suppress them, and to put a stop to their increasing. But you punished us for it. And they now spread, by your connivance and protection." But Pilate (as hath been already observed) had done such things, himself, that he stood in awe of the Jews; and dared not to call them to an account, even for some of the greatest and most notorious crimes. Nor would the providence of God permit the Jews, to have such a plea, against christianity; as if it wanted to be supported by the secular arm.

The manner of their stoning persons, was thus: "A cryer went before him, who was to die; proclaiming his name, his crime, and who were the witnesses against him. When they were come, within two or three yards of the place of execution; they stripped the criminal naked; except a small covering, for decency, about his midle. The place of execution, from which they threw down the malefactor, was above twice the height of a man. Upon which, he was made to ascend, with his hands bound. When he was ascended, the witnesses laid their hands upon him, and then stripped off their upper garment, that they might be fitter for going through the execution." [And the witnesses, who stoned Stephen, committed their upper garments, to the custody of a young man, whose name was Saul. We shall have occasion to speak of him, hereafter, more at large. It will be sufficient, at present, to say, that he was glad of the office; and pleased, indeed, with any thing, which molested the christians, to whom he had then the greatest aversion.] "From that high place, one of the witnesses threw down the criminal; and dashed his loins against a great stone; which was laid there, for that very purpose. If that killed him not; then the other witness threw, from the same height, a great stone upon his heart, as he lay on his back, and was stoned with the fall. If that dispatched him not; then all the people fell upon him with stones, till he died." St. Stephen, in the midst of all this popular fury, and such cruel treatment, showed his dying behavior to be as remarkable, as the latter part of his life had been. For, notwithstanding their rage and virulence, he, with great composure, prayed; "Lord Jesus

See what Dr. Lightfoot [vol. i. of his works, p. 280.] hath quoted from the Talmud; and other commentators upon this place, from other antient Jewish authors. See, also, Ainsworth on Lev. xx. 2. and xxiv. 23.

Dout. xiii. 9, 10. and xvii. 7.
St. Stephen stoned.

"Jesus (the true Christ, or Messiah) receive my spirit." And An., Christi then, makeing a shift to get upon his knees, in the midst of them, he most meekly and charitably, in imitation of his great Lord and Master, cried aloud: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge, so as to punish them according to the weight and aggravation of it: but yet lead them to repentence, and grant them full remission." And, having said so, he composed himself to die, like one falling asleep. And, by his first undergoing a violent death, in defence of Christianity, he hath obtained the honorable name, and memorial, of the first Christian martyr.

The Jews, who came up, from distant countries, to worship God at the temple, were called devout persons. A number of them had, since their last coming up to Jerusalem, embraced the Christian religion. And St. Stephen had, perhaps, been one of those devout persons; though (most probably) he had been a more early convert to Christianity, and one of the hundred and twenty. Notwithstanding his having been stoned, as a false prophet, and a blasphemer, when Christianity was fallen under the popular odium; yet he had not the burial of a malefactor. But some of those pious and devout men, who had also embraced the gospel, even in the height of the rage of the Jews against him, ventured to testify their great esteem of the proto-martyr. For they took away his body, from the place, where the people had covered him with stones, prepared for him a decent funeral; honored him with their presence. Nay; and even carried his body to the grave, where they made great lamentation over him.

Ver. 59. As to praying to our Lord Jesus Christ, see on 1 Thess. iii. 11.] So our dying Lord had committed his spirit, into his father's hands. Luke xxiii. 46. Ver. 60. [Luke xxiii. 34.

This prayer of St. Stephen was heard, and remarkably answered in the conversion of Saul.

Ver. 2. [Acts ii. 5. Dr. Doddridge is mistaken, when he saith, that "I thought (with Dr. Hammond and Mr. Baxter) that the persons, who are here called devout men, were proselytes; and that I, also, imagined St. Stephen to have been a proselyte." I do not know that I ever thought, much less affirmed, any such thing.

w Gen. 1: 10.

CHAP.
The gospel spread into Judæa.

CHAP. IV.

Of the first removal of the gospel from Jerusalem; and particularly of its spreading over Judæa. The character and behavior of Saul of Tarsus. Acts viii. 1—4.

With St. Stephen’s life, ended the great harvest of the Jews, at Jerusalem. In that city, first of all, (though it had persecuted and murdered him) Jesus ordered his apostles to begin and preach the gospel. And God, in his good providence, permitted the christians, there, to keep together, till many of them had learned the scheme of christianity, from the apostles, who were the only persons, that had received it, from our Lord Jesus Christ. But, when divers of the christians were well instructed, by the apostles; and had received spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, themselves, (though in an inferior degree) they became capable of spreading christianity. And, then God permitted them to be dispersed; that they might go and plant it, in other places. For, the perfection did not cease, with the martyrdom of St. Stephen; but grew, and raged with the more violence. He had charged the Jews, with the murder of the Messiah; as their wicked fore-fathers had murdered the prophets, who had prophesied, before-hand, of his coming. And he had also accused them, of breaking the law of Moses; for which they pretended so high a veneration. But, above all, the spreading of christianity had struck, so much, at their unjust authority over the people; that the leading men, at Jerusalem, as they had succeeded in cutting off St. Stephen, resolved upon nothing less, than the destruction of the whole sect of the christians. Among their most violent persecutors, there was a young man, whose name was Saul. It hath been, already, observed of him, that the false witnesses, who stoned St. Stephen, committed their upper garments to his custody, ’till they had finished the execution. And he was not averse to the office. For he heartily approved of that cruel treatment of the first martyr; and would have been glad to have crushed the christian religion entirely.
The history of Saul of Tarfs.

Tirely. He was borne at Tarfs, the chief city of the province of Cilicia. His parents were both of them bebre Jews; and his father, who was of the tribe of Benjamin, was a freeman of Rome. How he came by his freedom, I have not found any satisfactorie account. But, as Saul was the son of a freeman, he was free-born. To that freedom were annexed several great privileges; which he afterwards did not fail to insist upon, where-ever it could be of any service to him. He was, most probably, educated, in his younger days, in Tarfs, his native city; where, as Strabo observes, there were several schools and scholars, not at all inferior to those of Athens, or Alexandria. And, where the gentiles had such seats of learning, the Jews very often received some advantage thereby. That was, very likely, the place, where Saul attained his skill, in the Greek literature. For that he was no stranger to their philosophy, and poetry, appeareth from his quoting Aratus, (who was of the same province of Cilicia;) Menander, and Epimenides. From Tarfs, he went to Jerusalem; where he was entered into the sect of the Pharisees, and studied the law of Moses, together with the traditions of the elders. By sitting at the feet of Rabbi Gamaliel, and using great diligence and application, he made a progress, in the Jewish learning, beyond most of his equals in age and standing. He is said to have sat at the feet of Gamaliel. For (according to the Jewish custom) the masters sat upon a seat, raised pretty high; and their scholars used to sit, at their feet, upon mats, or upon the ground. In allusion to which, Mary, the sister of Martha, is said to have sat at our Lord's feet, and to have heard his words.

But, besides a learned education, Saul's parents had him, also, instructed in an handicraft trade. This might be done, partly, for an innocent and useful amusement, in his leisure hours. But, principally, for an honest support: if, in the various vicissitudes of life, such support should be wanted. It was then so common, even for persons in rich and plentiful circumstances, to bring up their children, in that manner, as that it was a maxim among the Jews;
The history of Saul of Tarsus.

An. Christ. 34. Tiber. 21.
Book I. Chap. IV.
Acts viii.

He, who did not bring up his son to a trade, did, in effect, teach him to be a thief. And, indeed, no man knoweth to what straits he, or his children, may be reduced; whatever his present circumstances are. — Saul's trade was to make tents of linen, or of skins: such as, in those hot countries, they sometimes lived in, during the summer season; such as, travelers made use of; where they had no houses, nor caravansaries to lodge in; and such, as soldiers lodged in, when incamped in the field. It were easiest to multiply instances, in other ages and nations, of princes, priests, and persons of great eminence, who have been skilled, and worked with their own hands, in agriculture, carving, and other meaner handicraft trades. Whereby it would appear that Saul's case was not singular; nor his education, the meaner, nor less liberal, upon that account.

It is a matter of some difficulty, to settle the chronology of St. Stephen's martyrdom, and Saul's conversion. One would be apt to think, that, if Saul had been studying under Gamaliel, during the time of our Lord's personal ministry, here upon earth; and had heard of his fame; one of so much warmth of temper, and distinguished zeal, would have inquired into the facts; and been curious, either to see our Lord, and acknowledge him for the Messiah; or to oppose him, as an impostor. And much more, after Christ's resurrection, would one have expected him, either to have embraced Christianity, or to have appeared more early against Christ's disciples; — if he had been, all the while, at Jerusalem; and knew, how much, their numbers daily increased. These things may, perhaps, make some incline to think, that he had formerly sat, at the feet of Gamaliel; but that, of late years, he had returned, to his native country; and never heard any thing, of certainty, concerning Christianity, till he came up to Jerusalem, upon some great festival, a little before the death of the proto-martyr. But, on the other hand, it must be acknowledged, that, then, he must have been grown up, to maturity; and have finished his studies, for some time. And, upon that supposition, one cannot easily account for so zealous a Jew's neglecting to go up, to Jerusalem, at the great festivals; where he must have seen, and heard, as much, or more, of the Christians, than at any other time. I, therefore, according to the plain hints, which he himself hath given us, [Acts xxii. 3. and xxvi. 4. 5. Gal. i. 14.] do apprehend, that Saul was born at Tarsus, and spent his childhood there. But that, in his early youth, and as soon as ever he was capable of it, he was removed to Jerusalem; to study in that city; and continued his studies, there, till about...
The history of Saul of Tarsus. 147

about this time. But that, by reason of his unripe age, he had not, before, appeared, in the world; nor ever attempted to inquire into the truth and reasonableness of the christian religion. — However; now, he comes out, with all the warmth of his own natural temper, the fire of the academy, and the zeal, and bigotry, of a pupil to the pharisaical doctors.

Accordingly; we find, [Acts vii. 58.] that he is called, a young man: possibly, not much (if anything) above twenty years of age. And what, in part, seemeth to confirm this, is, that our Lord would not constitute him an APOSTLE, 'till he had been, about nine years, a christian, and a prophet. For his age might not be sufficient, for an office of such weight and dignity, any more than his acquaintance with christianity. — Commentators have, indeed, been unwilling to take the word υπαρχω, [young man,] Acts vii. 58. in its proper and usual meaning: because, from Philemon, ver. 9. they have gathered, that he was an old man, in the year 63. Whereas; if, in the year 35, he was, onely, about twenty; in the year 63, he would scarce be fifty. And, under fifty, he could not call himself, with any great propriety, Paul the aged. In answer to all which, I would observe, that the word πρεσβύτερος, which we translate the aged, [Philem. ver. 9.] doeth sometimes signify an ambassador. And, if the word ever signifie so, it is most probable that St. Paul designed it, in that sense; as he used the like expression, and represented himself as acting the ambassador for God. [2 Cor. v. 20.] Or, πρεσβύτερος, which commonly signifies an ambassador, might be the original reading, [Philem. ver. 9.] And by the omission of the small letter τ, might be changed into πρεσβύτερος, which is the present reading. For in his epistle to the Laodiceans, (commonly called the epistle to the Ephesians,) he calls himself an ambassador in bonds. [Eph. vi. 20.] Now that epistle was writ, about the same time; and sent along, with the epistle to Philemon. — To which, it may be added, that there is no other instance, in all his writings, of his calling himself PAUL the aged. 8

As I suppose our Lord's ministry to have continued, onely, two years and a half; and that Saul did not embrace christianity, 'till the year 35; I, by this mean, remove his conversion to a greater distance from Christ's ascension, than the chronologers commonly do. Though, as to the year of his conversion, and in the succeeding history of him, and of the christian church, I (generally speaking) fall in

8 See this discussed, more at large, in note [note 3 on Philem. ver. 9. 2d. edition.]}
The persecuting spirit of Saul.

And, what confirmeth me, that we fix the conversion of Saul, in the right year of the christian era, is, the time and occasion of the ceasing of the persecution; of which we shall speak, more particularly, hereafter. For Josephus hath informed us, that, for two years after his accession to the empire, Caius behaved very well. But, in the third year, he sent Petronius, into Judæa, with orders to set up his statue, in the temple; and to destroy the whole nation, if they opposed him. That put the Jews into a great consternation; and, most probably, occasioned their ceasing to molest the Christians, that they might look after their own safety. If, therefore, that happened in the beginning of the third year of Caius, it will fix Saul's conversion, in the twenty-second year of Tiberius. For, from his conversion, to the ceasing of the persecution, was a little above the space of three years; as appeareth from his own account.

So violently did the persecution rage, soon after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, that (except the twelve Apostles) all the leading men, among the Christians, were dispersed, far and wide: Some of them traveling through the regions of Judæa, and Samaria; others to Damascus, Phœnicia, the island Cyprus, and to several parts of Syria. The twelve Apostles did, indeed, with great wisdom and bravery, tarry still at Jerusalem, to assert and maintain the persecuted interest; and to consult how they might best suit all the rising, and unforeseen, emergencies of the church, in that its tender and infant state.

In the height of this persecution, Saul, flushed with the blood of St. Stephen, grew outrageous, making dreadful havoc among the Christians. And (as he had licence from his superiors) he hunted them, from place to place; breaking violently into their houses; dragging them away, to prison, without mercy; and scourging them in the synagogues, till he compelled them to blaspheme the name of Jesus.
The antient difference between, &c. 149

Jesus; not sparing even the weak and tender sex. — So furious An.Christi and cruel doeth bigotry and persecution render men; even beyond what Tiber. 21. often happeneth in battles and sieges! — But all this tended, only, to disperse them, and spread christianity the more. And, in the first place, such, as the persecution drove, from Jerusalem, planted it in several other towns and villages of Judæa.

CHAP. V.

Of the second removal, which the gospel made, from Jerusalem; or of it's being planted in Samaria. Acts viii. 5,— 25.

Sect. I.

An account of the antient difference between the Jews, and the Samaritans.

After our lord himself had preached, in Jerusalem, he went and preached in Judea; and then in Samaria. Just before his ascension, he ordered his apostles, to tarry at Jerusalem, till the pouring down of the holy spirit; and intimated, that then they were to be his witnesses; first in Jerusalem; then in Judea; and, after that, in Samaria. And (though our lord himself, as messiah of the jews, or apostle and minister of the circumcision, preached in person, only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; yet) he further ordered his apostles, that they should spread the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. This order they obeyed; and that in the very method prescribed by our lord. For, christianity had begun at Jerusalem, as the prophets had predicted, and Christ had commanded. And it had since spread, among the jews, in other towns and villages of Judea. — The next removal, therefore, was to Samaria; whither it was carried, upon this occasion. The christians kept together, at Jerusalem, till many of them had learned the scheme of the gospel doctrine, from the apostles. But the late persecution had dispersed them, into several places.

Ver. 5. a John ii. 13, &c.  b John iii. 22. c John, chap. iv.

a Acts i. 8.
The antient difference between

places; whither they fled for safety; and, among the rest, some fled to Samaria. That we may observe the futeablenesse of this gradation; and how proper an introduction it was, to the conversion of the devout gentiles, who were to be converted the next; let us carefully consider, how things stood, between the Jews, and the Samaritane.

Some time after the ten tribes had revolted, from the house of David; even in the thirty-first year of Asa, king of Judah, began Omri to reign over Israel. Six years he reigned in Tirza. And then he bought the hill of Samaria, of Shemer, for two talents of silver; on which he built a city, and called it Samaria, from the name of Shemer, of whom he had bought the ground. From that time, it became the capital city, for the kings of Israel; till Shalmanezer, king of Assyria, came, with an army; and (after a three years siege) took the city, and carried captive the ten tribes of Israel; dispersing them, in Media; that they might not revolt any more. Eserbaddon, the grandson of Shalmanezer, who is called Asnappar, [Ezra iv. 10.] succeeded his father Sennacherib, in the kingdom of Assyria. Having enlarged his dominions, and augmented his strength, by seizing upon Babylon and Chaldea; he marched, with a great army to recover, what his father had lost, in Syria and Palestine. And then he took captive most of the few Israelites; whom his grandfather had left, in the land of Israel; carrying them away, into Babylon and Assyria. And, to plant the country, he brought people, from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim. But they, being an idolatrous and a very wicked people, were at first molested, by lions; and many of them devoured by them. To prevent which calamity, Eserbaddon sent, among them, a priest, from among the Jews, whom his grandfather had carried away captive; who instructed them in the knowledge of the God of Israel. For, they looked upon him, as the God of that particular country; who would not be appeased, unless he was worshiped by its inhabitants. These new inhabitants received the name of Samaritane, from the country which they planted. And, from that time, they worshiped the true God, together with their idol-gods; till Nebemiab, intent upon a reformation, at Jerusalem, insisted upon it, that such of the Jews, as had married women of other nations, should, according to the law of Moses, put them away.

\[\text{e} 1\text{ Kings xvi. 23, 24.} \quad \text{f} 2\text{ Kings xvii. 5, 6. and xviii. 9, 10, 11, 12.} \\
\text{g} 2\text{ Kings xix. 35. and 2 Chron. xxxii. 21.} \\
\text{h} \quad \text{That this was done by Eserbaddon, see Ezra iv. 2. 10. See also Prideaux's Con-}\\n\text{nexion, &c. vol. i. p. 30. 4th edition, 8vo. 1718.} \\
\text{i} 2\text{ Kings xvii. 24. — 29.} \]
The Jews and Samaritans.

away; left they should prove a snare to them; and引进 them to idolatry. Some refused to part with their wives; and them Nebemiah banished. Among whom was a son of Joiada; the son of Eliasib, the high-priest; whom Josephus calleth Manasseb. He had married Nicafe, the daughter of Sanballat, the Horonite, who was deputy-governour of Samaria; to whom he fled; and several Jews along with him, upon the like occasion. Sanballat obtained leave of the Jews, to build, upon mount Gerizim, a temple, like to that, at Jerusalem; and there to make Manassesb, his son in law, high-priest. From that time, Samaria became the common refuge for the vagabond Jews. And, if any of them were called to an account for the breach of the Jewish law, especially in its rituals, such as the eating forbidden meats, the breaking of the Sabbath, or the like; they presently fled over to Samaria; and there they were kindly received. The same Jews, by this mean, became a mixed people; consisting partly of Jews, and partly of the posterity of that people, whom the kings of Assyria had planted there. However; by having a temple, and the law of Moses, and so many Jews among them, they forsook their idolatry, and conformed to the law of Moses; but are said not to have received the prophets, nor regarded the traditions of the elders.

This quarrel was, indeed, of an old standing. And, when it was once begun, several things helped to aggravate and inflame it. The Samaritans, in the first place, had, in possession, the land of Israel; that belonged to the kindred of the Jews, the ten tribes, which were carried captive into Assyria. They had opposed Nebemiah, and his associates, in the building the temple at Jerusalem, and repairing the walls thereof. On the other hand, the tribute of Samaria was assigned, first by Cyrus, and afterwards by Darius, kings of Persia, towards repairing the temple at Jerusalem, after the Babylonish captivity; and for the furnishing the Jews with sacrifices; that oblations and prayers might be daily offered up, for the king, the royal family, and the whole Persian empire.

k Nehem. x. 30. and xiii. 23, &c. Exod. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3. 1 Joseph. Antiq. l. xi. c. 8. § 2. Neh. xiii. 28. m Joseph (Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 8. § 4.) through a great defect among the Jews, in the chronology of the Babylonian, and Medo-Persian, empires, ascribes this grant, to Alexander the great. Whereas; according to the most exact chronology, it must have been a grant of Darius Nthus, almost an hundred years, before the Persian empire was conquered, by Alexander the great. [See Sir Isaac Newton's chronology, p. 357, 365. Prideaux's connection, vol. i. p. 410, &c. 4th edit. 8vo. printed 1718.] n Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xi. c. 8. § ult. o Nehem. iv. & vi.
The antient difference between

That contribution, the samaritanees abhorred, as an indignity. And yet, when they made application to get it off, they were reproved, and were commanded to continue it. The author of the book of Ecclesiasticus, in reckoning up the nations, that were most odious to the jews, mentions them that fate upon the mountain of Samaria; and the foolish people, who dwelt in Sichem; as "those, who were the most odious and detestable: A nation, that his heart abhorred, and who deserved not to be accounted a nation." In one word, they did not omit any occasion, on either side, to testify their dislike of one another. And thus it too often happens, between different religious sects, when they quarrel for any time. Every thing widens the breach: and the nearer they come to one another, in general, in their doctrine, discipline, and worship, the more furiously and violently they contend, for their own little peculiarities, and party-distinctions.

But what most of all incensed the jews, was, the above-mentioned schism and apostasy of Manasseh, and his companions, who had erected a temple and an altar, upon mount Gerizim, in direct opposition to that at Jerusalem: alleging, that, as some of the patriarchs had worshiped upon mount Gerizim; — as God ordered the blessings to be pronounced, from thence, upon Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt; — and as Joshua had accordingly caused the blessings of God to be pronounced from thence; — therefore, that must be the place, where men ought to worship. Nay; they had not scrupled to corrupt the five books of Moses, to countenance their building a temple, there; and soifted in a paragraph; wherein God is represented, as pointing out mount Gerizim, for the place, where he would have his temple built, and where men ought to worship him. But...
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But (besides their receiving all apostate Jews, and interpolating the sacred writings) the Samaritans were ever ready to show their contempt, to such as worshipped at Jerusalem; or to do any indignity, that they could, to the temple there. Of the former, we have one

putting mount Ebal, in their copies, where it should be mount Gerizim; and bring this argument for it; that mount Gerizim, having been the mountain, on which the blessings were to be declared: and mount Ebal appointed for the place, from whence the curses were to be denounced; the mountain of blessing was very proper, and the mountain of cursing very improper, on which to build an altar to God. [See Maunder's travels, 3d edition, 8vo. p. 60.] But, notwithstanding this allegation, in their behalf; all other copies, and translations, of the pentateuch make against them, and prove the corruption to be on their side. And it very much aggravates their guilt, here in; that they have not only corrupted the scripture, in this place; but have also interpolated them, with the following corruption: For, Exod. xx. after the tenth commandment, they have subjoined the following words, taken out of the xith and xxivith chapters of Deuteronomy. "And it shall be, when the Lord, thy God, hath brought thee, into the land of the Canaanites, whither thou goest to possess it; that thou shalt set up two great stones, and plaister them with plaister, and thou shalt write, upon these stones, all the words of this law. And it shall be, when you are gone over Jordan, that you shall set up these stones, which I command you, this day, in mount Gerizim. And thou shalt build, there, an altar, unto the Lord, thy God; an altar of stones. Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord, thy God, of whole stones. And, upon it, thou shalt offer burnt offerings, to the Lord, thy God. And thou shalt sacrifice peace offerings; and shalt eat, there; and rejoice, before the Lord, thy God. This mountain is on the other side Jordan, by the way, where the sun goeth down; in the land of the Canaanites, who dwell in the champian, over against Gilgal, beside the planes of Moreh, which are over against Sichem." This corrupt alteration in one place, and corrupt addition in another, which the Samaritans have made, merely to serve a bad cause, render the Samaritan copy of less authority, in all other places; where, either by alteration, or addition, it differeth from that of the Jews. [See the Samaritan copy of the pentateuch, Exod. xx. 17. Prideaux's connexion, vol. 1, p. 422, &c. 4th edition, 8vo. 1718.]

About one hundred and sixty years before the birth of Christ, Onias, the son of Onias, the high-priest, being unjustly disappointed of the high-priesthood, at Jerusalem, fled into Egypt; and ingratiated himself, so far, with king Ptolemey Philometor, and his queen Cleopatra; that, after some years, they gave him leave, to build a temple in Egypt, after the model of that, at Jerusalem. Upon which, the quarrel was revived afresh, between the Jews and Samaritans, who dwelt at Alexandria; "Where the Jerusalem, or mount Gerizim, was the place appointed, by the law of Moses, for the building of a temple, and where God ought to be worshipped?" The contention for a while was exceeding fierce; till, at last, it came to open arms. This made it a proper affair, for the cognizance of the civil magistrate. And both parties agreed to refer it, to the king, and his council; on condition that, when both sides were heard, they, who were vanquished, should be put to death. Two advocates were appointed, on each side, to plead the cause. Upon which, the Jews made it so evident, from the succession of the high-priests, and other arguments, that they had antiquity and truth on their side, that the king gave sentence in favor of them; and condemned the two advocates, for the Samaritans, to be put to death. [Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 13. c. 3.]
The antient difference between Aix.Christiremarkable instance. [Luke ix. 51, &c.] For, when our savior appeared to be going up, from Galilee, to worship, in the temple, at Jerusalem, he sent his disciples into a samaritane village, to provide entertainment for him. But the samaritane would not receive him; because he was going up, to worship, at Jerusalem. — — — And the rancor of the jews, against the samaritane, doeth as planely appear, by the proposeal, which two of the disciples made to our lord, upon that occasion; who asked him, “If they should command fire, to come down from heaven, to revenge the unkindnesse; and destroy those samaritane; as the prophet Elijah had done to two idolatrous captains, with their fifty men.” Our lord, indeed, (who knew that the samaritane were not then as bad as idolators, how vile soever the jews accounted them; and who abhorred persecution, in matters of religion, in all the degrees and branches of it) rebuked them for their rash zele; and pointed out, to them, the meekness and benevolence of the christian doctrine; which is calculated to heal differences; and not to revenge, or widen, them.

And there is another instance, recorded by Josephus; which, though it did not happen till Cumanus was procurator; that is, about seventeen years after this time; yet giveth light and confirmation to what hath just been mentioned, out of the gospel. “Moreover; a difference (faith he’) arose between the samaritane and jews, on this occasion. The Galileans used, at the festivals, to go to the holy city, through Samaria. As they were, at this time, going through a village, called Ginea (which lieth upon the borders of Samaria, and of the great plane) some of the inhabitants set upon them, and killed several. The chief men of Galilee, hearing of this, applied to Cumanus; and desired that he would revenge the death of such as were slain. But he, having been bribed by the samaritane, regarded them not. However; the jews took arms, and indeavor-ed to revenge themselves; plundering, and burning, some villages of the samaritane. For this, Cumanus severely chastised the jews; killing some, but taking others of them alive.”

And the following is as remarkable an instance of the readiness of the samaritane to do any indignity to the temple, at Jerusalem. For, when

* The prophet, Elijah, acted by divine direction, or a prophetic impulse; but the two disciples were animated, by a spirit of party-zele, rage, and revenge. Therein, the two cases widely differed. And for that reason, principally, our lord blamed his two disciples: though the prophet, Elijah, was not, in the least, culpable. [See Mr. Morris his excellent sermon on 2 Kings i. 11, 12.]

when Coponius was procurator of Judea, the priests, having opened the doors of the temple, at midnight, according to their custom, at the time of the passover; some Samaritans entered the city privately; and, going up to the temple, they strewed dead men's bones, in the porticoes, and all about the temple; to defile the place, and show their contempt of, and spite against, it. For which reason, the priests, ever after, guarded the temple more strictly. This is reckoned to have been done, at that passover, at which our Lord went up to Jerusalem, when he was only twelve years old; and so much surprized the Jewish doctors and rabbies, with hearing them, and asking them questions.

This quarrel, by being carried on, for a long time; and increased, by such repeated acts of hostility; did at length so highly inflame the rancor of the Jews, that they published a curse and an anathema against them; the worst, and the bitterest, that ever was denounced against any people. For they not only forbade all Jews to have any manner of communication with them; but also cursed the Samaritans in their meats and drinks; declaring them all to be as swine's flesh; and strictly prohibiting all Jews from tasting any thing, which had belonged to a Samaritan, or to have any manner of dealings with them; so as even to ask, or receive, so small a kindness as a draught of water.

Our Lord, indeed, in his passing through Samaria, did not think himself bound, by the rules, which the Jews followed; as he was not moved.

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4. Josephus, his reflections upon the Samaritans. For instance: their claiming kindred with the Jews, and alleging that they were descended from Jacob and Joseph, when the Jews were in prosperity; and their utter disclaiming all relation to them, when the Jews were in adversity; [Antiq. Jud. 1. 9. c. 14. § 3. & l. 11. c. 8. § 6.] their relapsing into idolatry, especially in the time of Antiochus; and their readiness to persecute the Jews, for not worshipping idols along with them, when they had power, and opportunity: [Antiq. Jud. l. 12. c. 5. § 5.] I have not, I say, taken notice of these reflections; because Josephus was himself a Jew, violently prejudiced again the Samaritans, and has taken all occasions to reflect upon them. If we had a Samaritan history, we should, very probably, find the same, or as bitter, reflections made upon the behavior of the Jews towards them. But, we ought not entirely to credit the one, or the other. They were too much parties, to speak with due candor and moderation of one another. And we may reasonably suppose, that, when there was a small fault, they aggravated it, and represented it worse than it really was; and sometimes accused one another of great crimes, where there was little, or no, foundation.

The antient difference between An. Christi moved by the passions, with which they were possess'd. But the popular prejudice planely appears, from the woman of Samaria's being so vastly surpriz'd that our Saviour, being a Jew, should ask even a draught of water of her, who was a Samaritane.

Nay, farther; — the Jews made a decree that no Samaritane should ever be admitted as a proselyte to the Jewish religion. And, finally, they deliver'd all Samaritane's over to eternal damnation; as if that also had been in their power. The worst name, which they could give any person, was to call him a Cuthean, or Samaritane. And they used the most virulent and opprobrious language, that they could invent, when they said to our Saviour, [John viii. 48.] "Say we not well, Thou art a Samaritane, and hast a Daemon?" For they abhorred no people so much; and the enmity between them must have been the greatest that can be conceived.

The city Samaria was, for a long time, the chief city and metropolis of the Samaritane sect. But Sichem became their metropolis, in the time of Alexander the great; and hath continued so, to this day. Alexander had made Andromachus, a great favorite of his, governor of Syria and Palestine. And, when he came to Samaria, to settle some matters there, the Samaritane's (apprehending, very probably, that they were not favored equally with the Jews) mutinied against him; and, by setting fire to the house where he was, they burned him alive. The news greatly affected Alexander; who caus'd such, as had had any hand in the mutiny, to be put to death; and drove all the rest of the inhabitants out of the city; planting there, instead of them, a colony of his Macedonians; and giving their other territories to the Jews, free from all tributes. The Samaritane's, who survived that calamity, retir'd to Sichem. It was situat'd in a narrow valley between mount Gerizim, on the south; and mount Ebal, on the north; in a part of the country, which seems to have taken it's name from Sichem, the son of Hamor. There had been a small town, built there, in the early ages of the world; and Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, either rebuilt or enlarged it. The Jews called it Sichem, πόλεις, a town, or city. The Jews called it Sichbar; that is

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* Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c. part i. p. 166, 2d. edit. p. 280, 3d edit.
  † Prideaux, ubi supra.
  ¶ 1 Kings xii. 25.
  † 1 Antiq. Jud. l. 8. c. 8. § 4.
the Jews and Samaritane.

is, the drunken city, by way of reproach. And, as the prophet Isaiah had called the Ephraimites, who lived in those parts, drunkards; they had that text on their side, for the justifying of that name. Near unto this place, was the field, which Jacob bought, of the children of Hamor; and gave unto his son, Joseph, a little before his death. There Joseph's bones were buried; and (probably) the bones of the other patriarchs were carried along with them, when the children of Israel went out of Egypt, and buried there, also. And, within the same plot of ground, was Jacob's well; at which, our Saviour spake down, when he discoursed with the woman of Samaria. The city Samaria was demolished; and the descendents of those Macedonians, whom Alexander the great had placed there, were dispersed, or destroyed, about two hundred years after, by John Hyrcanus, high-priest, and prince of the Jews. For, after a year's siege, the town was surrenderred into his hands. And he forthwith demolish'd the place; drawing trenches, through, and a-crosse, the ground; and filling them with water, that there might not remain the least mark of a city's having ever been there. However: though the city was demolish'd, the surrounding country, including the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, received, and retained, the name of Samaria. The city was rebuilded, within an hundred years, by Herod the great; and called Sebaste, in honor of Augustus Caesar, whose greek name was Sebastes. But it was no longer called Samaria; nor was it any more the head-city of the Samaritane sect. Not long before Hyrcanus destroy'd Samaria, he took (besides several other places) the city Sichem, and mount Gerizim. And then he demolish'd the temple there, which had continued for about two hundred years. Herod the great did, indeed, build the Samaritane another magnificent temple, in the middle of Sebaste. But they never valued it, because it stood not upon mount Gerizim. Yet, though the temple on mount Gerizim was never rebuild, the Samaritane still continued to have an altar there; on which they offered their usual sacrifices. Nay; it is said that the head of that sect doeth still live at Sichem, (which was afterwards called Neapolis); and is now, by a corrupt pronunciation of that word, called Naplouza.

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a John iv. 5. Prideaux his connexion, vol. i. p. 423. b Isa. xxviii. 1.

The Samaritans prepared for Christianity.

The Samaritans prepared for Christianity. Our Lord mercifully bore with the prejudices of his disciples, 'till the spirit was poured out: And did not send them to the Samaritans; though he himself treated the Samaritans, in the same manner as he treated the Jews. Philip, the deacon, now converteth the Samaritans; probably at Sichar, or Sichem; where our Lord himself had been. Acts viii. 5,—8.

From the long account, which hath been given, of the Samaritans, in the foregoing section, they appear to have been much better prepared for the reception of Christianity, than most of the gentiles. For they acknowledged and worshiped the true God, and received the five books of Moses. Nay; upon some accounts, they were better prepared, than the body of the Jewish nation. For they believed a future state of rewards and punishments, which the Saducees denied; and rejected the traditions of the elders, which fettered the minds of the Pharisees, and increased their aversion to Christianity. The Old Testament prophets spoke of the Messiah; not only as a prophet, but as a great prince, possessed of universal dominion. Whereas the law of Moses prophesied of him, only as a prophet, and a law-giver; and did not raise such pompous ideas of his dominion and kingdom. Which was one great reason, perhaps, why our Savior so readily and frankly discovered himself to be the Messiah, to the woman of Samaria, and her neighbors; and was so reserved, on that head, when he was in Judaea. For the owning himself to be such,
Philip preaches the gospel in Samaria.

such, among the Jews, would have occasioned tumults and insurrections; because of their expectations of a temporal prince, to deliver them from the Roman yoke. Whereas, the Samaritans, who looked for him, only as a prophet, and a law-giver, were in no great danger of making such a discovery. Their Sect. II. expecting so great a prophet, might arise from their regard to the law, and particularly to the celebrated prophecies of Moses. [Deut. xviii. 5, 15, &c.] But their calling him the Messiah, [John iv. 25.] seems to have risen from his going under that name, so commonly, among the Jews, who had fled over to the Samaritans, in great numbers.

Even the Apostles of our Lord (as hath been hinted already) were deeply tainted with the prejudices of the Jews, against the Samaritans. And, accordingly, Jesus, who was so remarkable for his wisdom and goodness, required no more of them than their minds were able to bear. When, therefore, he sent out the twelve, and after them the seventy, upon the first expedition, which was during his own personal ministry among them; he commanded them, saying: “Go not into the way of the Gentiles; neither enter ye into any city of the Samaritans.” Merely in condescension to the narrow minds of the Jews, or rather of his own disciples, who were all Jews, did our Lord then dispense with their making no application to the Samaritans: even though they were then, in effect, Jews, by religion; and conformed to the law of Moses, rather more exactly than the Jews in Judæa, as to every thing but the place of worship. Our Lord himself, therefore, with great justice and propriety, treated them as Jews; converting the woman of Samaria, and several other persons of Sichar, or Sichem: though both his disciples, and the Samaritans themselves, were greatly astonished at his so treating them. Before his ascension, he ordered his Apostles to plant the gospel, first in Jerusalem, and Judæa, and then in Samaria. For, when the spirit was poured out, their prejudices would in a great measure vanish. — As the Jews in Jerusalem and Judæa had already had the gospel preached, for some time, among them; and great numbers had embraced that doctrine of life; and a persecution had drove some of the Christian from Jerusalem to Samaria; the providence of God, chose, by that mean, to send the gospel among them.

One of the twelve Apostles was called Philip. But the Philip of whom we are going to speak, was not an Apostle; but only an Evangelist, or an Assistant to the Apostles. Though he knew that
Philip preaches the gospel in Samaria.

An. Chriſtī 34.

Tiber. 21.

that St. Stephen had suffered a violent death for his zeale, in spread- ing and defending chriſitianity; yet this Philip (the second of the seven deacons, when they were elected to that office; since the mar-

Book I. tyrdom of St. Stephen, the first of them) imitateing the proto-mar-

Chap. V. tyr's zeale, went down to a city of Samaria; most probably to Si-

Sect. II. chrar, or Sicbem, which was then the chief city of the samaritane 

Acts viii. sect. 5.—8. sect. Our Lord himself had been there, in perfon, about four 

years before; and many of the Samaritane of that city believed on 

him. I am apt to think that Philip knew this; and that it was one 
great reason, why he so readily, and without any scruple, preach- ed to; and baptized, the samaritane, who were so very odious to 

the Jews. Though our Lord's exprefs order, just before his ac- 
cension, was a sufficient warrant for him to have done so. If ma-

ny of them had seen Christ, and believed on him, before Philip 
came thither; it is reasonable to think that it would greatly facilitate 
his reception, and promote his success. And the event was an-
swerable. For the people, almost universally, attended to him; 
diligently hearing him preach the gospel; and carefully observing 
the miracles, which he worked among them, in confirmation of 
his mission and doctrine. For he healed severall persons, who were 

lunatic; and the wicked spirits are said to have made a loud noise, 
upon their departure out of such as were posseffed. He, likewise, 
cured many of lameness, and of the palsy. And (in one word) 
by his excellent doctrine, and many beneficent miracles, he caused 
great joy, in that city.
Simon Magus pretends to be a christian, and is baptized.

The two apostles, Peter and John, go to Samaria; and confer the gift of the holy spirit, upon the converts, there. Simon Magus would have sought, of them, the power to confer the holy spirit, by the laying on of his hands. They severely reprove him. After which, departing from the city, they preach the gospel in the Samaritane villages; and then return to Jerusalem. Acts viii. 9—25.

There had been, for some time, and was then, in that city, one Simon, a magian; whom the people of Samaria had, universally, reverenced. For he pretended that he was a very great and extraordinary person. And they believed him to be so. This character he had raised, not only by boasting of himself, (as impostors commonly do;) but also by sham miracles, and the most artful

Ver. 9. The Magians, or the Magi, were a sect, which arose in Persia. They abominated images (in which they differed from the Sabians) and worshiped God, only, by fire. They held, that there were two first principles, or gods; the one good, and the other evil. The former of which, was, (as they said) the author of all good, and represented by light; and the other, the author of all evil, and represented by darkness. And, therefore, they abhorred darkness, as we do the devil; and worshiped the good principle, or God, before fire; (for which purpose they had fire-altars;) and especially before the sun; as being the most perfect fire, and yielding the most perfect light. One of them, who, for some fault that he had committed, had his ears cut off, found means to ascend the throne of Persia; as somewhat resembling the true heir, who was actually dead. But he affirmed himself to be the person, still alive. When the imposture came to be discovered, multitudes of the same sect were destroyed, as well as he. And, from that time, they were called Magi, or Magians; that is, cropp-ear’d: Which name was given them, by way of nick-name, and contempt. After that, the sect of the Magians lay under the popular odium, for some time; and would have funk, had it not been revived by Zoroaster; who is reckoned to have been a servant to the prophet Daniel; and who added several Jewish rites and customs to their old institutions. By that mean, the sect increased again; and spread into Arabia, and other countries. And, as Bar-jesus is called Elymas, Acts xiii. 8. which, in the Arabic tongue, signifies a magian; Grotsius his conjecture is highly probable, that he was a native of Arabia.
ful delusions; so that the people, in general, were astonished at his practices, and reckoned him to have been indued with an extraordinary and divine power. This regard they had paid to him, for some considerable time; in consequence of his surprizing and deluding them by his magic arts and impostures. But, when many of that city, both men and women, had imbraced christianity, and were baptized; Simon pretended to be a christian, too; and was also baptized, by Philip. From which time, he was generally in Philip's company. It is uncertain, whether he was afraid lest Philip should draw away the people from him, if he stood out, and opposed him; or hoped to have perfected his magical skill, by instructions from Philip; as reckoning that Philip's miracles were only the effect of a magic, superior to his own. I think it is highly probable, that he was, from the beginning, hypocritical and insincere. But, though the apostles, and several of the primitive christians, had the gift of discerning the spirits, and secret intentions, of men, in some cases; yet this was not one of the gifts, which they could exercise, at all times; but only on certain occasions, according to the pleasure and direction of the spirit. And the divine wisdom saw fit that Simon's insincerity should be concealed, till he himself discovered it. He, indeed, (as well as the people in general) was astonished at beholding the many and unquestionable miracles, worked by Philip; which far exceeded any of his magical tricks, or anything else that he had ever seen. But his astonishment was much increased, upon the coming of the two apostles. It deserveth particular notice, that (though several of the christians had spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers; yet) none but apostles could confer, upon others, such gifts and powers. For this reason, when the apostles (who hitherto continued at Jerusalem, to consult how they might, in the most effectual manner, spread and confirm the christian doctrine) had heard that the samari-
tanes

Dr. Prideaux has given a very fine and succinct account of them, and their sentiments; [Vol. i. p. 174, &c. 212, &c. of his Connection, &c. 4th edition, 8vo.] and faith, that "some of that sect continue in Persia and India unto this day." But he is mistaken, in saying, that "the sect of the magians was propagated only in India and Persia." For they introduced their religion among the tribes of the Arabs; as Mr. Sale has shown, in his preliminary discourse before Al-coran, p. 21. And it would have been a wonder if they had not; considering their great zeal, and the vicinity of Arabia to Persia.

I make no question but that several of the magi pretended to supernatural power, and made use of incantations, or magical arts. And that this Simon had practised such unlawful arts, or delusions; as being one of the worst and most wicked of that sect.
**St. Peter and St. John go to Samaria.**

The Samaritans had, many of them, embraced the gospel; they sent, unto them, two of their own number; namely, Peter and John, who were Apostles of chief repute, that they might confer upon them the gift of the Holy Spirit. From which, it appeareth very probable, that the Spirit had been conferred upon all the Christian converts, hitherto. And, it was highly proper the Samaritans should have that divine gift; both as a confirmation of the truth of the Christian doctrine, in general; and, as an evidence to them, in particular, that, (however they had been formerly hated by the Jews; yet) under the gospel, they would be equally acceptable to God with the Jews; and as openly and fully admitted to all the privileges of the church and people of God.—It will appear, by what followeth, that the Holy Spirit was conferred, in his supernatural and miraculous influences. For Simon the magician, saw some of the wondrous effects of that divine gift, immediately; by the new converts speaking languages, which they had never learned; or prophesying, or working miracles. And that was what made him so earnestly covet that apostolic power. They who phantast that the Apostles conferred those, which have in these later ages, been called the standing, or the sanctifying, influences of the spirit, must surely (upon reflection) own, that, supposing it had been so, such influences could not have been discerned, but gradually, and from the tenor and habit of the life and conversation. And there was not time sufficient, for making such exact observations, between the Apostles confering the gifts, and Simon's offering money to purchase that power. Nor would that magician, very probably, have given any thing for any sanctifying influences of the Spirit, or for the power to confer them upon others; supposing God would have bestowed such an extraordinary favor upon him.

I have already observed, "that the Apostles (who alone had this power of imparting them) appear to have conferred some, or other, of the miraculous gifts, upon all adult Christians, where-ever they

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Verse 14. a John was one of the two, that was for calling down fire, from heaven, upon the Samaritans, who would not entertain Christ. [Luke ix. 54.] Such a zeal did his zeal then carry him: but that was a zeal without knowledge. [Probably, his zeal for what he apprehended to be right, was the reason, why Jesus gave him the title of the Son of Thunder.] But, after the Spirit was poured out, upon him, his mind was enlarged, his zeal guided by knowledge and charity. And then, he makes no scruple of going to the Samaritans; imparting unto them the gift of the Holy Spirit; and acknowledging them for Christian brethren, whom his Jewish zeal would have burnt up, and destroyed.

As the apostles sent Peter along with John; and he went, accordingly, at their appointment; neither he nor they had any notion of the supremacy of that apostle.
The spirit imparted to the samaritane.

An. Christi they came: that, upon the apostles themselves, and the rest of the hundred and twenty, the spirit was poured down, immediately from heaven, and without the laying on of the hands of any man: and, finally, that upon the other jewish converts, the apostles laid their hands, and thereby conferred that divine gift. — As the samaritane were now jews by religion, and many of them even descended from jewish parents; and our Lord himself had during his own personal ministry, treated them as jews; there was no occasion for the pouring down of the holy spirit upon them, before baptism, to prepare the way for their being received into the christian church; (as there manifestly was, afterwards, in the case of the first-fruits from among the gentiles.) And, on the other hand, suppose the samaritane had not been favored with any spiritual gifts and miraculous powers; that is, neither before baptism, nor after it; they would have come behind other churches; and might, thereupon, have been ready to question, whether they, who had been so peculiarly odious to the jews, were now accepted of God, equally, and to like privileges, with the jews, from among whom came the savior and salvation to mankind. — To Samaria, therefore, the two apostles went; most probably, to the city of Sichar, or Sichem; which (according to Reland) was at the distance of forty miles from Jerusalem. And, as Moses of old laid his hands upon Joshua, and imparted to him of the spirit, which he himself had. [Deut.xxxiv. 9. Num. xxvii. 18, &c.] So did the apostles to the samaritane converts; at the same time praying, that they might be confirmed in the faith, by receiving of that spirit, which God had given to them. And, when the apostles had laid their hands upon them, those samaritane converts, immediately, found themselves possessed of such extraordinary gifts and powers; though, before that, they had never partook of any thing like them. For the holy spirit had not been poured down, upon any of them; neither had there been any apostle there, before the coming of St. Peter and St. John, to confer that divine gift, upon them, by the laying on of their hands. They had only been baptized, with water, in the name of the Lord Jesus, as the Messiah actually come; without this confirming evidence, with which they were now favored.

Thus

The vile proposeal of Simon Magus.

Thus (according to the wise and jeautous scheme of raising the new creation) the jewith and samaritane chrisitian were both treated alike. And how great soever their mutual averterion had formerly been, the benign spirit of christianity laid the foundation, for abating their mutual prejudices, for healing their unhappy differences, and for making them look upon one another, as brethren in CHRIST. Jesus, and equally acceptable unto GOD; who is, in the gospel, most plainly declared to be the GOD and father of all, who believe, and obey, the christian revelation; whether jews, samaritans, or gentiles.

As the apostles seem, generally, to have imparted the holy spirit to all professed christians, where-ever they came, and to some who did not prove sincere; perhaps they imparted some spiritual gifts to Simon Magus, among the rest. But, as the persons, upon whom such miraculous gifts were bestowed, might either stir them up, or quench them, as they were diligent, or carelesse, in working the works of GOD; supposing that grand impostor had any spiritual gifts conferred upon him, he immediately and entirely quenched them, by his insincerity and vile temper, discovered in the following proposeal. For, when he saw that the apostles could impart such astonishing gifts and powers, by the laying on of their hands, as much preferable to any thing which he had done, as gold is to tinsel; or diamonds to glasse, or counterfeit stones; and not believing their power to be divine, or not duely reflecting upon the nature of such a divine power, and the vast and kind design, in which it was employed: — Without considering these things, I say, he basely and infamous offered to purchase that power with money; saying: "Such a sum will I give you, if you will teach me this art; or grant me the power of conferring the holy spirit, upon whomsoever I shall lay my hands." "No! (faith St. Peter) your money perish with you; you inconsiderate, and wicked, wretch! How can you imagine, that this divine gift can be purchased with money? And, that for so vile a purpose, as to keep up, or increace, the veneration, which the deluded people have formerly had for you? Such a proposeal is the plainest indication, that you are unworthy of any spiritual gifts; and much more of the power of communicating them to others. For your heart is not right in the sight of GOD. Repent, therefore, speedily, and pray to GOD to pardon you; if there be any manner of hopes, that this wicked purpose of your heart may be forgiven. For I perceive that you are in a dreadful, and al-
The gospel sent to Æthiopia.

An. Chris. 34. Tiber. 11.

Then replied Simon: "I desire that you would pray, to the Lord, for me, that none of these dreadful things, of which you have spoken, may befall me." St. Peter seemeth to have suspected, that the crime of Simon Magus bordered upon the unpardonable sin of blasphemy of the holy spirit: Or, however, that there was but little hopes of his repentance and forgivenesse.

From this crime of Simon, a purchasing the ministerial function, with money, or bribes, was called simony, in the antient canons of the christian church. But, it is now called so, to procure ecclesiastical benefices, by bribing and corrupting such as have the disposeal of them; nor can they, who take such bribes, be wholly clear of all crime.

The two apostles, St. Peter and St. John, having preached the word of the Lord, in that city of Samaria, and confirmed it, by their own testimony, as well as by imparting the gifts of the holy spirit; they set out, in order to return to Jerusalem. But, as they went along, they preached the gospel, in many samaritane villages, also. For, it was their common method, to begin with a city; and from thence to spread christianity, through the surrounding country.

CHAP. VI.

Of sending the gospel to Æthiopia, by the conversion of the eunuch. Philip baptizes him; but the holy spirit was poured down upon him, immediately, from heaven. Acts viii. 26, to the end of that chapter.

Christianity having been planted, according to our Lord's express order, in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria; it was, in the following manner, sent to Æthiopia, one of the uttermost parts of the earth. After the two apostles had left Samaria, an angel

Verse 23. * The gall of bitterness seemeth to have been an allusion to Deut. xxix. 18. or xxxii. 32. and, the bond of iniquity, to Isa. lviii. 6.
Philip converts the Æthiopian eunuch.

 angel of the LORD was sent, unto Philip, with this message: "Make haste, and go southward, unto the road, which leads from Jerusalem to Gaza; I mean that road, which lies through the desert." Philip immediately and cheerfully obeyed. And, when he came thither, he found a certain Æthiopian, an eunuch, a grandee, who was no less than chief treasurer to Candace, queen of Æthiopia. He was a proselyte of righteousness to the Jewish religion; and, out of his great zeal, had gone, that long journey, to worship the true God, at Jerusalem; perhaps, at the time of Pentecost, or some other of their public feasts. He was now going back, by way of Ægypt, to Æthiopia; and was reading aloud, in the prophecy of Isaiah, as he passed along the road, in his chariot. Philip, by a divine impulse, ran towards him. And, when he heard what he was reading, he said: "Do you understand what you now read?" "No (said he;) how should I understand such ancient prophetic writings, concerning which I know very little, unless I had some-body, who had some knowledge of such matters, to explain them to me?" Then he desired Philip to come up into the chariot, and explain the passage to him. The period of scripture, which he was then reading, was (according to our present dividing of the scriptures) the 53d chapter of Isaiah; and particularly the following words: "He was led, as a lamb, to the slaughter; and, as a sheep, before his shearers, is dumb; so he opened not his mouth. In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away [and no right done him;]

Ver. 26. * Vid. Glosse gram. p. 190. and Beza. in loc. I formerly thought that these words, [which is desert,] had refered to the city of Gaza. And that interpretation is contended for, by many learned men; and particularly by Reland. [in his pa- lestin. sacr. p. 787.] but I am not fully satisfied with what he has said. If there was another road to Gaza, it was right to distinguish. But I do not see any reason for informing Philip, upon this occasion, that the city of Gaza now lay in ruins: as there was no other town of that name, near it.

Ver. 27. b Plinius, de Meroe, l. 6. c. 29.] Regnare fæminam Candace; quod nomen multis jam annis ad reginas transit. [Alexander ab Alexandro, Genial. di rerum, l. 1. c. 2.] In Meroe, quod Candaces precipua mulier regnum tenuisset, reginas in posterum Candacer cognominarunt. [Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 2. c. 1.] Kan ca τι ἀληθών τῷ θεῷ ἀσίπηται, τῷ ἀληθείᾳ ἐν τῷ βασιλείῳ. Dion and Strabo, though they speak, each of them, but of one queen of that name, yet are a farther confirmation of what is here asserted. The words of the former are: τις ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ τῷ ἄλλῳ ἐν τῷ ταύτῃ, οὐτί αἱρέσεως ἰδεῖς, προσκεφαλάζων μεγάλη τῇ πόλει τῆς εἰρωνίας ἑορτάζουσιν, καθά τε ἐν τῷ ποιητῇ, ἐγγυήν εἰς τοῦ Κανδάκα. [Dion. C. de Augus. p. 526. Ed. Hanoi- via, 1606.] The words of the latter are: Τοιούτῳ δὲ οὐκ οἱ τῆς βασιλείας σφαγαῖς τῆς Κανδάκα, ἀ οὐδὲ ἡμᾶς ἔχει τῶν αἰκίαν, &c. [Strab. l. 17. Vid. Weissen. in loc.]

Ver. 31. c Perhaps the eunuch had been lately brought over to the Jewish religion; and so was not much acquainted with the national expectation of the Messiah, and much less with their prophecies.
The spirit fell, upon the eunuch.

The spirit fell, upon the eunuch.

An. Chrīstī " but who can declare (the wickedness of) that generation? For
his life was taken away, from off the face of the earth." This
was the passage, which the eunuch stuck at. And he asked Philip:
"Can you tell me, concerning whom the prophet said this? Did he
speak it of himself, or of some other person? I should be glad
to know who is here meant." Then Philip began to explain it;
and to show him that it was a prophecy concerning the messiah, whom
the jews expected. And that it agreed exactly to Jesus of Nazareth; who, in the days of his humiliation, was grievously afflicted;
but eminently meek and patient, under it all. And (notwithstanding
his innocence, and great benevolence to mankind; as well as the
clear attestation to his divine mission and doctrine) justice and judgment were denied him; and he was condemned, as a malefactor, by
a cruel and wicked generation. But, though they put him to death,
he was raised again; and, by all his conduct, gave sufficient evidence
that he was the great messiah. To which, Philip added, that his
kingdom was now going to be erected in the world; and the way of
entering into it, was by baptism. — As they were riding along,
and confering thus with one another, they came to a place, where the
eunuch observed there was water. Upon which, he said to Philip:
"Look, here is water; why may not I now be initiated into the chris-
tian church by baptism?" To which, Philip replied: "If you sin-
cerely believe that doctrine, which I have now taught, there is no-
thing to hinder you. You may be baptized immediately." "Yes,
(faith the eunuch,) I do heartily believe, what you have now repre-
sented, as the grand and fundamental article of the christian faith;
"namely, that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah; who is other-
wise, called the anointed son of God, and savior of the world." Then he ordered the chariot to stop. And they both went down
into the water; and Philip baptized him. As soon as they were
come up, from the water, the holy spirit fell down upon the eunuch,
immediately from heaven, and without Philip's laying on of his
hands. And (probably) the effusion was attended with a visible
glory, like cloven tongues, or pointed flames, of fire. For that ex-
ternal

Ver. 36. a In one manuscript, the 36th verse begins thus: 'ᾬς σοὶ ἵππος ὁ, συνεργεῖς μου', ἀλλαγμα. [Vid. Mill. in loc.]
Ver. 38. e As to the place, where Philip baptized the eunuch, see Fullerini miscel-
lanæ facra, l. 2. c. 8. Pearsonii lectiones in acta apostol. p. 72. Reilandii palæstin.
sacr. p. 487.
Ver. 39. f Περὶ μαρτυρίαν ἐπιστολὴς ἐν τῷ κύριῳ ψυχέας διὰ τοῦ κυρίου &c. Νικίπ, &c. [the holy spi-
rit fell upon the eunuch; but an angel of the Lord caught away Philip, &c.] is the reading
Philip caught away by an angel.

ternal symbol seemeth always to have accompanied the pouring down of the holy spirit, immediately from heaven. Though the eunuch thereby received some spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers, or both; yet this effusion of the spirit was not in order to prepare the way for his reception into the christian church, which was the case with Cornelius and his company, who were the first-fruits of the gentiles. No! then it ought to have been conferred, on him, before baptism. Whereas; the eunuch was a proselyte of righteousness: And, therefore, Philip made no scruple of baptizing him, as soon as ever he professed the christian faith: as knowing the rule, in that case, [Exod. xii. 49.] namely, "One law shall be unto him, who is home-borne, [that is, a jew, by birth, as well as religion:] and to the stranger, "who sojourns among you:″ For so, it plainly appeareth, from the foregoing verse, to be the circumcised proselyte, or proselyte of righteousness; and not the proselyte of the gate. But, as Philip was onely an evangelist;—no apostle at hand;—the eunuch going, directly, into a distant country;—and God unwilling that he should go, without the extraordinary attestation, which was so commonly afforded to the christians of that primitive age; and yet resolved not to break in, upon his common method, which was to communicate the holy spirit, by the hands of no man, but of apostles only;—For these reasons, I say, God seems to have poured out the holy spirit, upon him, by an immediate effusion. Hereby, this illustrious convert had the spirit conferred, in the most honorable manner; and in the way, in which the highest and best gifts used to be bestowed. Presently after this signal evidence had been granted to the eunuch, an angel of the Lord caught away Philip; perhaps by a rapture through the air, in the sight of the eunuch and his attendents. And, after he was removed beyond their utmost ken, the eunuch saw him no more. And he did not search after, or follow, the evangelist. For, as he was satisfied that it was the will of God that they should be so separated, he pursued his journey to Aethiopia; greatly rejoicing at what had happened. For, he was not onely convinced of the truth of christianity himself; but he had such gifts and powers, as

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inabled reading in the Alexandrian, and other manuscripts; as well as in some of the fathers. [Vid. Mill. and Wetten. in loc. Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel-history, part 2d, vol. ii. p. 312.] And I take it to be the true and original reading. What confirms this, is, that an angel is represented as appearing, and speaking, to Philip, ver. 26. * See 1 Kings xviii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 16. Ezek. iii. 14.
Saul goeth to Damascus.


The place, in which Philip first appeared, after the angel had taken him away from the eunuchs, was Azotus, (the famous Asdod of the Philistines,) a town, upon the eastern coast of the Mediterranean sea; which is computed to have been thirty-four miles from Gaza. 

From thence he passed, through the towns, nigh or upon the sea-coast; and planted the gospel, all along, till he came to Caesarea; which was then the metropolis of Palestine. There Philip settled for some years; very probably for life. For we find, long after this, that Paul and his company lodged at his house, in Caesarea; and that then he had four daughters, virgins, who were prophetesses. 

But, though he settled at Caesarea; we may reasonably presume that Philip would continue to preach the christian doctrine to the jews, and make as many converts among them as he could.

CHAP. VII.
The conversion of Saul. Acts ix. 1, — 22.

SECT. I.

Saul goeth to Damascus, to persecute the christians. In the way, the glory of the Lord appeared to him. He continued, three days, blind, and fasting. Acts ix. 1, — 9.

Saul, the furious, young zealote, who had assisted in the stoning of St. Stephen; and who had since been active in persecuting the christians, in Jerusalem, and Judæa; understanding that they had dispersed, and planted christianity where they went; he grew exceed-
to persecute the christians.

Though the romans kept, in their own hands, the power of life and death; yet they allowed the jewish sanhedrim, at Jerusalem, the power of apprehending, and of scourging in their synagogues, such jews; as they thought proper, throughout Jerusalem and Judea; and even in other parts of the roman empire. Nay; beyond the bounds of the empire, the synagogues generally acknowledged the power of the sanhedrim, at Jerusalem; and were ready to inflict punishments, according to their directions; provided they could get the consent of the civil magistrates. SAUL, therefore, breathing nothing but terror and destruction to the poor christians, went unto the high-priest, as head of the sanhedrim; b to petition for letters of licence and authority, to the synagogues, at Damascus.

Damascus was a most noble city, at the foot of mount Libanus. It had formerly been the capital city of Syria, c and was now very considerable. How much it abounded with jews, may partly appear from Josephus; who, in one place, taketh notice of the inhabitants shutting up in the gymnasium, or place for wrestling and other public exercises; and destroying, ten thousand jews, in one hour. d And he intimateth, that they were afraid their own wives would have hindered such a slaughter; because they were generally devoted to the jewish religion. In another place, he represented the Damascenes, as having murthered eighteen thousand jews, with their wives and children, without any color or pretence for so doing; e unless it was the great calamity, which every where befell the jews. A place, which so much abounded with jews, was very likely to have some christians: as the christians, who were dispersed, endeavored to make converts; and none but jews had, as yet, been preached to, in order to their embracing the christian faith. SAUL, either suspecting, or having heard, that some of the christians, in their dispersions, had travelled to Damascus, petitioned for letters of licence and authority, from the high-priest, to search for christians, among the jews; there; that, if he found any of that sect, the synagogues might deliver them up to him; that he might carry them in chains to Jerusalem, in order to their being punished with imprisonment, scourging, or otherwise; at the pleasure of the high-priest, or the sanbedrim. Caiaphas was then

The divine glory appeared to Saul.

Saul was high-priest. He had procured the death of our Lord, and had, once or twice, apprehended the apostles; whom he imprisoned, threatened, and scourged; in order to make them desist from spreading Christianity. And he was not only much swayed, by the Sadducees, in that affair; but he himself had a very great aversion to the Christians. He, therefore, granted Saul's request, with all alacrity; being as willing to have the whole sect of the Christians extirpated, as Saul could be, to engage in their utter extirpation. Away, therefore, Saul goeth, with suitable company, as chief inquisitor, upon the merciful and holy errand of extirpating heretics. It was about noon, when they came nigh the city Damascus. And, as they were upon the road, suddenly there appeared the shechinah, or the glory of the Lord, far more bright and dazzling than the sun in his meridian splendor. And this great light from heaven shone peculiarly round about them. Upon which, they all fell flat upon their faces; [as the prophet Daniel had done, upon like occasions.] And Saul heard a voice, saying unto him, in the Hebrew language, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? For such, in effect, is the persecution of my disciples." He had his head full of Jewish learning, and was well acquainted with the notion of the shechinah. And, therefore, he soon apprehended this to be the excellent glory. But, upon hearing a voice from it, which charged him with persecution, he was greatly surprized; and inquired, "Who art thou, Lord; that I should be charged with persecuting thee?" The voice, out of the midst of the glory, replied: "I am Jesus, the Nazarene, whom thou persecutest. Thou wilt find it an hard thing to contend with my superior power. For that is, in effect, like kicking against spikes. And, if thou persistest, it will bring certain ruin and destruction upon thine own self." Saul (trembling at this glorious appearance, and utterly astonished at being so severely reprimanded, for what he had done out of pure zeal, as thinking it right, and highly praiseworthy;) replied: "Lord, what wilt thou have me do? For I am ready to do whatsoever thou shalt command me." The Lord said unto him; "Arise, and stand upon thy feet. For I have made this glorious appearance unto thee, to shoo thee thine error. [In as much as I know thee to have done it ignorantly, and in unbelief, rather than out of malice to truth and virtue.] And thou shalt not only obtain mercy; but thou shalt also be constituted a minister, and a witness, to the world, both of the things, which thou hast now seen; and of

Ver 4. Dan. viii. 17. and x. 9.
The conversion of Saul.

... those things, about which I will hereafter appear unto thee. And, though thou shalt meet with many enemies; yet I will either deliver thee from them, or support thee in suffering bravely for my name's sake. But, go into the city of Damascus: and there thou wilt receive farther directions. His fellow-persecutors, rising again, stood fixed and confounded. For, though they saw not the person, that spoke, they had seen the brightness of the divine glory, and had been overwhelmed with it's lustre. And they had, also, heard the voice, which spoke, though not so, as to understand what had been said. Perhaps, it appeared to them like the noise of thunder at a distance. But, from St. Paul's taking such particular notice, that the voice spoke, unto him, in the hebrew tongue; we may gather that, possibly, his companions might be hellenistic jews; who, though they heard the sound of the words, yet did not understand their meaning. And it doeth not appear that Saul informed them, who it was that made that glorious appearance unto him; or what the voice had said. Very likely, he kept it secret, from every body; at least 'till he had received farther directions, in Damascus. Saul's companions raising him up, he opened his eyes, and tried to look about him. But he immediately found that the dazzling light of the divine glory had struck his bodily eyes quite blind. [As the eyes of his understanding had hitherto been, in the midst of the marvellous light of the gospel.] They, therefore, led him, by the hand, into Damascus. And so very much affected was he, with the vision, and with reflecting upon his own past conduct, that he would neither eat nor drink, for three days; that he might humble himself, and testify the greatnesse and sincerity of his repentence; as well as pray for pardon, with greater fervency. And hitherto he continued blind, as well as fasting.

If we compare the prophet Daniel's being affected with some of his visions, with this case of Saul, we shall find that they bear a great resemblance:—onely Daniel had not been guilty of such great crimes; and, consequently, had not occasion for such bitter repentence, as Saul had.
CHAP. VII.  

Ananias hath a vision; and Saul, another; of the same kind, and at the same time. Ananias goeth, and cureth him of his blindness. Acts ix. 10,—18.

ABOUT the end of the three days, (probably at three a-clock in the afternoon; which was the time of the evening-sacrifice, and one of the jewisb hours of prayer) Saul, being intense at his devotions, saw, in a vision, a man, whose name was Ananias, coming unto him, and laying his hands upon him, and (by the miraculous power of healing) conferring upon him his sight. Ananias had been a devout man, according to their law; and in great reputation among the Jews. Whether he was a native of Damascus, where the Jews were so numerous; and had been converted to Christianity, upon going up to Jerusalem, at some of the festivals; or an inhabitant of Jerusalem; and driven from thence, by the persecution; — is uncertain. The former appears to be more probable, from what he himself has said, ver. 13. namely, "that he had only heard, from many others, the mischief, which Saul had done to the christians, at Jerusalem." For, if he had been an inhabitant of Jerusalem, he would, most likely, have seen and known Saul's outrageous conduct himself.

After the appearance of the divine glory, and the voice from heaven, Saul went into the city, as the vision had appointed him; and, very likely, took up his lodgings at the house of a Jew. But, for these three days, he seemeth to have kept himself wholly upon the reserve. He had heard enough, upon the road, to deter him from applying to the Jews, to assist him, in apprehending the christians, or to send them in chains to Jerusalem; and he knew too much of their zeal, to declare unto them, as yet, his own conversion. He himself was still too bigoted a Jew, to think of going among the gentiles. And he might very easily suppose, that, if he had applied himself to the christians, and

Verse 10. So he is called, Acts xxii. 12. and I had once inferred, from that expression, that he was a proselyte of righteousness to the Jewish religion. But I now believe, that a native Jew might be called a devout man according to the law. And, from Ananias his laying unto Saul, Acts xxii. 14. "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee." I conclude that Ananias was of Jewish extraction as well as Saul.
Ananias his vision, and order to go to Saul.

and acquainted them, with what had happened, they would have looked upon him, onely as a wolf in sheep's cloathing; who made such pretensions, purely to betray them, that he might destroy them the more effectually. Nor were the christians ignorant of his letting out, in pursuit of them. For the apostles, who continued at Jerusalem, would, no doubt, get all the intelligence they could, of any thing, which concerned the christians; and as readily communicate what might be of any service. And, from Ananias his words, [ver. 13, 14.] it appeareth, that, within three days after his arrival, the christians were acquainted with his character, and the occasion of his coming to Damascus. In such a situation, it was most proper, for Saul, to conceal what had happened. But the divine wisdom made it manifest; and that, in such a manner, as fully convinced the christians of the truth and reality of his conversion. Just as St. Peter and Cornelius had, afterwards, each of them, a vision, not long after one another, and concerning the same thing. So, towards the end of the three days, and about the very time that Saul had the fore-mentioned vision, Ananias also had a vision; in which the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him, calling him by his name, “Ananias.” To which he replied: “LORD, I am here; ready to do whatsoever you shall please to order me.” Then the Lord said: “Ariseth, and go into the street called Straight, and to the house of one Juvinus in Cilicia. For, behold! he is spending his time in prayer, and fasting. And, as he humbleth himself for his past sins; and so earnestly implores divine direction; I have, even now, in a vision, represented thee to him, as coming in, and, by putting thine hands upon him, miraculously curing him of his blindness.”

[It ought to be observed, that our Lord did not order Ananias, to go to him; and, by the laying on of his hands, impart unto him the holy spirit. Which, if he had gone to do, would surely have been the most important part of his message. And, therefore, our Lord would not have omitted to mention it. From his silence, therefore, we may draw a good presumptive argument against that supposition.]

Ananias replied to the order, which Jesus had given him: “LORD, I have heard, from many persons, the character of that very man; and am well informed, how barbarously he has treated several of the christians, at Jerusalem. And it must needs be unsafe for me, to go nigh him. For he is come hither to Damascus, with a commission and authority, from the chief-priests at Jerusalem, to apprehend all such, as call upon thy name; and to carry
Ananias miraculously cures Saul's blindness.

Ananias, being now fully convinced that the enemy and persecutor was become a "brother-christian," went presently to the house, where he lodged; and, putting his hands upon Saul's eyes, he said: "Brother Saul, as secret as you have kept it, I know that Jesus appeared, in the cloud of glory, unto you, as you came along the road. And that same Jesus hath sent me (as he hath lately presented to you, in a vision) that I might miraculously cure you of your blindness, and that you may afterwards be filled with the holy spirit. For, the God of our great ancestors, the patriarchs, hath chosen you; that you should be fully instructed in the christian revelation; and that you should yet see that righteous and holy person, the messiah; and hear the doctrine of the gospel, from his own mouth.

For you are to be a witness, unto all men, both of what you have heard and seen already, and of what you are hereafter to hear and see. And now, why do you delay one moment? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins; calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus, and acknowledging him for the messiah, or savior of the world." Upon Ananias his laying his hands on Saul's eyes, and speaking thus; there fell, from his eyes, something like scales; [a most lively emblem of the veil's being done away from his heart!] And his sight was restored, immediately. Then he rose up, and was baptized. And, as appears by the event, was then also filled with the holy spirit; that is, (as that phrase commonly signifies) the holy spirit was poured down upon him, immediately from heaven; and not conveyed, by the laying on of the hands of any man. And, very probably, that effusion

Ver. 17. b Acts xxii. 14, 15, 16. Ver. 18. c 2 Cor. iii. 14; 16.
Ananias did not impart the spirit to Saul.

Fusion upon Saul was accompanied with a glory; cloven tongues, or pointed flames, like as of fire. Which was the external symbol, when the spirit was given, in the most honorable manner, as well as in the highest measure. And, if that symbol attended his receiving the holy spirit, it was proper that his eyes should be first opened, that he himself might see the glory; and so be convinced, both by external signs, and internal gifts, that he, who had formerly been a persecutor, was now graciously accepted, as a christian, and a prophet.

CHAP. VII. SECT. III.

Some have supposed that Ananias conferred, on Saul, the gift of the holy spirit. The contrary is here asserted, and defended. Acts ix. 17, 18.

It hath been questioned, whether Ananias did not, by the laying on of his hands, both miraculously cure Saul of his blindness, and impart unto him the gift of the holy spirit? I will, therefore, mention what maketh the contrary appear probable to me. (1.) It is evident, as I apprehend, that there is no other clear instance, in the Acts of the apostles, or in their epistles, of any person's imparting the holy spirit, by the laying on of their hands, but apostles only. And, it is certain, Ananias was no apostle. One would not, therefore, willingly make this an exception, if any other fair account can be given of it; nor ground much upon a singular, and disputed, case. (2.) The divine wisdom seemeth studiously to have declined conferring the holy spirit, by the hands of any, but apostles only. Thus, though Philip was one of the seven deacons, whilst the christians continued together, at Jerusalem; and an evangelist; that is, he was equal, if not superior, to Ananias; yet he could not impart the holy spirit to the samaritans. And, therefore, the apostles sent two of their own number, from Jerusalem; namely, Peter and John; "who laid their hands upon them, and imparted unto them the gift of the holy spirit. [Acts vii. 16, 17.] For, before that, the spirit was fallen upon none of them." And, if the reading be genuine, concerning the holy spirit's falling down upon the eunuch, (as I take it to be;) that will confirm this
Ananias did not impart the spirit to Saul.

This second observation. (3.) It hath been taken notice of, already, that the order, which Ananias received, from our Lord, was onely, that "he should go and put his hands upon Saul, that he might receive his sight." And, if that was the onely thing, mentioned in Saul's vision, and Ananias his order; it can hardly be supposed, that a thing so much superior, [as that of imparting the holy spirit,] should be intended; when it was not so much as mentioned. Agreeably to this, we find Saul himself giving an account of Ananias his curing him of his blindness; [Acts xxii. 12, 13.] but giving no intimations of his confering upon him the holy spirit.

Some, indeed, may object what is said ver. 17. namely, "Ananias declared unto Saul, that he was sent, by Jesus, that he [Saul] might receive his sight, and be filled with the holy spirit." To which I would answer, That this is the onely text, which can give any color to the supposition of Ananias his confering the holy spirit upon Saul; and that ellipses are so common in scripture (as well as in other ancient authors) that as much must be inferred in many places, as would here make the sense complete. For instance; "Jesus hath sent me to restore your sight; that, when you see again, you may be filled with the holy spirit." That is, his eyes were to be opened, that he might see the glory, the external and visible emblem of the shedding down of the spirit. And it deserveth some notice (I think) that, even in this, which is the onely place, that can be objected, Ananias doeth not say, I am sent to impart unto you the holy spirit; [as St. Paul speaketh, Rom. i. 11.] but, that you may be filled with it; that is, he useth the verb passive [\(\pi\alpha\nu\beta\eta\varphi\varsigma\)] and doeth not speak, in the style of one, who could, himself, confer the gift of the spirit.

(4.) There are some hints, in the epistles, which intimate that St. Paul received the holy spirit, immediately from heaven. And, what is said, more particularly, Tit. iii. 5, 6. appears to me to afford a strong argument for this. For, from ver. 3. the whole section is mostly a description of St. Paul's own character; and the shedding down of the holy spirit, is a circumstance, which could agree to him onely; and not to Titus, nor to the Cretans. For both Titus and they had been St. Paul's converts; and had received the holy spirit, by the laying on of his hands. All, who are acquainted with his style and manner, will readily allow that St. Paul doeth often speak of himself, in the plural number. And it was, there, a most proper argument, by which to urge them to gentleness and meekness towards

*See on Titus iii. 3, 6.*
Ananias did not impart the Spirit to Saul.

towards such as differed from them; to point out, to them, what he did.

a zealot and persecutor he himself had been; and what reason he had seen, for a different temper and conduct, since the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy spirit; which God had shed down, upon him, abundantly; by, [or through,] our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gal. i. 12. he intimateth, that it was not, by the medium of any man, that he had received the gospel-revelation. And, as if he had designed to preclude any such imagination, he declareth, [ver. 17.] that he did not, upon his conversion, go up to Jerusalem, to them, who were apostles before him. And the christians of that age did ( as I apprehend ) know very well, that none but apostles could confer the holy spirit, by the laying on of their hands; and would, therefore, easily understand St. Paul as intimating that he had not received the spirit, from them; but by an immediate effusion from heaven. For,

(5.) Saul, upon his conversion, received the revelation of the scheme of the christian doctrine, as far as it concerned the jews; and was able to preach, immediately, to them, without any instructions from any man. [Gal. i. 12, — 17.] Whereas; we find no instance of any other person's having such an extensive and honorable revelation, but apostles; who, all of them, received it, by an immediate effusion of the spirit. (6.) As Saul was a jew, the gift of the holy spirit (according to the method, in all the other instances, mentioned in the new testament) must have been conferred, on him, after baptism. So it was conferred upon all the jewish and samaritan converts; whether it was poured down from heaven, or conveyed by imposition of bands. And in that order it was conferred on the gentile converts; excepting only the first-fruits of them. In which case, it was poured down, from heaven, to point out their right to baptism; which St. Peter and the jewish christians had before scrupled. But, as to Saul, there was no such scruple to be removed. For he was a jew, both by birth and religion. And it plainly appears that Saul was baptized, after Ananias laid his hands upon him, to cure him of his blindness. [Acts ix. 18. and xxii. 13, — 16.] Nor is it, any where, so much as intimateth, that Ananias did, upon any account, lay his hands, a second time, on Saul. Accordingly; [Tit. iii. 5, 6.] after baptism, or the washing of regeneration, he intimateth that the holy spirit was poured out, upon him. (7. and lastly.) Saul was not a whit behind any of the prophets, after he became a christian, and a prophet; any more
Ananias did not impart the spirit to Saul.

Ananias did not impart the spirit to Saul. Ananias did not impart the spirit to Saul. Ananias did not impart the spirit to Saul.

And, would it not be unaccountable, that the holy spirit should be poured down, upon the eunuch; and that God would not enable Philip to confer, upon him, that divine gift, by the laying on of his bands; merely because Philip was not an apostle; and yet he was an evangelist; and, upon every account, only second to an apostle; and the eunuch (in many respects) only a common convert. — Would not this be unaccountable, I say, upon the supposition that Ananias (who was, at the highest, only equal to Philip; and, very probably, inferior to him) was enabled to confer the holy spirit upon the most signal convert, prophet, and apostle, in the christian church? Or (to take a more unexceptionable instance) would Philip the evangelist, have been denied the honor of conferring the spirit, upon the samaritans; and yet Ananias (who is never dignified with the title of an evangelist) have been permitted to confer that divine gift, upon one who was greater than any of the samaritans? Or, finally, would not his violent and implacable enemies have objected it to Saul, if Ananias had conferred upon him the gift of the holy spirit; when they condescended to much lower scandal; not only charging him with being an apostle of men, and learning Christianity of the other apostles; but basely insulting him, because his bodily presence was mean, and his speech contemptible? St. Paul was not only equal to, but honored above, all the apostles. And, in every respect, excepting his late conversion, appears to have had the preference.

For these, and like reasons, I think that Ananias did not impart, unto Saul, the gift of the holy spirit, by the laying on of his hands: though I leave others to judge of this matter, as it appears most reasonable to them.
The spiritual gifts and miraculous powers conferred on Saul, immediately after baptism. Acts ix. 18.

As soon as Saul was baptized, the holy spirit (as I apprehend) was poured down, from heaven, upon him, accompanied with a glory; which was called cloven tongues, or pointed flames, like as of fire: Such as accompanied the giving of the spirit, to the other apostles, upon the illustrious day of pentecost; and such as, very probably, always accompanied an immediate effusion from heaven. What gifts and powers were hereby conferred on Saul, deserve to be inquired. But we have so few, and such imperfect, hints, that we cannot speak positively and expressly; at least as to all of them. It doeth, indeed, evidently appear, that some gifts and powers he did receive. For, St. Luke says, ver. 20. that he immediately preached the christian doctrine, in the jewish synagogues, at Damascus. And he himself faith, [Gal. i. 11, &c.] “that the gospel, which he did preach, he neither received, from any man; neither was he taught it, by any man; but by revelation from our Lord Jesus Christ.

For, when he, who was formerly a zealous pharisee, had the gospel revealed to him; [that, in due time, he might be the apostle of the gentiles;] he did not consult with flesh and blood: that is, be applied to no man for advice and instruction; neither went he up to Jerusalem, unto them, who were apostles before him, to learn the christian doctrine of them. But he went, (I suppose, by a divine order,) and preached the gospel in Arabia. And then returned; and preached it, again, in Damascus.” Nay; for three years after his conversion, he had never seen any of the apostles. And when, at the end of three years, he went up to Jerusalem, he saw none of them, except Peter and James. And with them he tarried only fifteen days. Which would have been too short a time to have learned the whole scheme of the christian doctrine, if he had been then to have learned it. But he understood it, as well as St. Peter, or any other of the apostles: [who, in conferring about it, could add nothing to his knowledge.] And, therefore, he went out again, and preached it in Syria and Cilicia. From all which, we are
The spiritual gifts, conferred on Saul.

And, from what hath been said, it appeareth: 1. That he must now have received the word of wisdom; that is, (as it has been defined above,) "a full and clear knowledge of the scheme of the christian doctrine: At least, that general part, which was common to all mankind; and that particular part, which might be, more peculiarly, called the jewish gospel." There is, indeed, no reason to think, that he had, as yet, any notion of preaching to the gentiles; or any revelation, communicated to him, of that gospel, which more peculiarly concerned them. For st. peter had not yet opened the door of faith to them, or led the way to their conversion. And, 'till he had, by divine direction, led the way, no body presumed to convert any gentiles. It was well, if they afterwards got over their prejudices, and communicated the gospel unto the uncircumcised.

By this word of wisdom, Saul had more knowledge communicated, in one hour, than ever he could have attained, by sitting at the feet of Gamaliel. His former aversion to christianity was now dissipated. And he, with astonishment, saw what a glorious plan god had contrived, for erecting a spiritual kingdom: — much superior to the plan, which was shown to Moses, in the mount, when he was about to erect god's temporal kingdom over the jews.

In order to preach christianity, which was founded upon facts, Saul must have had the knowledge of christ's life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension, communicated unto him; all which, I suppose, were made known, to him, by immediate revelation.

It may appear strange, to some, that Saul should have had facts communicated, unto him, by revelation; when he might have been informed of them, by the apostles, who were present, when they were done, and eye-witnesses of them. But, notwithstanding all this, it appeareth to me highly probable (not to say evident) that such facts were actually revealed to him. [1 cor. xi. 23, &c.] It is his own account: "I have received, of the Lord, the manner, in which the Lord Jesus first instituted his last supper," &c. And so he speaks of the facts of Christ's death, and resurrection. [1 cor. xv. 3, &c.] He, again, declareth, [Gal. i. 11, 12.] "that the gospel, which he preached, was not according to man, neither did he receive it of man; nor was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus christ." [ver. 17, 18.] He went directly, into Arabia, upon his conversion; and preached the gospel; and saw none of the apostles, for three years. And, [chap. ii. 6.] when he did see them, the chief of the apostles could add nothing to his former knowledge. I am ready to question, whether st. luke might not have his knowledge of these facts from st. paul. It is, indeed, commonly supposed, that he learned his
The spiritual gifts, conferred on Saul.

If any should object, "that he was not now made an apostle, but only a christian prophet; and, that the word of wisdom, or the having a comprehensive view of the christian doctrine, communicated, by immediate revelation, was peculiar to apostles; and should, from thence, infer, that Saul could not now receive this gift; but must rather have received it, several years after this, when he was taken up into heaven, and made an apostle." I answer, that this objection made me hesitate a long time; and rather incline to fix his having the word of wisdom communicated to him, when he became an apostle. But finding St. Luke pretend that he preached, soon after his conversion, and Saul himself declaring, that what he then preached, he "received, not of men, neither by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ," I think it fixed, both by the evangelist and apostle, to this very time, where I now place it. Though I look upon this, as the only instance, of any person, but an apostle's, having the word of wisdom; and that it was now granted to Saul, merely with a view to his being afterwards an apostle. When he was made an apostle, it was to the gentiles. But that was some years after this. For, had he been, immediately upon his conversion, sent out, as apostle of the gentiles, it would not only violently have contradicted all his own prejudices: [which would have been contrary to our Lord's usual method, of letting light into men's minds, as they were able to bear it:] but it would have made the generality of the jews,christians to have looked upon him, as no christian: nay, as their grand enemy; who only pretended to christianity, and preached it, among the gentiles, to perplex them, and oppose the real interest of the gospel of Christ. Whereas, if we narrowly observe, how amazingly God condescended to their most grosse and unaccountable prejudices; and with what a wise and gentle hand his gospel from such as had been eye-witnesses. But St. Luke doth not say so himself. He saith, "that many had taken in hand to write accounts; as they, who had been eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word, had informed them. And, that it seemed good to him also to write; as he had had a perfect information of every thing from the first." [Luke i. 2, 3.] But he doth not say, "that he had all his information from eye-witnesses." And, just so, do some of the ancients speak. Jerome [de Pir. illustr. c. 7.] saith: "Luke learned his gospel, not only of Paul, who had not conversed with our Lord, in the flesh; but of the other apostles." Ireneaus [as quoted by Eusebius, Eccl. hist. l. 5. c. 8.] saith, that "Luke, the companion of Paul, hath wrote, in a book, the gospel, which was preached by him;" that is, by Paul. See, also, Irene. adv. bar. l. 3. c. 1. And Tertullian [adv. Marcion. l. 4. c. 5.] hath informed us, "that Luke's history was usually ascribed to Paul. For those things may be looked upon, as the master's, which the disciples have published."
The spiritual gifts, conferred on Saul.

hand he rooted them out; particularly, with what easy steps, and by what just and gentle degrees, he ordered the several removes and advances of the gospel-light; — we shall applaud and admire the method, which was taken, as the wisest and most effectual that can be conceived. It is true, I have included, under the word of wisdom, the revelation of divers mysteries, or of the grand events, relating to the spreading, corrupting, and restoring, of the christian religion. But this I do not suppose Saul to have received, 'till he was made an apostle. And, it is remarkable, that, even to the apostles of the circumcision, such mysteries were not discovered, all at once; and to few, if any, of them, so early as the former branches of the word of wisdom.

2. By this effusion of the spirit, Saul must have received the word of knowledge; that is, "a full and comprehensive view of the scope and design of the law and the prophets; and a thorough understanding of the confirmation, which the old testament giveth to christianity." It is true, Saul had had a learned education. And, therefore, was (very probably) acquainted with the original language of the old testament, as well as with the most antient of the chaldee paraphrases. And, upon such accounts, some may think that he had much lesse occasion for being let into the meaning of those antient writings, by revelation: — lesse occasion, I mean, than the other apostles; who were, most, or all, of them, unlearned men. But then, if we consider how much more he must have been established, in his prejudices, against the just interpretation of the prophecies, and the scope and design of the successive revelations; we shall be ready to acknowledge, that there must have been as much, or more, reason, for God's communicating unto him the word of knowledge; before he sent him out to preach christianity among the jews. The gospel-doctrine was, indeed, to be founded upon facts. And, for that reason, I have supposed that the facts of Christ's life, sufferings, and resurrection, were revealed to Saul, in a full, clear, and distinct, manner; as well as the scheme of the christian doctrine. But, when he had asserted the facts, and built the doctrine upon them; it was requisite, in order to his preaching successfully among the jews, that he should lead them into a right interpretation of the law and the prophets; and thereby remove the scruples of the honest, and convince gainsayers. It will not be so much wonder-

b For a large and particular account of the chaldee paraphrases, and of the time when, and the persons, by whom, they were written; see Prideaux his connection, &c. vol. 2. p. 531, &c. 8vo. 4th edition, 1718.
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ed, that Saul should have this gift, if he had the former. For this latter gift was not peculiar to the Apostles. Some of the superior prophets, also, had it. And Saul ought, from the time of his embracing the gospel, to be reckoned among the superior Christian prophets.

3. Possibly, he might now receive the gift of discerning spirits: because that gift was granted, not only to the superior, but often-times (I believe) even to the inferior, prophets. What the gift was, hath been already shown at large. But, as we have no particular proof of Saul's receiving it, at this time, we shall passe on, without saying any more about it.

4. In order to have preached the gospel to the Jews, he must have had the power of binding and loosing; so far as that relates to "the pointing out to them their duty, and their being bound over to, or freed from, future punishments, upon their neglecting, or practising, it." But that he should, as yet, be capable of freeing them from the observance of the ceremonial law; or of miraculously inflicting bodily punishments upon them, when incorrigible; and as miraculously releasing them, when penitent; — is, what I cannot believe. For these things appear to me to have been peculiar to Apostles; and Saul was not an Apostle till many years after this.

5. Saul, very probably, did now receive the gift of prophesying; both as it signified "the foretelling some future contingent events;" and as it included the praying, singing, or making discourses upon particular occasions, by immediate inspiration." This was so commonly granted, even to the inferior prophets; and the latter-branches of it so necessary, for carrying on of religious worship, in the Christian assemblies; that I can hardly think God would suffer Saul to go into Arabia, to preach the gospel, and plant churches, without it.

6. Perhaps, Saul now received the gift of tongues. — In the Jewish synagogue, at Damascus, and in Arabia, he could (I think) have no very great occasion for more languages than he had learned; either at Tarsus, or in Jerusalem. But this gift was so commonly bestowed, upon the effusion of the Spirit, and even upon inferior prophets, that it is not unlikely Saul might now have it. For, besides it's being conferred upon the Apostles; [Acts ii. 6, 7, 8; 11.] it was, probably, conferred on the Samaritans, [Acts viii. 17.] and on the eunuch. [ver. 39.] It was most evidently conferred, when the Spirit was first poured out, upon the Gentiles: [Acts x. 44, 45, 46.]

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and
The miraculous powers, conferred on Saul.

And upon the twelve disciples of John the baptist, on whom St. Paul laid his hands. [Acts xix. 6.] And a great part of the christians, in the church of Corinth, seem to have had it. [1 Cor. xiv. 2, Book I. &c.]

Ch. VII. Sect. IV. 7. The interpretation of tongues was, also, frequently granted to inferior prophets. And, therefore, we may presume that it would not be denied to Saul; who was so eminent a convert, and prophet. Hereby, he could turn into the languages of the countries (wherever he preached christianity) any part of the old testament, after he had recited it in the original. And, it is possible, that it might be of service to him, upon some other accounts, in the planting, or watering, of the christian churches.

As to the miraculous powers now conferred on Saul. He had, most likely, (1) A greater degree of fortitude, to run hazards, or actually suffer, for the truth, than he had before his conversion; though not equal to what he received, when he became an apostle. (2.) It is highly probable that he now received the power of healing diseases, and doing other miracles; to raise the attention of the jews, and to confirm the doctrine which he preached. Several of the inferior prophets had this power. And, therefore, Saul cannot reasonably be supposed to have been destitute of it.

As to the apostolic rod, or the power of imparting the holy spirit unto others, by the laying on of his hands; I am satisfied that Saul had them not, 'till he became an apostle. All the gifts and powers, which I suppose him now to have received, were only such, as were necessary to his own understanding the christian doctrine; to his being fully convinced of its truth and divinity; and to his preaching it, among the jews, with certainty, and with success.
Saul preaches Christianity in Damascus.

CHAP. VII. SECT. V.

Saul breaketh his long fast; associateth himself with the christians; preacheth Christ, in the synagogue of the jews, to their great astonishment; was set up, as a monument of mercy, to encourage other sinners to repent, and imbrace Christianity. Acts ix. 19, — 22.

Saul, having been cured of his blindness, baptized, and filled with the holy spirit, he ended his long fast. And, after eating, he found himself much refreshed. And well he might; considering his late happy change; and the great mercy, which God had shewn him; as well as the honor done him, in so eminently qualifying him for a christian prophet. And, now, he no longer made a secret of his conversion; but associated himself with the christians, at Damascus. For, we may reasonably suppose that Ananias had informed them of what had happened; and fully convinced them that he was a real, and sincere, convert. As such, therefore, they received him. And, among them, did he freely converse, for several days. — Being converted to Christianity, and extraordinarily qualified, as hath been above related; there was a strange alteration in his conduct. For, instead of apprehending the christians, beating them in the synagogues, or carrying them, in chains, to Jerusalem; he himself went into several of the synagogues, at Damascus: (where, as hath been observ'd, the jews were very numerous; and consequently had, very likely, many synagogues there.) And he publicly preached, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth; asserting and proving him to be the promised, and long expected, messiah. The jews seem to have known nothing, till then, of his conversion. And, therefore, this sudden and strange turn amazed them all. "What! (said they to one another) Is Saul, also,

Ver. 20. a That the jews used to have more synagogues than one, in a city, vid. Vitring. de vet. synag. p. 255, &c. They now have three in London.

b Instead of the word [Christ,] several antient mss. versions, and fathers, read [Jesus.] Which reading was approved of, by Grotius, Dr. Mill, and Bengelius.

[Vid. Weiss. in loc.]
Saul, a monument of divine mercy.

Also, among the prophets? Is not this the very man, who fiercely persecuted such as invoked this name, at Jerusalem? And was it not his errand to this city, to apprehend the christians, and carry them bound to Jerusalem, to the chief-priests, that they might punish them, at their pleasure? What can have befallen this man? How astonishing is his conduct? Let them think, or say, what they would, Saul was still the more confirmed; confuting such of the Jews, at Damascus, as opposed the christian doctrine: with the zeal of a new convert, contending for the truth of the christian religion, and endeavoring to persuade and convince as many as he could. As he had blasphemed Christ, and persecuted the christians, through ignorance, and whilst he really disbelieved the gospel; he more easily obtained mercy, at the hands of Our Lord Jesus Christ. But, though our Lord forgave him, he could hardly forgive himself; and thought he could not sufficiently testify his love and affection, without the greatest study and diligence to convert others. And, indeed, by showing mercy to him, who had been (as he calleth himself) a blasphemer, and a persecutor; our Lord gave a most remarkable instance of his long-suffering, patience, and abundant mercy. And in showing mercy to him, who was the first, that from a blasphemer and persecutor, became a christian, the blessed Jesus afforded a most signal pattern unto them, who should afterwards believe, on him, unto eternal life. [See on i Tim. i. 15, 16. 2d edition.] For what could be a greater encouragement unto others, to hope for mercy, upon their repentance, and embracing the gospel? To the Jews, for instance, who had procured the murther of the Messiah, the Lord of life and glory? To the Samaritans, who had formerly been so odious to the Jews, and corruptors of the old testament? To the devout gentiles, with whom the Jews would not eat, nor freely converse; as long as they remained uncircumcised? And, finally, and above all, unto the idolatrous gentiles; who had a long time lived, without the true God in the world, and as aliens to his church and covenant: unto whom, more peculiarly, this Saul, this singular monument of mercy, was, in due time, to be an apostle.

Saul's stay at Damascus, at this time, was but short. For, in a little while, he went to Arabia, and preached the gospel unto the Jews there.

CHAP.

Verse 21. "1 Sam. x. 11, 12. This was a proverbial expression among the Jews, when any thing strange, or unexpected, happened. It was literally applicable, in the present case."
Some particulars, from the Jewish and Roman history, which concerned the Christians. For instance; the government of Rome changed from a commonwealth to a monarchy. Under Augustus, the 2d. of the Roman emperors, Jesus was born; under Tiberius, the 3d. of them, he was crucified. How, and when, Judæa became subject to the Romans. The form of the government in Judæa changed. Pontius Pilate deposed and banished. Caiaphas, the high-priest, deposed. A war between Herod Antipas and Aretas, king of Arabia. Caligula succeeds Tiberius, as emperor of Rome. A brief account of Josephus, the Jewish historian.

Before we proceed to relate Saul's going into Arabia, to plant the gospel there; it will be proper to take notice of some things, from the Jewish and Roman history, which happened about this time; and which may give some light to the Christian history.

The Roman empire, being extended over the greatest part of the then known world, was secure from outward force. But it fell by its own power; and received its mortal wound, from the venality and corruption of the people; the ambition of the leading men; and the civil discords, which arose from thence. It was the fourth kingdom, in the prophecies of Daniel; and flourished, while it was a commonwealth. But it was now reduced, from a commonwealth to a monarchy. For Pompey, Crassus, and Julius Caesar, three of the greatest men in Rome, had agreed to support one another, and to divide the power of the empire among themselves. As long as Crassus lived, he balanced the matter between the other two. But, when he died, neither of them could be content with less than the whole. For Pompey could not bear an equal, nor Caesar a superior. And, therefore, they raised a civil war, in which Caesar got the better. He was a man of infinite ambition, and the most artful address. And had, by
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by his valor abroad, and by his boundless generosity and insinuating arts at home, gained the good-will of almost all sorts of men. He first aspired to the consular dignity, and then to the dictatorialship, or supreme power; in which he was fixed, after the defeat of Pompey, his son in law, who had opposed him, with the like ambitious and aspiring views. But Caesar did not long enjoy the supreme power. For, after three years and an half, some of the leading men, among the Romans, who resented his inflaving a free people; or some of them, perhaps, as ambitious to have the supreme power, themselves stabbed him publicly, in the senate-house. Cæsar, who was afterwards called Augustus, succeeded him in the empire. He was the son of Atia, or Atia, which Atia was the daughter of Balbus and of Julia, sister to Julius Caesar; and Julius had, by his will, made him his adopted son. After various struggles and contests, more particularly with Marc Antony, he obtained the supreme power; which he held, for above forty years. And, in the main, behaved like a good prince; considering the absolute power, of which he was possessed; and the great corruption and wickedness of the times. In the reign of Augustus, was Jesus Christ borne, at Bethlehem, in the land of Judea.

Augustus was succeeded by Tiberius; in whose reign, Christ was crucified, and his religion began to be planted in the world. The emperor, Tiberius, was the son of Tiberius Nero, and of Livia. Augustus Cæsar took Livia, from her former husband, when she was big with child, and married her. And Caius and Lucius, the grandsons of Augustus, dying; he adopted Livia's son, Tiberius; and Agrippa, their brother; in their stead. About three years before his own death, he took in Tiberius, as co-partner in the empire. And (after his death) he succeeded to the whole empire. — Tiberius was a prince of a suspicious temper, and savage disposition; exceedingly devoted to all manner of vice and debauchery. Before Augustus his death was published, he procured the death of Agrippa. And he concealed his inclinations, in the beginning of his reign, for fear of Germanicus, his brother's son, who was presumptive heir to the empire. For, when Augustus was about to adopt Tiberius, he ordered him to adopt Germanicus. Now Germanicus was a man of great valor, and distinguished virtue; much fitter for the empire than Tiberius. Of him, therefore, the people

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Joseph. de bell. jud. l. i. c. 11. § 1 & Antiq. l. 14. c. 11. § 1. Josephus very justly reckons the beginning of Caesar's government, from his second dictatorship. [Aldrich. & Ufber. in Joseph. in loc. edit. Havercamp.]

Suets. in August. § 4. Dion. Cæs. l. 57, 58. Suets. in Tiber. c. 25.
people of Rome were exceeding fond; which made Tiberius both envy, and fear, him. But, when he had got him taken off, he threw off the mask; and discovered his temper, by many acts of cruelty and debauchery.*

Judea became subject to the Romans, but a little before the Roman government was reduced from a commonwealth to a monarchy. The occasion of which, was, a quarrel in the Asimonæan family. For, after the death of queen Alexandra, (who, by gratifying the pharisæes, had governed that kingdom peaceably, nine years; that is, from the death of her husband, to the end of her own life;) her eldest son, Hyrcanus, who was of an indolent and peaceable temper, succeeded to the crown. But, after he had enjoyed it, only three months, Aristobulus, his younger brother, wrested it from him. f However; the contest did not end there, but was improved, by Antipater, the Idumæan, the father of Herod the great, to raise new disturbances and commotions among the Jews. g The father of Antipater had been advanced to the government of Idumæa, by Alexander Janneas, the late king of the Jews. And Antipater himself, having been bred up, in the court of Alexander Janneas, and of queen Alexandra, had curried favor with Hyrcanus, in hopes of being advanced by him, when he should come to the crown. When, therefore, Hyrcanus was deposed, Antipater incited him first to apply to Aretas, king of Arabia, to restore him to the kingdom; h and afterwards to the Romans, to whose decision Aristobulus at first agreed to refer the matter. But, when they had both pleaded their cause, before Pompey, who was then at Damascus; and Pompey seemed inclined to decide in favor of Hyrcanus; Aristobulus retired, and put Judea in a posture of defence. Which so incensed Pompey, that, having Aristobulus in his hands, he laid him in chains; and then besieged Jerusalem, and put to death the heads of Aristobulus his faction, and demolished the walls of Jerusalem, he made Hyrcanus both high-priest, and prince, of the Jews. But he reduced...
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Antipater, being an active and sagacious man, did afterwards greatly ingratiate himself with Julius Caesar, by doing him many kind offices; and, particularly, by assisting him to carry on the war, in the neighboring provinces. Upon which, he was made procurator of Judea, under Hircanus; with leave to rebuild the ruined walls of Jerusalem. And he got two of his sons preferred; that is, Phasael, the eldest, to be governor of the city Jerusalem; and Herod, his second son, to be governor of Galilee. Antipater was, after some time, poisoned, by one Malichus, a rival, who envied his power and greatness; and Phasael, his eldest son, being taken and imprisoned by an enemy, beat out his own brains, in the prison. But the other son, Herod, was a young man of a great genius, and an aspiring temper; and was indefatigable in his attempts to please and oblige the Romans. By their interest, he was made king of Judea, to the exclusion of the Asmonæan family. This was Herod the great; who arose to vast power, and reigned above thirty years. He was a most jealous and cruel tyrant. And, at last, fell into such a loathsome disease, and most cruciating torments, that he endeavored to kill himself; but was restrained by his friends. However; after long and grievous sufferings, he died a most miserable death. It was he, who, king of Judea, when our Savior was borne; and who murdered the infants at Bethlehem, in order to have cut off our Lord: of whom he was jealous, as he appeared under the character of the king of the Jews. After Herod the great, his son Archelaus reigned, about ten years, over Judea and Samaria. And was then, by the Romans, deposed and banished, for the many and tyrannical actions, of which he had been guilty, during his government. From that time, Judea and Samaria were made a Roman province; with this particular circumstance, that they were to be a branch of the province of Syria. But, that they might be kept in good order, there was an officer, sent by Augustus, to reside and govern there; invested with the power of life.
The Jewish and Roman history. Pontius Pilate is reckoned to have been the fifth in succession. He was procurator, when our blessed Lord was crucified; and had tamely submitted to let the Jews murder that holy and innocent person. For he had been guilty of great cruelties, and many irregularities, in the foregoing part of his government; and was afraid of disobligeing the Jews, lest they should accuse him of male-administration before Caesar; and so get him deposed, or punished. It hath been observed, in the course of this history, that Pilate is not once mentioned, as interposing, or calling the Jews to an account, for their irregular proceedings against the Christians. No! when he had, contrary to what he more than once declared to be his own judgment, condemned Jesus, at their importunity; the Jews had gained a point; and would scarce condescend to ask him for leave to persecute the disciples of Jesus. But, though he winked at the riots of the people, and the irregular proceedings of the Sanhedrim; or sometimes, perhaps, gratified them, by secretly joining with them; yet all this did not procure him the favor of the people; nor screen him from the accusations, which he justly feared. For he was deposed this year, (according to the best accounts) some time before the passover. The more immediate occasion of which, was, as follows. An impostor, among the Samaritans, having made himself popular, ordered the people to meet together, and go with him, up to Mount Gerizim, which they esteemed the most holy of all mountains; at the top of which, he assured them, he would show them sacred vessels, that had been hid, there, by the hands of Moses. They, being too credulous, believed him. And, having armed, and posted themselves in a village called Tirathaba, they there received all that would join them; designing to ascend the mountain, in a very large body. Pilate had got notice of their intention, and intercepted their passage, both with horse and foot; who fell upon the Samaritans, at the village; killing some, dispersing others, and taking many others prisoners. The chief of whom, Pilate put to death. Upon this, the Senate, or chief-men of Samaria, were very much incensed against Pilate: and accused him, to Vitellius, the president of Syria, desiring that he might be removed from the government. And the Jews either joined with them herein; or, however, soon after, brought accusations against him. And (notwithstanding all his former base compliances) they, also, petitioned that he might be deposed. Vitellius commanded Pilate to go to Rome, to answer to the emperor, [Tiberius,] for those
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The things, of which he was accused, by the samaritanes and Jews.

Upo which, Pilate (who had been procurator, there, for ten years) hastened away, from Judea, in order to go to Rome. For he dared not to refuse obedience to the command of Vitellius. This must have been a grievous mortification to him, who had scrupled no methods to establish himself in the government. A few years after this, (as Eusebius hath informed us, from the greek historians) Pilate made away with himself; because of his having fallen under so many, and such great, calamities. And the place, where he made so miserable an end, is commonly reckoned to have been at Vienna in Gaul. Thus ended the life of that infamous and unjust judge, who gave sentence against our blessed Lord; contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, and to gratifie the Jews; who, notwithstanding, brought the accusation against him, which he hoped, by such unworthy methods, to have prevented.

I was willing to finish the history of Pilate all together. But, from the samaritanes readiness to follow that impostor; and from Josephus his intimating, that he contrived all that he said, so as might best please the people; it may be farther observed, that the samaritanes plainly appear to have been in expectation of some extraordinary events happening about this time. And particularly, that God would make some discoveries and regulations concerning matters of religion. For, certainly, if they found those sacred vessels, they supposed they should have some instructions what to do with them. Nor could they think him an ordinary prophet, who should be honored with such a commission. In our present copies of Josephus, Moses is said to have hid those sacred vessels. In an ancient samaritane chronicle, which Reland had in manuscript, the hiding those vessels is ascribed to Ozes, or Ozi; by whom was, perhaps, meant the high-priest Uzzi. It is ascribed to Jeremiah; but he is said to have hid them in mount Nebo. But it seemeth to have been the same story, originally: though the names now differ so much, in the places here mentioned. What I would infer, from all this, is, that, according to the traditions, which they then had among them, the finding of those sacred vessels was to be immediately followed, by very glorious times, and new discoveries of the divine will: — Such glorious times,
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times, and such signal discoveries, as the Jews then expected would happen, in the days of the Messiah; and as the Jews, to this day, expect, at his coming. Which confirmeth the account given, John iv. 25; 29. namely, that the Samaritans looked for the coming of the Messiah, as well as the Jews.

It doeth not appear that the Jews had any procurator, residing among them; or any person, who had the power of life and death, from the removal of Pilate, to the accession of Herod Agrippa; whom Claudius Caesar constituted king of the Jews. For Vitellius, having commanded Pilate to go to Rome, sent his friend, Marcellus, to administer the affairs of Judea. As, therefore, he was sent thither, only by Vitellius, he could not have the power of life and death. For Ulpius faith, that no officer, under the emperor, could convey this power to another. When Caius Caligula, the emperor, did afterwards send Marullus, from Rome, it was only as master, or praefect, of the borde; which was an office of considerable power, under Vitellius, and tended to keep things in tolerable order. But Vitellius himself, who seldom resided in Judea, had the superior causes in his hands; and, particularly, the power of life and death. As had also Petronius, who was president of Syria after him. The Jews, therefore, who were commonly a riotous and seditious people, and excessively fond of power, would, during this period, (very probably,) take an unusual licence; when they had no procurator; nor any person, among them, with the power of life and death. And the president of Syria (who was invested with that power) did chiefly reside at so great a distance as Antioch. The behavior of Ananus, and his council, in the interval, between the death of Porcius Festus, and the arrival of his successor, Albinus, is a proof how ready the Jews were to lay hold of such opportunities. And none were so likely to feel the weight of their power, as the disciples and followers of Jesus. Nay; farther; such was the temper of Vitellius, that we may very reasonably suppose the Jews enjoyed some peculiar indulgences, under his administration. For he was excessively complaisant, and obsequious.

To confirm the above-mentioned observations, we find that all the grand affairs of Judea were managed, during this interval, by the


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After the next Passover, when Pilate was deposed, Vitellius went from Syria to Jerusalem. The Jews, receiving him with great magnificence, abolished entirely the tax upon vendible fruits; and, by his interest with the Emperor Tiberius, procured, for the priests, the right of keeping, in the temple, the vestment of the high-priest, and all its ornaments. Herod the Great, to overawe the Jews, had taken that vestment into his custody, and kept it in the tower of Antonia; delivering it out only at the three great festivals. And so Archelaus had done; and the Roman governors after him. But now, Vitellius, in return for the honorable reception, which he met with at Jerusalem, delivered to the Jews the custody of that vestment; which they looked upon as no small favor. Having done these things, to gratify the nation; he deposed the high-priest Joseph, called Caiaphas; and made Jonathan, his brother-in-law, the son of Ananus (or Annas) high-priest, in his stead. And then he returned to Antioch in Syria. Thus Caiaphas also, who, by his diligence and implacable malice, had procured the death of Jesus, and had since persecuted his Apostles and disciples, was degraded, as well as Pilate. And that very power and dignity taken from him, which he was so much afraid would have been undermined by Jesus, and his followers. But nothing undermined authority and true honor, so much, as cruelty and a persecution spirit, fraud and violence.

About this time, died Philip, the tetrarch, brother of Herod Antipas. He had been, for above thirty years, governor of Trachonitis, Gaulonitis, and Batanea. His life had been sober and peaceable; and he had the character of a good governor, and just judge. He died in the city Bethsaida, or Julias, and was there buried, with great pomp and solemnity. As he left no issue behind him, Tiberius added his tetrarchy to Syria; but the tribute of it was reserved within itself.

There had been a rebellion against the Romans, and great commotions, in Parthia. And, after various attempts to settle them, Tiberius ordered Vitellius to go and make a league with Artabanus, king of the Parthians. They met, each of them attended with a guard, upon a bridge, made for that purpose, over the Euphrates; where they concluded upon articles of agreement. And there, Herod, the tetrarch, entertained them both, in a rich pavilion, curiously placed in the middle of the stream. After which, Vitellius returned to Antioch.

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Herod dispatched the most early, and particular; account of all these transactions, to the emperor, Tiberius. So that, when Vitellius his intelligence came, the emperor sent back word, that he had told him nothing, but what Herod had already acquainted him with. This incensed Vitellius against Herod; though he smothered his resentment 'till he had a fair opportunity for revenge.

This Herod (whom Josephus hath also called Antipas) had married the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea; with whom he had lived for some considerable time. But, as he went to Rome, he happened to take his brother Philip's house in the way; and there fell passionately in love with Herodias, his brother's wife: to whom he proposed marriage, and she consented. She it was, who occasioned the beheading of John the Baptist. For he freely and justly reproved them, for that incestuous marriage. And so it was this Herod, to whom our Savior was sent, by Pilate, when he was accused before him. [Luke xxiii. 6, 7.] The daughter of Herodias (who danced before Herod, when he made that rash promise, to give her what she should desire, even to the half of his kingdom) was, very probably, Salome, whom she had by her first husband, Philip. In order to that incestuous

* Ibid. c. 4. § 4, 5. Tacit. Annal. 1. 6. c. 37, ad fin.
* De Bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 6. § 3. collat. cum c. q. § 1. "Haddas, &c." Antipas.
* Josephus hath called this Philip, by the name of Herod. [Antiq. Jud. l. 18. c. 5. § 1.] For the descendants of Herod the great, had, many of them, that name. But, that this was a distinct person from Philip the tetrarch; and, most probably, a private person, who lived at Jerusalem, and was called Philip Herod; see Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c., part i. book i. chap. i. p. 22. book ii. chap. 5. p. 884, &c.

Of Salome, the daughter of Herodias, it is related, that she, going over the ice, in the winter, the ice broke; and she flit in, up to the head; which at last was severed from her body, by the sharpness of the ice: "Idque non sine dei numine. God requiring her head, for that of the baptist's, which she desired. Which, if true, was a wonderful providence." [See Dr. Whitby on Matt. xiv. 11.] "Dr. Whitby did well to say, [if true.] For the story hath the air of a legend; was unknown to the antients; is not adopted even by Tillemont, h. e. i. 101. and can boast no better vouchers, than Nicephorus, and Symon Metaphrastes; such fabulous writers, as can defer no regard, more especially the latter of them.

Of all the actors in this tragedy, Salome seems to have been the least guilty; as she was a girl of only 14 years of age; and acted under the command of her profane mother. [See Mr. Jortin's remarks on ecclesiastical history, vol. 3. p. 249.] I the rather mention this, to deter the friends of Christianity from making use of any history, that is not well attested, or any observations that are groundless. For these things differ from Christianity, in the end; and cause men to suspect the true testimonies, and just observations, of the authors that make use of them.
The Jewish and Roman history.

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An. Chrifi
Tiber. 35.
Book I.
Ch. VIII.
Acts ix.
22.

The Jewish and Roman history.

Trous marriage, it was agreed, between Herod and Herodias, that he
should put away his former wife, the daughter of Aretas; who, hav-
ing private and early intelligence of the affair, fled to her father. This
treatment of his daughter greatly incensed Aretas. And, some time af-
ter that, there happened a dispute between them, about their boun-
daries, in Gamala. These things occasioned a battle, and ended in
the defeat of Herod; whose army was utterly routed, and overthrown,
by the treachery of some fugitives out of his brother Philip's tetrarchy,
who had taken up arms, under a pretence of fighting for Herod. Up-
on being defeated by Aretas, Herod had wrote to Tiberius, for help
and redress. And the emperor (either envying Aretas his victory; or
being affronted at his audacity, in that he, who was but a tribu-
tary prince, had dared to fight within the Roman empire) sent orders
immediately to Vitellius, to go and make war with Aretas; and either
bring him alive in chains, or send his head to Rome. Vitellius, hav-
ing got all things ready for the war, hastened away for Arabia petraea;
taking along with him two legions, and as many other light-armed
soldiers and horse-men, as the allies brought him. And he came so
far as Ptolemais. But, as he was about to march his army, through
Judaea, the chief men of the Jewish nation met him; and begged that
the army might march another way, because of the images in their
banners, which were offensive to the Jews. Vitellius complied with
their earnest request; and, having ordered his army to take their
route through the great plain; he himself, and Herod the tetrarch,
with their friends, went up to Jerusalem, to offer sacrifices, and wor-
ship God; a feast of the Jews (most probably, the Passover,) being
then just at hand. Vitellius was, now again, received, with great re-
spect, by the Jews. And, after he had been there three days, he took
away the high-priesthood from Jonathan (upon whom he had con-
firmed it, the year before) and gave it to his brother, Theophilus. But,
on the fourth day after his arrival at Jerusalem, he received letters,
which brought him an account of the death of Tiberius; who died
this year, March 16. Upon which, he took an oath of the people
to Caius Caligula, the succeeding emperor. Tiberius was the empe-
or, under whom our Lord was crucified: a man of such a brute-
ish, cruel, and jealous temper, that it was necessary for our Savi-
or, if he would not die, as a criminal, and a traitor, to take heed
to his words and actions; lest he should do, or say, any thing, which
might be offensive, or give the least umbrage to the Roman govern-
ment.

1Id. ibid. § 1.

2Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 5. § 3.
The jewifh and roman history.

He therefore did, very justly, keep himself upon the reserve; especially as to owning himself the king of the jews; even though his kingdom was not of this world. Notwithstanding his innocence, as he had something extraordinary in him, it was necessary to be very wary, under that jealous and cruel prince; who encouraged informations, and filled his reign with executions for treason. For, words spoken innocently, or in jest, if they could be mis- construed, were, by him, made treason; and prosecuted with such rigor, as made it always the same thing to be accused, and condemned. And, therefore, when the jews told Pilate, [John xix. 12.] "If thou lettest this man [Jesus] go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. For whosoever maketh himself a king, is a rebel to Cæsar." He asketh them no more, "Whether they would have Barabbas released, or Jesus?" but, even against his conscience, gave Jesus up to death, to secure his own head. After all his other infamous conduct, Tiberius chose Caius Caligula to succeed him in the empire: — a person of so exceeding brutish, and cruel a disposition, that it hath been suspected Tiberius chose him, in particular, for his successor; as foreseeing that Caius would out-do him, in what was vile and abominable. At least, his excessive wickedness, and intolerable shocking behavior, tended greatly to obliterate the horror and infamy of Tiberius his name and memory. Upon the death of Tiberius, Vitellius recalled the army, which was marching against Aretas; and ordered them into their winter-quarters. For he had not forgot the affront, which he had lately received from Herod. And, therefore, no wonder he was backward to engage in his quarrel. Besides; he knew not whether Caligula would approve of the orders, which he had received from Tiberius. Aretas, therefore, still continued undisturbed, in the effects and acquisitions of his victory over Herod. Though, as he had such powerful enemies as the romans, to join with Herod, we may reasonably suppose he would be upon his guard.

And, finally; while Saul was preaching the gospel in Arabia, Flavius Josephus, the famous jewifh historian, was borne. He was, by his father, of the race of the priests; and of the first of the twenty-four courses. And, by his mother, was descended from the Asmonian family;

* See Mr. Locke's Reasonableness of the christian religion, p. 507. vol. 2. of his works, in folio, 3d edit. 1727. p. 546. 4th edit. 1740. Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 6. § 5. 6. 10. Dion. l. 57. 58. & Sueton. in Tiber. c. 49. &c.


* Id. ibid. l. 18. c. 5. § 3.
An. Christi family; in which the regal power was united with that of the high-priesthood, for several ages. He was born at Jerusalem, in the first year of Caius Caligula. At sixteen years of age, he began to inquire into the sentiments of the different sects among the Jews; the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. At twenty-six, he went to Rome, to petition the emperor Nero, in behalf of several priests of his acquaintance, whom Felix had sent bound to Rome. At Puteoli, he got acquainted with one Aliturus, a Jew; who had ingratiated himself with Nero, by being a mimic, or comedian. And he introduced him to Poppea, Nero's wife; by whose favor he presently obtained liberty for his friends, and from whom he received many considerable presents himself. The next year, he returned into Judea: where he saw all things tending to a revolt, under Gessius Florus; and found great disturbances among the Jews. In the beginning of the Jewish war, he commanded in Galilee. When Vespasian, who was general under Nero, had conquered that country, Josephus was taken at Jotapata. He, and forty more Jews, had hid themselves in a subterraneous cavern. After thirty-nine of them had cast lots, and killed one another, rather than fall into the hands of the Romans; he, and the other who survived, agreed not to lay violent hands upon themselves, nor to imbrue their hands in one another's blood; but rather to deliver themselves up to the Romans. Upon which, he gave himself up to Nicanor, who conducted him to Vespasian. That general, after some time, showed him great favor; and Josephus continued with him, as long as Vespasian stayed in those parts. When Vespasian was declared emperor, and went to Rome, to take possession of the empire, Josephus stayed with Titus, his son; was present at the siege of Jerusalem; and saw, with his own eyes, the amazing desolation of the city and country. He afterwards settled at Rome; and obtained the freedom of that city from Vespasian. Some time after the destruction of Jerusalem, he wrote the history of the Jewish wars, in seven books. After that, he wrote, in twenty books, the Jewish antiquities; or the history of the Jews, from the creation of the world, to the twelfth year of Nero; when the wars broke out, which ended in that universal ruin. This work he finished in the 56th year of his age; in the 13th year of the reign of Domitian, An. Christi, 93. Besides this, we have his life, written by himself; and two books against Appion, an Egyptian author, who had calumniated the

The history of Saul continued.  

The Jewish people. These works, Josephus wrote in the Greek language. They are valuable monuments of antiquity; especially to the Christian world; and bear a more remarkable testimony to the gospel; as he evidently appeareth, by his silence concerning many events, to have had so great an aversion to the Christians. However; our Savior's prophecy concerning the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, and the temple; and the great calamities, that were coming upon that nation; plainly appear (according to the account, which Josephus hath given us, from what he himself knew and saw) to have been the most punctually accomplished. And the writings of an inveterate enemy to Christianity, bear the most ample testimony of its truth and divinity. To his excellent writings are we, also, much indebted, for many other things, which give light to the sacred scriptures: such as the Jewish antiquities, and the customs, which then prevailed; and the history of the Jews and Romans, about that time; with which he was so well acquainted.

CHAP. IX.

The history of Saul continued.

SECT. I.

Saul planteth Christianity among the Jews, in Arabia Deserta; returneth to Damascus; preacheth Christianity, in the synagogues, there: exasperateth the Jews; so that he narrowly escapes with his life. Acts ix. 23, 24, 25. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33. Galat. i. 17, 18, 19.

Though St. Luke hath not given us a particular account of this part of Saul's travels; yet, from ver. 23. he appears not to have been ignorant of it. For he saith, that it was not 'till after many days were fulfilled, or 'till some considerable time after Saul's conversion, that the Jews at Damascus plotted his death. And Saul himself hath led us to conclude, that it was not 'till after he returned from Arabia, to Damascus, just before he went up to Jerusalem.
Saul planteth Christianity in Arabia;

Possibly, the reason why St. Luke so transiently passed over this prophetic journey of Saul, was, because it was the most private and inconsiderable. Or, rather, because he thought he had other instances now, to lay before his reader, of Saul's promoting Christianity, as a superior prophet. Besides; it is evident, that he hastened to the history of Saul's apostleship; which was much more material; and about which, he designed to treat more largely. However; as I am desirous to bring together everything, which can give light to the Christian history, within this period, I will not omit to take notice of the broken and imperfect hints, which are dispersed, in his epistles, concerning this his journey into Arabia; as well as what treatment he met with, when he returned, and preached the gospel, in the synagogues, at Damascus.

As Saul's abode at Damascus, both upon his conversion, and at his returning from Arabia, appear to have been very short; he must (according to his own account) have spent almost three years in Arabia. His going so soon from Damascus, and preaching the gospel so long in a remote country, where there were no Christians, before his coming, is, what he himself very justly allegeth, as a proof, that "he received not the knowledge of the gospel-doctrine from any other of the apostles, or Christians; but immediately from our Lord Jesus Christ; or by the illumination of the spirit." And, as none but Jews had hitherto been accepted into the Christian church; it is reasonable to suppose, that Saul preached, in Arabia, to none but to Jews only.

Returning from Arabia, he came again to Damascus. And, going into one of the synagogues there, he preached the Christian doctrine to the Jews, as he had done before. But they, not being content with barely rejecting his doctrine, consulted how they might take away his life. For they looked upon him, as a grand apostate; whose conversion greatly strengthened the interest of Christianity.

Damascus did now belong to Aretas, king of Arabia; who governed it, by an etharch, or deputy-governor. It has been observed, that...
and returns to Damascus.

that Herod's army was routed by Aretas. And, after Aretas had broken with his son-in-law, and got such a signal victory over him, who was a Jew, and son to Herod the great, the late king of the Jews; very probably, the Jews, in general, would have left less interest in the king of Arabia's dominions, and rather be watched and suspected by him. This might be the reason, perhaps, why they could not apprehend Saul in the synagogue; as he himself thought formerly to have apprehended the Christians. However, though the Jews could not, by their own power, compass their design; nor would Aretas himself, perhaps, have granted them such a favor; yet they made interest with his ethnarch, that the garrison might have orders to apprehend Saul, and deliver him into their hands. After such a battle, it was necessary for Aretas more strongly to garrison all his cities. For he knew that the Romans claimed it, as their right, to decide the affairs of princes; and looked upon it as an indignity, for any to fight, within the borders of the empire, without leave first obtained of them. He knew, also, that he had fought without their permission; and he could not long be without intelligence of their design to assist Herod. The garrison, which he had let to guard, and defend Damascus, upon that occasion, was (I suppose) the very garrison, to whom the ethnarch gave that additional order, to apprehend Saul, and deliver him up to the Jews. Possibly, the Jews might incense the ethnarch against him, by pretending that (though they were loyal subjects) Saul was a spy for Herod, or for the Romans, and an enemy to the Arabians; and so draw him into their quarrel. For, what will not persecuting and malicious men say, or do, in the current of their blind zeal; and when hotly engaged to oppose truth and goodness? But, whatever their pretence was, they prevailed with him to give such orders to the garrison; who, according to their request, watched the gates of the city, mate nothing of it's being restored to the Arabians. [Vid. Pocock, Not. in Abul-far, p. 77, 78, & Spec. p. 57, &c. and Mr. S. preliminary discourse to the Koran, p. 10, 11. With which compare Joseph. Antiq. Jud. 1. 13. c. 15. § 2. & de Bell. Jud. l. 1. c. 4. § ult. & Antiq. Jud. l. 14. c. 2. § ult. Hieron. in Isa. xvii. 1. Dion. Cass. l. 36. p. 36. [alias, 37.] B. & Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 14. c. 4. § ult. & c. 9. § 5. & c. 11. § 4. & ult. & l. 15. c. 3. § penult. & c. 16. § 1.] However, Damascus belonged to Arabia, in the second century, as Justin Martyr expressly affirms. [Dial. cum Trypho. Par. edit. 1636. p. 305. A.] And, as he was born in Palæstine, he must have known the fact. But how, or when, the Arabians recovered it; or had it restored to them, by the Romans; I have not been able to find.

Upon farther considering this matter, I apprehend that the Romans never took away Damascus from the Arabians; but that Aretas his kingdom was tributary to the Romans; and that he held his dominion, under them, as a dependent and tributary prince.
Saul goes to Jerusalem;


city, day and night, that Saul might not escape. But he, having intimations of the steps which they were taking, kept himself concealed, for some days; and no more appeared, in any of their synagogues, or in any public place. And, as soon as they could do it with safety, the christians took him, and let him down, by night, in a large basket, through the window of a house, which joined to the walls of the city; and, by that mean, the bloody-minded jews lost their prey.

C H A P. IX. S E C T. II.

Saul goeth to Jerusalem; seeth Peter and James.

The christians were afraid of him. Barnabas introduced him among them; and satisfied them of his conversion. The christians are convinced, and admit him to their confidence and familiarity. He disputed with some of the hellenistic jews, who sought his life. Upon which, the christians conveyed him away to his native country. Acts ix. 26, — 30.

Upon his escapeing from Damascus, Saul went up to Jerusalem; where he had never been, since his conversion to christianity. And thither he went, chiefly to visit the great apostle of the circumcision; [Gal i. 18.] who, as some of the christians had informed him, did then reside at that city. He had, very probably, heard much talk of St. Peter; which made him long for the sight and acquaintance of one so eminent in the christian church.

Great souls, by instinct, to each other turn;  
Demand alliance, and in friendship burn.

And, indeed, there was something alike in their case. For the one had been recovered to the dignity of one of the prime ministers of the circumcision, after a three-fold denial of his Lord and master. The other, from a persecutor of the christians, was already converted,
and associates with the christians there.

ed, and made an eminent prophet; and was farther designed for the great apostolate of the gentile world. But, though Saul went as a friend, to visit St. Peter, and the christian church; yet, as he had been so zealous and distinguished a persecutor; and had, since his conversion, been mostly in Arabia deserta; a country, with which Jerusalem had but little correspondence; the christians were still afraid of him. They knew how he had persecuted their brethren in Jerusalem, formerly; and gone, to Damascus, in pursuit of them: but they, very probably, had had little, or no, account of his conversion. Though it seemeth strange, that so remarkable an event should have been so long hid from them! However: some very probable reasons have been alleged; why they had not had a full and satisfying account of this affair; such as, (1.) The war between Herod and Aretas, might greatly interrupt the correspondence between Jerusalem and Damascus. (2.) As the christians in Judæa were under a violent persecution, those of Damascus might be afraid of going to Jerusalem; and the christians of Jerusalem might not be able to carry on their correspondence, so regularly, with the christians at a distance. (3.) Perhaps the persecuting Jews might raise jealousies; and pretend that Saul acted that part, as their spy; when they had really lost him as their fellow-persecutor. But, whatever was the cause, the christians at Jerusalem still doubted his integrity; and could hardly believe, that so great an enemy, as he had been, could be any other than a feigned convert; who thrust himself in, among them, as a spy, in order to molest and persecute them more effectually. Some affirm that Barnabas had been his old acquaintance; and had fate, with him, at the feet of Gamaliel; and therefore he might know him to be a man of too much veracity, to act an insincere part. But I question whether that account can be depended upon; as it cometh so late, and is not mentioned by the fathers, nor by any body that I know of, till Simeon Metaphrastes affirmed it, in the tenth century. However; Barnabas was, some way or other, fully satisfied of the truth and reality of Saul’s conversion. He, therefore, with great propriety, took Saul by the hand, and introduced him to the apostles; namely, to St. Peter, who had gone with St. John to Samaria, and who was now come back again; and to St. James, the kinsman of our Lord. [Gal. i. 18, 19.] For these were the onely apostles, whom Saul now saw at Jerusalem: The other apostles had dispersed themselves to plant, or water, the christian religion, in different places: and, especially, to confirm and establish such converts, as the christians had made, in their several dispersions; by the laying on of their hands, and
Saul persecuted, for preaching the gospel.

and imparting unto them the gift of the holy spirit. Barnabas fully convinced the church at Jerusalem, of Saul's being a sincere convert, by alleging the manner of his conversion, together with the effects of it; namely, that he had seen the glory of the Lord, as he was upon the road to Damascus, when he was going thither to persecute the christians: that a voice came along with the glory, which reproved and convinced him: and that he himself had afterwards preached boldly, at Damascus, in the name of the Lord Jesus; proving him to be the promised, and long-expected, Messiah.

Saul tarried only fifteen days at Jerusalem, along with Peter and James, and the christian brethren; who used him with an entire confidence, as fully satisfied of his integrity. And he preached, openly, and undauntedly, in the name of the Lord Jesus; even at Jerusalem also, where he had formerly shown himself a zealous pharisee, had assisted at the stoning of St. Stephen, and persecuted and opposed the other christians. Particularly, he disputed with some of the hellenistic Jews; that very sort of persons, with whom he had joined in stoning the proto martyr. Possibly, he thought he could do more good among them, than among the hebrews. For the hebrews had not only known him to have been one of them; and consequently were more prejudiced against him, since his conversion: but (what is more) christianity had been so long preached in Jerusalem, that the harvest of the hebrew converts was gathered in; and the rest were generally hardened, almost beyond all hopes of conviction. However; Saul had no great success among the hellenists. For, when he had quite confounded them, and put them to silence, in disputing; they took the very method, which he and his old associates had used against St. Stephen; and contrived how to put him to death. But, by the favor of a kind providence, he made his escape. For the christian brethren, having notice of their wicked design, took care to convey him away to Caesarea. And, from thence, they sent him, by land, to Cilicia, his native province; and to Tarsus, the very city, where he was born, that he might find protection among his old friends and relations, and perhaps plant the gospel among them. They, possibly, might not have heard of his former bigotry

Ver. 30. * "[Conducted him to Cæsarea.] I should have concluded this had been the celebrated city of that name, on the mediterranean sea, so often mentioned afterwards, and from whence he might so easily have passed by ship to Tarshish; had not Paul himself told us, he went through the regions of Syria and Cilicia. [Gal. 1. 21.] which
The history of Herod Agrippa.

bigotry against the christians: Or, however; as the harvest of the An.Christi
jews at Tarfus was not yet gathered in, as it had been, some time ago, at Jerusalem; there were hopes of better treatment, and more success, there.

Saul was hitherto unknown, by face, to most of the christians churches, in Judaea. Onely they had heard of his remarkable conversion. The news of which had spread among them; especially since his last coming up to Jerusalem. And they understood that he, who formerly persecuted them, now preached the doctrine, which once he destroyed. And for that they gave praise and glory unto God.

CHAP. IX. SECT. III.

The ceaseing of the persecution, together with the occasion of it. Acts ix. 31.

HEROD Agrippa major was son of Aristobulus, grandson of Herod the great, and brother of Herodias; who had left her first husband Philip, and married his brother Herod Antipas. This Herod Agrippa had been educated at Rome; and conversed freely in the emperor's family: where he became acquainted with Drusus, son of the emperor Tiberius; and was also in the good graces of Antonia, mother of Germanicus and Claudius, and wife of Drusus the elder, who was brother of Tiberius the emperor. The favor of Antonia he obtained, by means of his own mother, Berenice; for whom Antonia had a very great esteem. So grand a manner of living drove him, in the heat of his youth, into expenses superior to his fortune; so that

"21.] which intimates that he went by land, and makes it probable that it was Caesarea Philippi, near the borders of Syria, which is here spoken of." [So Dr. Doddridge remarks on this place.] My principal objection, is, that the word, Cesarea, alone, did not denote Cesarea Philippi, but Cesarea Palaestina, or the celebrated city of that name, on the mediterranean sea. But I acknowledge that St. Paul's own words, [Gal. i. 21, &c.] render it probable, that he now went by land; and that in such an hurry, that he had not time to visit the christian churches, as he passed along, through the several towns, in Judaea, where there were any christian churches.

b Gal. i. 22, 23, 24. a Jos. Antiq. l. 16. c. 6. § 1, &c.
The history of Caius Caligula.

An. Chrisli
Calig. 2.
Book I.
Ch. IX.
Sect. III.
Acts ix.
38.

He could stay no longer at Rome. And the young Dru
tus, the son of Tiberius, dying; Tiberius was unwilling to see
any of his acquaintance; for fear of reviving the painful
memory of so great a loss. Herod, therefore, returned into
Judea; and, for a long time, lived upon the bounty and favor
of his friends. And, among the rest, Herod Antipas, and Herodias,
were kind to him, and supported him: though not so long, nor so
generously, as they might have done. At last, being reduced to
great calamities, he went back to Italy: where he again met
with great kindness, from Antonia; partly out of respect
to the memory of his mother, and partly because he had been
educated with her son, Claudius. Tiberius also, the emperor,
took him into particular favor; and committed to his care the
younger Tiberius, the son of Dru
tus, and grandson to Tiberius the emperor. But Herod,
being ambitious, made his court to Caius; who was the son
of Germanicus, and grandson of Antonia; and universally
respected for his father's

Caius treated him with the greatest confidence and familiarity.
And one day, as they were riding in the chariot together, "Herod
wished to God that Tiberius was gone, and Caius emperor in
his stead."

Eutychus, Herod's freed-man, drove the chariot, and over
heard the words; which he then concealed. But, being, after some
time, accused, by his master, of theft, he discovered the treason
to Tiberius; who thereupon committed Herod to close custody.
When Tiberius died, Caius soon advanced his old friend.
Sending for him, to his palace, he put a crown upon his head, and
constituted him king of the tetrarchy of Philip; intending also to
give him the tetrarchy

of Ly'anias. And he bestowed upon him a chain of gold; of the
same weight with the iron one, which he had wore in his imprison
ment. This chain Agrippa did afterwards lay up in the temple
at Jerusalem; as "a monument that God can bring down those
things which are great, and raise up those things which are
fallen."

We must now, for a while, leave the history of Herod Agrippa;
and mention some particulars concerning Caius Caligula, the roman
emperor; and Flaccus Avilius, the president of Egypt. The be
ginning of Caius his reign was obliging, and popular. He did many
wife and beneficent actions, and gained the love of the people. They
had an affectionate rememberance of Germanicus, his father; and
they hoped his son would tread in his steps. But it was not long be
fore he plainly discovered his wicked disposition. One of his first
Flaccus Avilius, president of Egypt.

vile actions was the murder of the younger Tiberius; whom the emperor Tiberius had left his co-partner in the empire. Another was the murder of Macro, who had been Tiberius his favorite, after the death of Sejanus; and one, to whom Caius himself had been exceedingly obliged. When Caius acted any thing unbecoming his dignity, (as, indeed, he was very apt to do) Macro would freely admonish him of it; 'till at last he could bear it no longer: and, therefore, ordered Macro to be put to death. By degrees, he proceeded to such extravagance, that he would needs set himself up for a god, and be worshipped as such:—A thing, to which the Jews, of all nations, would never consent! And, therefore, they fell under his resentment.  

About this time, Flaccus Avilius, the president of Egypt, who had been a most excellent governor for the last five years of Tiberius his reign, became quite another man. While Tiberius was emperor, Flaccus had been no friend to Caligula. When, therefore, Caligula came to be emperor, and had put to death the younger Tiberius and Macro, in whom Flaccus had some interest; he was thrown into a terrible fright. His concern was visible; and all the Egyptians knew very well the cause of it. Hereupon they got him entirely into their own hands. And, of a governor, Flaccus became a subject; and they of subjects became presidents; inventors of useless decrees, directors of all affairs; taking him in as a mere mute image in a play; for no other reason, but because he had the name of governor. The leading men among them, therefore, confired together to form a most wicked design against the Jews; and, coming to Flaccus, they tell him: "Sir, you have lost the young Tiberius; and, your next hope after him, your friend Macro. You have no expectation of favor from the emperor; but rather otherwise. We must necessarily contrive, for you, some powerful advocate with Caius. This advocate, Sir, is the city of Alexandria; which hath ever been honored by the imperial family, and especially by our present sovereign. If she may obtain some favor of you, she will undertake your cause. You can oblige her, by nothing, so much, as by delivering up the Jews into her hands." Then he, who ought to have been provoked at so impudent a proposal, and to have reprimanded the authors of it, as incendiaries and disturbers of the public peace, tamely complied with what

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Footnotes:
1. Philo de Legat. ad Caium, p. 908.
2. Id. ibid. p. 1008. C, D, E.
3. & 1020. D, E.
The Jews persecuted in Egypt.

Book I. Ch. IX. Sect. III. Acts ix.

what they desired. From that time, Flaccus first carried it coldly to the Jews; and, afterwards, became their open enemy. The Alexandrian Jews, when they heard of Caligula's succeeding Tiberius, decreed him all the honors, which the law of Moses would permit them to pay him. And, as they were not allowed to send an embassy, they desired Flaccus to send the decree to Rome. He promised them he would do so, but never sent it; that he might render the Jews odious, as the only persons who despised the new emperor. And hence Caius his displeasure with the Jews seemeth to have taken its first rise. But, before the emperor showed his dislike of them, things went very much against them at Alexandria. They were not only cast in all causes; but the Egyptians, taking encouragement from this behavior of the governor, came by degrees to rifle the houses of the Jews, and to murder great numbers of them.

The president, if he had pleased, could in one hour have quieted that mad multitude. But he was under such influence, that he pretended not to hear, or see, any thing of the matter. In this interim, Herod Agrippa came to Alexandria, in his way to Judæa, by the advice of Caesar; who thought it the safest, and best way. And, though he designed to have kept himself private, the Alexandrians soon got notice of his arrival, and of the design of his journey; which was to take possession of his kingdom. They were filled with envy, at the thoughts of a Jew's having the title of king: and many ways they showed their indignation. One was this. There was one Caras, a sort of a distracted fellow, who, in all seasons of the year, went naked about the streets. He was somewhat between a madman and a fool; the common jest of boys, and other idle people. This wretch they brought into the theatre; and placed him on a lofty seat, that he might be conspicuous to all. Then they put a paper diadem on his head, for a crown. The rest of his body they covered with a mat, instead of a robe; and, for a scepter, one put into his hand a little piece of reed, which he had just taken up from the ground. Having thus given him a mimic, royal dress; several young fellows, with poles on their shoulders, came and stood on each side of him, as his guards. Then there came people towards him; some to pay their homage to him, others to ask justice of him, and some to know his will and pleasure concerning affairs of state. And, in the crowd,
Caligula exasperated against the Jews.

were loud and confused acclamations, of Maris, Maris; that being the Syriac word for lord; thereby intimateing whom they intended to ridicule, by all this mock-show: Agrippa being a Syrian, and king of Judea; a large country in Syria. Other indignities, also, he suffered from the people; very probably by Flaccus his order, or connivance. Though he dared not publicly to affront one so much in the emperor's favor. The Alexandrian Jews acquainted Herod Agrippa with the design of the Egyptians, and of Flaccus, against them. Upon which, he took the decree, that they had made, in the beginning of Caius his reign; and promised them that he would send it to Rome, together with the reason of it's coming so late. And, accordingly, he did send it; and a proper apology along with it. In the mean time, the Alexandrians still proceeded to greater outrages against the Jews;setting up Caius his image in their profectiones, or oratories; and afterwards demolishing their synagogues, or oratories. Nay; the governor declared himself publicly their enemy. Upon which, the people spared neither age, nor sex. Even the leading men among the Jews were, by the president's order, used with the greatest indignity; and some of them put to cruel deaths. For he hoped to ingratiate himself with Caius, by destroying those, who refused to acknowledge his deity, and to pay him divine worship. Flaccus, in the event, did himself no real service, by all these base compliances; but was treated much as Pontius Pilate was treated by the Jews; being accused by those very Egyptians, whose tool he had been; and whose favor he had sought, by such violent and indirect methods.

Upon the above-mentioned quarrel, between the Jews and Greeks, who dwelt at Alexandria, there were ambassadors sent to Caius, at Rome; five on each side. Of whom, Appion was the chief among the Greeks; and Philo was the oldest, and most experienced, person, among the Jews. Appion, besides many other malicious and bitter reproaches against

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1 Ibid. p. 970. Compare, with this, the treatment, which our blessed Lord had met with, not many years before. Matt. xxvii. 27, 31. Mark xv. 16, 20.
2 Philo in Flac. p. 980.
3 Philo de legat. ad Caium, p. 1011. C, D.
4 Id. ibid. p. 1043. Jospeh. antiq. l. 18. c. 8. § 1, &c.
5 Appion was the person, against whom Josephus wrote his two books, in vindication of the Jews. And Philo, who is often called Philo-Judaus, was a Jew of Alexandria; brother to Alexander the alabarch, or chief magistrate of the Jews in that country. He was eminent for his wit and learning, as well as family. [Jospeh. Antiq. l. 18. c. 8. § 1, edit. Havercamp: Philo de legat. 1018, 1043.] Many of his write-
The confternation of the Jews.

An. Christ. 39. Calig. 3. "For, (faith he) when all other nations, who are subject to the Roman empire, have erected altars and temples to Caius; and, in every re- spect, honor him as they do the gods; these Jews alone think it an indignity to honor him with statues, or to swear by his name." By these, and like invectives, Caius was so inraged, that, when Philo was going to reply, he would not hear him; but commanded him to depart out of his presence, in such an angry tone, that it was generally believed the Jews would fall under the weight of his vengeance. And it was not long, before he discovered his resentment. About the same time, another thing happened, which farther exasperated that wicked emperor. Several of the Heathens, who lived at Jamnia, a city of Judæa, and who had an utter aversion to the Jewish laws; when they understood Caius his inclination to be worshiped as a god, and his resentment against the Jews, for refusing to join in that worship; they, on a sudden, erected an altar of brick; both to curry favor with Caius, and to molest and vex the Jews. The project succeeded to their wish. For the Jews quickly demolished the altar. And the Heathens went and complained to Capito, the questor, or collector of the Roman tribute in Judæa; who sent an account of the affair to Caius, with all imaginable aggravations. And he himself, indeed, was thought to be the secret author and contriver of the plot, in order to inflame and destroy the Jews. For as he came poor into that province, and had since enriched himself by fraudulent and oppressive methods, he was afraid of the people's accusing him. And, therefore, by way of prevention, he first calumniated and accused them. Caius, looking upon these as repeated affronts, recalled Vitellius; who was remarkable for his excessive complaisance, and who had gratified the Jews to the utmost of his power. And he sent Petronius to succeed him; giving him orders to go to Jerusalem, with an army, and to set up his statue, with the name of Jupiter inscribed upon it, in the most

writings are still remaining; though some have been lost. I have had frequent occasion to quote his discourse against Flaccus, the president of Egypt; and his account of this embassy to Caligula. [See Dr. Lardner's account of Philo, in his Credibility of the gospel history, part i. p. viii. of the 2d edition, p. xii. of the 3d edition; — in the introduction.]

Phil. de legat. &c. p. 1020, 1021. Joseph. de Bell. Jud. 1. 2. ch. 10. § 1, &c. collat. cum Philon. de legat. ad Caium, p. 1021, Ch. 1022; A, B. But I prefer Philo's account; because he went to Rome, in behalf of the Jews, in this dreadful time. And Josephus was then but an infant. Philo, ubi supra, p. 1019. & 1034. E.
They cease from persecuting the christians. Most holy place of the temple there; in joining him, if the Jews opposed it, to put to death all, who made any resistance, and to make the rest of the nation slaves. Very probably, the Jews of Judea were very much affected with the condition of their countrymen at Alexandria; where, by this time, they were almost ruined. But this order from Caligula was a thunder-stroke. Petronius marched from Antioch into Judea, and a large body of auxiliaries raised in Syria. The Jews could hardly believe the first report of so execrable a design. But it was not long, before all were convinced. And it threw them into the utmost consternation; the army being come as far as Ptolemais. They, therefore, gathering together, went with their wives and children into the plane, near Ptolemais; and intreated Petronius, in the first place, for their laws; and, in the next place, for themselves. Petronius, being moved with their intreaties, left his army and the image, at Ptolemais; and went into Galilee. At Tiberias, he called together the chief men of the Jews, and laid before them the power of the Romans, the threatenings of Cæsar, and the folly and absurdity of their request: intimating, that, as all other nations had received the image of Cæsar, among their other gods; the refusal of the Jews would be looked upon, as little less than rebellion, and an high contempt and indignity to the emperor. When they, after all, utterly refused to comply, and declared themselves ready to suffer any thing for their laws, he asked them: ‘Will you then fight against Cæsar?’ The Jews answered him: ‘That they offered up sacrifices, twice every day, for Cæsar; and the Roman people. But that, if he would set up the image, he ought first to sacrifice the whole nation of the Jews. ‘And, that they were ready to submit themselves, with their wives and children, to the slaughter.’ Philo faith, that the tidings of this order having reached Jerusalem, the Jews abandoning their cities, villages, and the open country, all went to Petronius in Phœnicia; both men and women, old and young, and middle-aged. Petronius his friends, at a distance, took them for a large army. But, when they came nearer, they found it was only an unarmed, lamenting multitude. When they came within sight of Petronius, who was seated upon an eminence, they threw themselves down upon the ground before him, with weeping and lamentation. And, when he ordered them to rise, they approached him, with their heads covered with dust, and their hands behind them, like men condemned to die. And

De legat. ad Caïum, p. 1024. E, &c.
The christians free from persecution.

And then the senate addressed themselves to Petronius, in this manner:

"We come to you, Sir, as you see, unarmed. We have brought, with us, our wives, children, and relations; and throw ourselves down, before you, as at the feet of Caius; having left none at home, that you may save all, or destroy all," &c. with a great deal more to the same purpose. In which, they repented their love of their temple, and their laws, more than of their lives. — And all which they expressed, with tears, and all the signs of anguish and distress. Petronius, out of compassion, deferred the executing of his commission. And he had a very good pretence for his delay. For the jews were in danger of neglecting the gathering in their harvest, and the cultivating of their lands; out of so general a concern for the violation of their religion. And as it was expected that Caligula would be at Alexandria, the next summer, he judged it improper to do any thing, that might hinder a sufficient plenty, for the company, which would follow the emperor, from Italy; the concourse of the princes of Asia, and other great men in those parts. He, therefore, wrote to the emperor; representing the case as favorably as he could: particularly, not forgetting to urge the necessity of deferring the matter, for fear of the scarcity which might ensue.

It is highly probable that the persecution of the christians ceased; not only at this time, but upon this occasion. For the jews were fully employed in warding off this terrible blow from themselves; and from the temple, which was their glory and confidence. Under so general a consternation, and in such circumstances of distress, they could not have the heart, or the leisure, to look after, or persecute, the christians. "Suppose it should be objected, that the christians would have been as far from worshiping Caius, as a god, as any of the jews. And, as they thought the levitical law to remain in full force and obligation; they must have been concerned for the temple also; and as unwilling as the rest of the nation to have it polluted. — And, therefore, so general a calamity must have equally affected them. So that, in such an interval, their churches could have no great rest." I would answer; that (very probably) it grieved and troubled them, as well as the other jews, to think, that the emperor should pollute the temple of God; and (perhaps) some of them might go, and join in the petition to Petronius.

*Id. ibid. p. 1028.*
The cause of their freedom from persecution.

But, considering how the unbelieving Jews had lately treated them; it could not be expected that they should go in a body; or, generally speaking, appear in such a petition at all. Nay, farther; the persecution of the Christians had hitherto risen from the Jews; and the Romans had not molested, but rather protected, them. And, as generally speaking, the Romans, both now, and for a long time after this, looked upon the Christians, as only a sect of the Jews; and the unbelieving Jews, their persecutors, were at present engaged in difficulties and discouragements, which so nearly affected themselves; the Christians might enjoy full liberty to profess their own peculiar sentiments, and follow their own manner of worship. For Caius did not yet require the Jewish nation directly to worship him: [Such an order, indeed, would have affected the Christians!] Nor was the temple actually profaned with his statue. For Herod Agrippa prevailed with him to delay the matter; and Caligula died, before the attempt was made; as will be related hereafter, in its proper place.

Commentators have generally ascribed this rest of the Christian churches to the conversion of Saul; who had, indeed, been a very zealous persecutor. But it hath (with great probability) been ascribed to the above-mentioned events. For the ascribing it to Saul, seemeth to do him a great deal of wrong, on the one hand; and too much honor, on the other. To ascribe to him, all the sufferings of the Christians, which ensued upon the death of St. Stephen, would surely be great injustice to Saul: because, after his conversion, the Jews of Judæa, Damascus, and every other place, were filled with malice and spite against Christianity, against Saul, and against every one else of that way. On the other hand; it is doing him, at the same time, too much honor. Saul was then but a young man. And, though a forward and active instrument, yet he could be no more than an instrument, in that persecution. It cannot be supposed, that, while he was with the high-priest and Pharisees, they were directed, and chiefly animated, by him; and that when he left them, their spirits were so sunk, that they could no longer pursue their old measures. His own dangers, at Damascus, and Jerusalem, are a clear proof of the contrary. Besides; according

Tacit, hist. 1. 5. c. 9.
Ver. 31. *See Dr. Lardner, in his Credibility of the gospel history, part i. p. 123, &c. 2d edit. p. 207, &c. 3d edit.
St. Peter re-visits the churches.

An. Chrifi
Calig. 4
Book I.
Ch. X.
Acts ix.
31.

St. Peter re-visits the churches, in Judæa, Galilee, and Phœnicia. Acts ix. 32, to the end of that chapter.

As St. Peter had gone formerly through the metropolis, and other towns of Samaria, to plant, or water, christianity; and, particularly, by the laying on of his hands, to impart, unto the christians, that grand and confirming evidence of the gift of the holy spirit; so, during this peaceful interval, he reviseth the several churches, in Judæa, and Galilee; to rectifie their disorders.
St. Peter cureth Æneas of a palsy.

Among other places, he went down to the Christian brethren, who dwelt at Lod, or Lydda, a town situated in the tribe of Ephraim. They had, very probably, been converted to Christianity by Philip; as he went along, preaching the gospel, in all the towns and cities from Azotus to Caesarea. For Lydda was a large village, or town, of Phœnicia, that lay between Azotus and Caesarea. It was, afterwards called Diospolis. There St. Peter found a man, whose Greek name was Æneas; but (according to Grotius) his Hebrew name was Hillel. He had been eight years bedridden with a palsy; to whom the apostle went in, and spoke thus: "Æneas, Jesus of Nazareth, who is the Messiah, healeth you of your disorder. Arise, therefore; and, as an evidence of the certainty and perfection of your cure, make your own bed; which you have for many years been unable to do." [In working this miracle, St. Peter seemeth to have imitated our Lord; partly as to the manner of expression; but principally as to the sign and evidence of the perfection of the miracle. [Mark ii. 9. John v. 8.] Only with this remarkable difference and decorum; namely, that the two men, whom our Lord cured, were not at their own home. And, therefore; they were ordered to take up their bed (or the couch, on which they had laid) and walk away; but Æneas, whom St. Peter cured, was at home, and kept his bed, there. And, therefore, he was ordered to arise, and make his bed.] Upon these words of St. Peter, Æneas immediately rose up; and found himself perfectly found and well.—Sharon [or Saron] was (not a town, but) a large, fruitful, and well-inhabited, valley; which lay near Lydda, and is said to have extended from mount Tabor to the lake of Tiberias, and from Caesarea to Joppa. Upon this miraculous cure of Æneas, many of the inhabitants of Lydda, and of the large valley of Sharon, were roused to attend to the Christian doctrine; and convinced, upon examination, of its truth and excellence. Upon which, they unanimously embraced the gospel. At Joppa also, another city of Phœnicia, lying upon the Mediterranean, a neighboring town to Lydda, there were already some Christians: converted (most probably) by the evangelist Philip, in the above mentioned journey; that is, from Azotus to Caesarea. At Lydda, there were famous schools of the Jews; and at Jabneh, or Jamnia, nigh Joppa, the great San-
Tabitha died at Joppa.

An. Chrifi

Tabitha died at Joppa.

And yet, for all their consultations, authority, and learning, christianity did there take root, and flourish. Joppa was, indeed, a remarkable place, upon many accounts.

There Jonas, the prophet, took ship, when he fled to Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord. And it was the nearest maritime town to Jerusalem, though computed to have been at the distance of forty miles from it. Simon, son to Mattathias, and brother to Judas Maccabæus, who was both high-priest and prince of the Jews; after he had made peace and alliance with Demetrius, son to Demetrius, king of Syria, repaired and fortified Joppa, and made it a seaport to Jerusalem, and all Judea; it being the fittest place, on all that coast, for the carrying on of their trade, to all the isles, and countries, in the mediterranean. For which purpose it served them, many ages after the Maccabees: as it still serveth the inhabitants of that country, to this very day; being called by the same name, though the vulgar pronunciation hath changed it to Jaffa. Among the christians at Joppa, there was a woman, whose hebrew name was Tabitha; which in greek is Dorcas: that is, a roe, or wild goat. For it was common among the hebrews to call men, or women, by the names of some inferior animal. This Dorcas had been one, who abounded in good works, and was exceeding liberal to the poor. But, when St. Peter was at Lydda, she was sick, and died. After which, they washed her corpse, according to an antient custom, both among the hebrews, greeks, and latins; (which is still in practice among us;) and then laid her in an upper room. The christians at Joppa, having sustained such a loss; such an ornament to their religion, which was then in its tender state of infancy; and one, who had been so very useful in her place and station; and Lydda being only about six miles from Joppa; they, understanding that the Apostle Peter was there, sent messengers unto him, intreating him...
Tabitha raised from the dead.

him to come to them without delay. To which he readily consented. And, being come into the house of Dorcas, and conducted into the upper room, where they had laid the corpse; there all the widows stood round about him, weeping; and lamenting the loss of their charitable neighbor: very much extolling her for her industry and liberality, and even showing him some of the under and upper garments, which she, with her own hands, had made, to clothe the naked, and relieve the poor. But the Apostles desired them all to withdraw a little. And, kneeling down, not far from the corpse, he prayed: [probably, that so useful a person, and such an ornament to Christianity, might be restored to life again.] And, knowing certainly, by a divine impulse, that his prayer was heard, he turned to the body, and said: "Tabitha, arise." Upon which, she opened her eyes; and, looking upon the Apostle, she attempted to sit up. Then he took hold of her hand, and helped her up. And, calling in all the christians, and the mourning widows, he presented her to them, alive and well. The report of this miracle spread swiftly through all Joppa. Upon which, Simon, the son of Jonas, became more famous there, than Jonas himself had been. For the antient prophet, Jonas, after he had taken ship at Joppa, was raised only from the belly of the whale. But Simon, the son of Jonas, raised the pious and charitable Tabitha from the dead; and thereby promoted a religion of greater and more extensive usefulness, than even the beneficent work of reducing Nineveh to repentance.

After this, St. Peter tarried several days at Joppa lodging in the house of one Simon, a tanner; whose house stood by the sea-shore.

Thus endeth the first book of the history of the first planting of the christian religion; containing the first grand period, in which the gospel was preached to the jews only. This period began at the day of pentecost, when the spirit was poured out, soon after the ascension of our Lord; and is computed to have lasted till the year of Christ 41; that is, about the space of eight years.

'Till such of the jews, as would imbrace christianity, were brought in: especially the jews in Palestine; god, in his great wisdom and goodness, would not suffer the gospel to be offered to one gentile. But, when such great numbers were gathered in, and the
The conclusion of the first book.

The apostles had gone a second time to visit and settle the churches; when Christianity had taken root among them, and they were sufficiently instructed and established; and when, at the same time, the providence of God had so ordered things, that the persecution was ceased; and the Christians in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, had so extensive and complete a tranquility: — Then, I say, and not till then, the same divine wisdom and goodness prepared the way for the spreading of the gospel among the devout gentiles. — The more particular account of which, will be the subject of book the second.

The end of the first book.
THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PLANTING OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION,&c.

BOOK II.

Containing an account of the spreading of Christianity among the devout gentiles, (whom the Jews commonly called proselytes of the gate:) together with its farther progress among the Jews: that is, from the year of our Lord 41, to the year 44, and from Acts xth to the end of the xiith chapter.

CHAP. I.
The conversion of the devout gentiles at Caesarea.
Acts x. 1. xi. 18.

SECT. I.
The distinction between proselytes of righteousness, and proselytes of the gate: And what things each of them were obliged to, antece-

dent to their embracing Christianity. Acts x. 1.

The Jews, in all nations, as well as in Judea, were obliged to pay a great regard to their own religion and polity, ante-

cedent to the appearance of the gospel-doctrine in the world.

And, though the Jews, in Judea, who embraced the christian reli-
gion, continued under obligations to the moral and political part of the Mosaic

An. Christ. 41.
Claud. I.

Book II.
Ch. I.
Sect. I.
Acts x. 1.
Two sorts of proselytes among the Jews.

An.Christi Mosaic law; yet I look upon them to have been absolved from the ceremonial part, immediately upon their becoming christians: provided they had understood their liberty; and could have got over the scruples and prejudices, which had grown up, with them, from their infancy. 'Til they could shake off their prejudices, they were indulged, and permitted to continue in the observation of the ceremonial law. The Jewish christians, in other nations, did undoubtedly continue under obligations to obey the civil law of the country, where they lived; and the moral law was still obligatory upon them, both from the reason of things, and as it is adopted into the christian law. But they appear to me to have been absolved, both from the political, and ceremonial, parts of the Jewish law, upon their embracing christianity; provided they could have got over their scruples. Otherwife they, also, were indulged in the continued use of their antient rites and customs. What hath been thus briefly said of the Jews, holds equally true of the proselytes of justice, or righteousness. But, in order to give a more clear account of this period; and of some things, which are to be related in the next book; it is necessary to inquire more particularly, "Who the devout Gentiles were? And to what laws they were obliged, antecedent to their becoming christians?"

There were two sorts of proselytes among the Jews; namely, proselytes of the covenant, who were also called proselytes of justice, or righteousness; and proselyte-inhabitants, or proselytes of the gate.

The proselytes of the covenant (who were also called proselytes of justice, or righteousness) were such persons, as had descended from gentile parents; but had consented to be circumcised, and so had bound themselves to observe the whole law of Moses. They differed in nothing from other Jews, except only that they had not descended from Jewish parents. Their religion, duties, liberties, and privileges, were exactly the same with those of the natural Jews; according to that known rule, [Exod. xii. 49.] "One law shall be to him that is home-borne, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you."

Ver. 1. Thus Josephus faith, of the Idumaeans, that, when they were circumcised, and submitted to live according to the law, — from that time they became Jews. [Antiq. Jud. l. 13. c. 9. § 1.] Παριστήμενος τοις λαοις τους παραδοσιάν, εκ τω λαω παρασκευαζοντος, εκω αει αυτοδει. A circumcised proselyte, seeing he is joined to the people [of the Jews,] is like one that is home-borne. [Justin. Martyr. Dial. cum Trypho. p. 35*. C. Paris edit. 1636.]
The proselytes of the gate.

Which maxim related to the proselytes of righteousness; as evidently ap-
eth from ver. 43, 44, 45; 48. We have, therefore, in the course
of this history, all along considered them as Jews. They were call-
ed proselytes of righteousness, or of the covenant; because the Jews
accounted them more righteous than the other sort of proselytes; as
they had been circumcised, and bound themselves to observe the whole
law, or covenant.

A proselyte of the gate, was sometimes by the Jews called a proselyte-
inhabitant. And, in the fourth commandment, he is called a stranger
within their gates. He was borne of gentile parents, and continued uncircumcised: but was distinguished from the idolatrous gentiles,
by his having renounced idolatry, and worshiping the one true
God, the God of Israel. If he had not done so, he could not
have been permitted to have been an inhabitant of the cities, or
within the gates, of the Jews; that is, to come and settle, or sojourn,
for any time, among the Jews, in Palestine. For, according to the
law of Moses, the Jewish government was a theocracy. And, as God
was their king, idolatry was high treason; and, therefore, punished
with death. They were called proselyte-inhabitants, proselytes of the
gate, or strangers within their gates; as they were permitted, upon
certain terms, to live in Judea; or within the gates, or borders, of
the Jews. But, besides their acknowledging the one true God;
complying with things of eternal, unalterable obligation; and observ-
ing the necessary laws of civil society; they were also obliged to some-
thing, peculiar to the Jewish polity: that is, They were carefully to
abstain from whatever was likely to tempt them to forsake the true
God; or would have made them look like idolaters. And those pro-
hibitions were particularly four. (1.) That they should abstain
from things offered to idols; that is, from any meats, or drinks, de-
voted to an idol; or that had been offered, before the image, private-
ly, or in the idol's temple. (2.) From blood, separated from the flesh
of any animal; either pure, or mixed with any thing else. (3.)
From eating the flesh of such creatures, as had been strangled,
with a design to keep the blood in them. For, by eating, and
drinking, such things, the heathens imagined that they held
communion with their idol-gods. (4.) From all sorts of lewdnesse,
or venereal uncleanness; that is, from whatever the law of Moses had
described and prohibited as such. For instance, the marrying.
within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity; as well as adul-
tery.
The proselytes of the gate.

It is shocking to consider that the abominations, mentioned Lev. xviii., were practised by the heathens, even in the worst of those instances; as part of their worship, performed to some or other of their idols. [See Wisd. xiv. 20, — 27. 2 Maccab. Ch. i. vi. 4.] But certainly they were, therefore, with great reason, prohibited unto such, as were separated from the world; to keep up the knowledge of the true God, and to avoid the temptations to, and concomitants of, idolatry.

They, who would fee the proofs at large, may consult Dr. Spencer; and compare him with what hath since been advanced, by the ingenious author of Miscellanea sacra. But I will more briefly endeavor to show, that these four things were prohibited to the proselytes of the gate; Lev. xvii., and xviii.

That, by the strangers that sojourn among you, [Lev. xvii. 8; 10; 12, 13.] are not meant proselytes of righteousness, is highly probable. (1.) Because (though proselytes of righteousness went, sometimes, under that general appellation; yet) there was no occasion here to distinguish them from the Jews. For, according to the above-mentioned rule, [Exod. xii. 49.] “there was one and the same law to the home-borne, or natural, Jew; and to them.” And, therefore, they are included among persons of the house, or children, of Israel; ver. 3; 5; 8; 10; 12, 13, 14. (2.) The proselytes of the gate might offer burnt-offerings, and sacrifices of peace-offerings. [Lev. xxii. 18, &c. Numb. xv. 8; 14, 15. Isa. lvi. 6, 7. compared with Mark xi. 17.] But it does not appear that they were allowed to offer sin-offerings, or trespass-offerings. And, as no offering is mentioned, [Lev. xvii. 8.] but what the proselytes of the gate might offer; it is probable that they are the persons meant, by that phrase, The strangers among you.

Incest is called φαρακά, fornication; 1 Cor. v. 1. Adultery is so called, Matt. v. 32. and xix. 9. Rev. ii. 20, 21. compared with ver. 22. And ἤτοι προσήλυται is used for fornication, (as some think) 1 Jude, ver. 7. The writers of the new testament seem to use the greek word φαρακά, which we translate fornication, in the same sense that the hebrew used זנעה, which we also translate fornication. Though it is evident that both these words, in sacred scripture, have a larger sense, than the word "fornication" hath, in our English language. For זנעה among the hebrews, signifies [turpiiudinem, vel rem turpem] uncleanness, or any flagitious, scandalous crime: "but, more especially, the uncleanness of unlawful copulation, and idolatry; and not precisely fornication, in our sense of the word; that is, the unlawful mixture of an unmarried couple.” [See Mr. Locke, on 1 Cor. v. 1. Spencer, dissertat. in Act. xv. 20. c. 1. § 2. & Selden de jure nat. & gent. c. 12.]

I apprehend that φαρακά signified idolatry, only in a secondary, or figurative, sense: namely, as idolatry was spiritual fornication, or adultery; a being inamored with false gods;
The proselytes of the gate.

or that sojourneth among you. For, if the proselytes of righteousness had been intended; why was not a sin-offering, and a trespass-offering, mentioned; as well as a burnt-offering, and sacrifice [of peace-offering]?

(3.) It is well known that the proselytes of the gate thought themselves obliged by these laws, and did actually abstain from these four things. And, indeed, there were sufficient reasons why such prohibitions should extend to them. For they were not only to renounce idolatry; but the usual concomitants of it, and temptations to it; or any thing which might make them suspected by the Jews. [Rev. ii. 14.] It is given as a reason, by God himself, why he cast out the wicked Canaanites; [Lev. xviii. 24, &c.] namely, “because they defiled the land with these abominations.” And he warned the new inhabitants to abstain from such things, lest he should also cast them out. Which reason evidently extended to the proselytes of the gate; as well as to the Jews, and proselytes of righteousness.

If it should be doubted, “whether the phrase, his people, [Lev. xvii. 9.] could agree to the proselytes of the gate;” it ought to be remembered, that, if any of them had fallen into idolatry, in Juda, he must have suffered death: and, in that case, might, very properly, have been said to have been cut off from among his people; that is, from among that people, where he was permitted to live, and enjoy the privileges of civil society, as long as he behaved in conformity to the laws of that polity. But farther; [Deut. xiv. 21.] the proselytes of the gate are plainly distinguished from aliens, or men of other nations. Which is, in effect, an acknowledging them to have been members of the Jewish nation.

Suppose it should again be objected, “that, by a stranger, Lev. xvii. 15. must be understood a proselyte of righteousness? because a proselyte of the gate might eat that which died of itself, or that which was torn by beasts, [Deut. xiv. 21.] whereas such things were prohibited to the proselytes of righteousness; who were, in all respects, to behave like a natural Jew. And if, by a stranger, be understood a proselyte of righteousness, in one part of that

...
The proselytes of the gate.

An. Chrifti "chapter; why not every where? Or, how shall we distinguish,
Claud. 1. "when it meaneth one fort of proselyte, and when the other?"
Book II. Answor. This phrase, [the stranger that sojourned among the Is-
Ch. I.raelites,] is a general expression; and used of both sorts of proselytes.
Seç. I. The fense and connection, therefore, must determine which fort is
Acts, I. any where meant. To me it appeareth, upon considering many of
the places, where the stranger is spoken of, that it means the pros-
elyte of the gate; unleffe where some circumstance is added, which
is inconsistent with that meaning, and determines it to signifie a pro-
selyte of righteousneffe. And I would propose it as a query, (which
well deserveth to be examined, by such learned men, as make the
scriptures their study) Whether the phrase, [a stranger, that sojourn-
ed among the Israelites,] doeth not always signifie a proselyte of the
gate; unleffe there be some circumstance added, which restriceth it
to the other fort of proselytes? Just as the word gentiles, signifieth
idolators, in the new testament; unleffe there be something, in the
context, which restraineth the meaning of that word to the
devout gentiles? Of which last, there will not, upon examina-
tion, be found a great many instances; though some such there
evidently are.

"(1.) The eating things offered to idols is forbid to the Israelites,
[Lev. xvii. 1; Lev. xvi. 1—7.] And to prevent this, they were ordered,
whilest in the wildernesse, to kill no beast, even for common
food, but what was devoted to the LORD; and slain at the door of
the tabernacle of the congregation. This is forbid to the proselytes
of the gate, also; ver. 8, 9. (2.) Blood is expressly forbid, both
to the Israelites, and to the proselytes of the gate; ver. 10, 11, 12:
(3.) Things strangled, with a design to keep the blood in them, are
prohibited to both of them; ver. 13. And, (4.) Fornication,
that is, every fort of lewdneffe, or venereal uncleannesse, is prohi-
bited, very particularly, both to the Israelites, and to the proselytes of
the gate. [Lev. xviii. See ver. 6, — 26."

When the Jews were an independent nation, and in flourishing cir-
cumstances, they did, indeed, arbitrarily require more, from the pros-
elytes of the gate. But, upon their renouncing idolatry, observing
the eternal law of nature, the necessary laws of civil society, and
these four prohibitions, peculiar to that polity; GOD himself, in the
law of Moses, required no more of them. But, upon such a con-
formity, they had several privileges of a civil nature, among the
Jews; as well as full liberty to join, in all such acts of religious wor-
ship, as were not peculiar to the Jews; but used among the patriarchs,
The devout gentiles, proselytes of the gate.

before the giving of the law of Moses. [See what is said in the apoholic constitutions, concerning this, book 6. chap. 12. as quoted in the essay concerning abolishing of the ceremonial law, annexed to Titus, chap. iii. § 1. at the end.]

CHAP. I. SECT. II.

The devout gentiles, mentioned in the Acts of the apostles, were, very probably, the same with the proselytes of the gate. Acts x. 2.

HAVING shown what the law of Moses required, both of the circumcised and uncircumcised proselytes; we proceed to show that the devout gentiles (of whom so much will be related, in the course of this history) were, most probably, proselytes of the gate. (1.) As they lived among the Jews. And we read of very few, or none, at a great distance from Jerusalem; unless it was in a Jewish synagogue, or proseucha. “Some may, perhaps, suppose “that they might become acquainted with the true God, by con-“verseing with the Jews; and yet not conform to any Jewish cus- “toms.” I own the thing was possible. But, if we consider how apt men are to imitate those, whom they reverence; and by whom they have been instructed, in any important article of religion; and how industrious the Jews were, in making proselytes; we shall scarce believe that the generality of them stopped short, and never became proselytes of any sort. And the facts, recorded in the new testament, seem plainly to represent the devout gentiles as proselytes. For, (2.) They prayed at the temple-hours of prayer, and attended the synagogue-service. Such a conformity to Jewish customs, could hardly be expected, from such as had merely cast off idolatry; unless they had also been proselytes to the Jewish religion, in some kind, or degree. (3.) In preaching to the devout gentiles, the apostles referred them to the prophecies of the old testament; which they never did, when they attempted to convert idolatrous gentiles. Now, unless they had been proselytes of the gate, and acquainted with the old testament, by reading it in private, or by hearing it read in the synagogue, every sabbath-day; what account can be given of the
The door of faith opened to the gentiles.

An. Chr. APOSTLES appealing to the prophecies, in order to convert them? Claud. 1. Would any man, of common sense, (much less one, who had also the apostolic illumination) appeal to prophecies, for the confirmation of any thing, among such as were unacquainted with them, or did not allow their authority? (4.) They are called ἁγιοβοι τοῦ θεοῦ, The religious, or devout, proselytes. [Acts xiii. 43.] Now, there were only two sorts of proselytes, among the Jews; and these, about whom we are here inquiring, appear to have been, not the circumcised, but the uncircumcised, or proselytes of the gate. For such devout gentiles will be found, hereafter, to be promiscuously called, such as feared, and worshiped, God; or, devout proselytes. [See Acts x. 2; 7; 22; 35. and xiii. 16; 26; 43.]

CHAP. I. SECT. III.

St. Peter was to preach first to the gentiles: though he appeareth, hitherto, not to have thought of such a thing. Caesarea the place where, and Cornelius the person, with whom, he was to begin. Cornelius his vision of an angel; who orders him to send for the apostle Peter. Acts x. 1—8.

The christian religion haveing been planted in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria; and sent, by the eunuch, into Ethiopia, one of the uttermost parts of the earth; according to our Lord's express order, [Acts i. 8.] and haveing now been preached, about eight years, to the Jews only; God, in his wise and merciful providence, disposed things, for the preaching it, among the gentiles. And, as he always made the most gentle and natural gradations; the next transition was to the devout gentiles, within the borders of Palestine. These glad tidings of great joy had been already carried to Caesarea, by Philip; who was one of the seven deacons, and an evangelist; and who (most probably) settled there, soon after he had converted the Ethiopian eunuch. But Philip, like all the other preachers of the gospel, had hitherto preached to none but to the Jews only. As St. Peter was travelling through the towns and villages of Palestine,
The Jews prejudiced against the Gentiles.

Palestine; especially such as lay nigh, or upon, the coasts of the Mediterranean, the places, in which Philip had planted the gospel: —

As St Peter, I say, was going over those places, establishing such as had embraced the Christian doctrine, and converting others; he received orders, immediately from heaven, to enter upon the great work of the conversion of the Gentiles. This eminent Apostle was, for his right and early profession of Jesus his being the Messiah, (or the great prophet, sent into the world, to open a new state of things, by the gospel,) surnamed Peter, which signifieth a rock; as he was to be the rock, upon which the Christian church was to be built; or was first to lay the foundation of the Christian church: and, as our Lord foresaw his future steadiness and constancy, in the profession and support of the truth. — By another figure of speech, the keys of the kingdom of heaven are said to have been committed unto him; as he was first to open the door of faith, both to the Jews and Gentiles; and to admit, into Christ's kingdom, all those, among them, who were duly qualified for it. He had, accordingly, some years ago, laid the foundation of the Christian church, among the Jews; or opened the door of faith to them. [Acts ii. 14, &c.] But it had not once entered into his head, that he was to do so, among the Gentiles; while they continued uncircumcised. He did, indeed, since the effusion of the spirit, fully understand that Christ's was not a temporal, but a spiritual, kingdom; ruling over the consciences of men; and not designed to transfer the monarchy of the world, from Rome, to Jerusalem. But he did not think that God would receive any, as members of that kingdom; except the Jews, who had, for so many ages, been the peculiar people of God: that holy nation, which God had so long, and so remarkably, distinguished from other nations; styleing himself their God, in an especial manner. And he knew, that such Gentiles, as became proselytes of righteousness, were to be treated as Jews. But the uncircumcised Gentiles, even such of them as were proselytes of the gate, were looked upon, as polluted and unclean: so far from being worthy to be accepted into the number of the people of God, that, unless they would be circumcised, they reckoned them too impure for a Jew to eat and drink with, or to have any familiar conversation with them. Nay; the more zealous Jews.

Ver. 2. a 2 Esdras, vi. 55, 56, 57. The Jews looked upon a sojourning proselyte, as a Gentile to all purposes. [Vid. Jerus. Jebamoth. fol. 8. col. 4. as quoted by Dr. Lightfoot, vol. i. p. 285. of his works.] b Compare, with this place, Matt. xviii. 17. Acts xi. 3. and 1 Cor. v. 11.
The apostles prejudiced against the gentiles.

The Jews would not suffer them to live quietly among them, whenever they had power; unless they would become proselytes of righteousness: even though God had, in their law, commanded them to receive such, into their nation; and to suffer them to live, among them, undisturbed. It was indeed, prophesied, in the old testament, that, in Abram's seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and that the Messiah should be a light to enlighten the gentiles, as well as the glory of God's people, Israel. But it was not said, on what terms the gentiles should be accepted. The Jews, therefore, (who were ever ready to interpret prophecies, according to what they wished; and so violently prejudiced to their own nation, and against the uncircumcised gentiles) took it for granted, that such of the gentiles, as should be accepted into the Messiah's kingdom, must be first circumcised, and become proselytes of righteousness; and that the rest must be slaves, or tributaries, to the Jewish nation. Our Lord, who was of a more humane and benevolent spirit, took the most wise methods, gently to root such inveterate prejudices, out of the minds of his disciples: particularly, by the beautiful parable of the prodigal son; by that of the vineyard, let out to husbandmen; and that of the laborers, hired into the vineyard; as well as by many other of his discourses. By which, he insinuated the rejection of the body of the Jewish nation, for their impenitence and disobedience; and the reception of the penitent, and virtuous, among the gentiles. But, as they were deeply tainted with the national prejudices; and those were truths, not only contrary to all their former sentiments, but highly disagreeable and distasteful to them; they either could not, or would not, understand him. In giving the apostles their first commission, their prejudices were considered; and they were sent, "only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In their last commission, which was for life, they were ordered to "go to all nations, to preach the gospel to every creature; and to be witnesses, unto our Lord, not only in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria; but also unto the uttermost parts of the earth." However; the commission was delivered in such general terms, and their minds were so narrow, and so much bigoted to their own nation, that they, for all that, continued ignorant of the extent of their commission; and understood it, either as extending to the Jews of the several nations, or divisions, of Judea only; or, at the farthest, to the Jews, where-ever dispersed, over the face of the whole earth. Our Lord bore with these prejudices, for about eight years, after his ascension, and the first effusion of the holy spirit; their minds not being able sooner to bear the discovery. For had the gospel
Cornelius, the first convert, among the gentiles.

gospel been preached to the gentiles, before it had taken root among the Jews; in all probability, the Jewish converts would have been so shocked, as to have been almost ready to quit christianity itself. But, now, the harvest of the Jews being gathered in, the time was come, when, in Jesus Christ, the true seed of Abram, all nations were to be blessed; and those made a people, whom the Jews had not accounted his people; and the persons treated as beloved of God, who had not been treated as God's beloved. St. Peter was to lead the way. And the remarkable place, to begin at, was Caesarea. There was a town called Caesarea-Philippi, nigh the fountain-head of the river Jordan; which was afterwards called Paneas. But this was called Caesarea-Palaestina, as being under the Romans, the metropolis of Palaestina. It was formerly called Straton's tower; and was then but a small and inconsiderable town, on the borders of Phœnicia. But, as it stood by the sea-side, and was a proper place for merchandise; Herod the great built a very large city there, with many stately marble buildings; a theatre of stone, and an amphitheatre; (in which it is reckoned that Herod Agrippa was struck dead, upon his assuming to himself the glory, which belonged to God alone.) The haven being very incommodious, Herod the great built, also, a noble haven, with marble edifices and towers. The greatest of which towers, he called Druus, in honor of the emperor's kinsman; as he called the city Caesarea, in honor of Cæsar, the emperor himself. It was situated between Doron and Joppa, about seventy miles from Jerusalem, and about thirty from Joppa; and inhabited by a mixture of Jews and gentiles, who were pretty near equal in number. And the Jews are said to have had several schools, and learned men, there. As Palaestine was now in subjection to the Romans, and this their metropolis in that province; the Roman governor frequently resided at Caesarea, and had there several companies of soldiers, to maintain the Roman authority, and keep the province in subjection. And, among the rest, there was a company, which went by the name of the Italian cohort. A cohort seems to have consisted of a thousand soldiers. For over it was a tribune, or captain of a thousand. And the Italian cohort had, probably, been sent, out of Italy, for the governor's life-guard; and was, perhaps, honored with some marks of esteem and distinction. In that cohort, there was a centurion, or captain of an hundred soldiers, Cornelius.

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Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. i. c. 21, § 5, &c. Antiq. l. 15. c. 8. § 5. & c. 9. § 6. 
Acts xxiii. 23, 24. and xxiv. 8. 
The word is χριστιανός, which is used, Matt. xxvii. 27. Mark x. 16. and over it there was χρίσαμαι. John xviii. 12. Acts xxvi. 31.
The character of Cornelius.

An. Chrili
Claud. 1.

Book II.
Ch. 1.
Sect. III.
Acts x.

Thus prepared were they in general. But the uncommon virtues, and great piety, of Cornelius rendered him, in particular, a proper person to begin with, among that well-disposed sort of people. He excelled in piety towards God, and benevolence towards mankind; even to men of different sects, without confining his charity to persons of his own sentiments and party. For he is said to have given much alms to the people [of the Jews;] as well as to have prayed, at those hours of the day, at which the Jews used to offer up their prayers. [I cannot forbear mentioning, in this place, one instance of the superstition of the Jews. They would readily receive alms from the devout gentiles, and accounted their gifts sufficiently clean and pure; but they held their persons in abomination; and looked upon them, as rejected of God.]

The great God, the wise and benevolent governor of rational creatures, in pitching upon a person, so pious in himself, and so charitable to the Jews, made the gradation as gentle as possible; and began with one of the fittest persons in the world, when he was about to unite Jew and Gentile into one church and body, through Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace. It was, indeed, with great difficulty, that the Jewish converts were brought to bear with the admission of one uncircumcised Gentile. But, if they could bear with the reception of any; they must own, that one of Cornelius his virtue and charity was the most proper person, among all the Gentiles. And, when they came to cool upon it; surely, they could not forbear admiring the divine condescension, in stooping to their prejudices, and so graciously bearing with their infirmities.

Cornelius

f Luke xi. 41. Our Savior intimates, that this was the way to render all things clean to any person.
Cornelius his vision of an angel.

Cornelius was one day praying, in private, at the time of the evening sacrifice; that is, about three a-clock in the afternoon; when, on a sudden, he saw, waking, and with his bodily eyes, an angel standing before him, clothed with a glory; who came near him, and called him by his name, "Cornelius." Perhaps he might be praying for the coming of the kingdom of the Messiah, when the gentiles were to be accepted as the people of God. For the Jews were then daily looking when that kingdom would appear. Cornelius looked intently upon the vision; and, not without some surprize, said: "What can this mean, Lord?" The angel answered: "Thy prayers, and thine alms, are come up before God; more grateful than the steam of burnt-incense; or of the most costly sacrifice, which thou couldst have offered. But, as a more perfect revelation of the mind and will of God will be to thy unspeakable advantage, God hath, therefore, dispatched me, with this message, to thee, Send to the town of Joppa, and inquire for one Simon, surnamed Peter. He lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner; whose house is by the sea-side. When he is come, he will instruct thee in what is proper for thee to know; and direct thee what thou oughtest farther to do." Having delivered his message, the angel disappeared.

When the angel was departed, Cornelius called unto him two of his domestic servants; and a soldier, who was a devout gentile, and used to attend upon him; and, relating to them, what had happened, in his retirement, he sent them to Joppa.

From Joppa, the prophet Jonah was sent to preach, to the gentiles, at Nineveh. And, from thence, the apostle Peter, was sent to preach, to the gentiles, at Cæsarea.
St. Peter's vision of the sheet. The decorum observed in erecting Christ's spiritual kingdom. The apostle goes along with the messengers from Cornelius; and six Jewish Christians, from Joppa, accompany him.

Acts x. 9, — 23.

T H E Y set out too late, to reach Joppa that night; but the next day, as the messengers of Cornelius were upon the road, and just entering the town; St. Peter went up, to the top of the house, to spend some time in retirement and devotion. For (as it hath been observed above*) the Jews had two hours in a day, for stated hours of prayer; namely, the time of the morning and evening sacrifice. The first of which was about nine o'clock in the morning; and the last, about three in the afternoon. And the more devout among them added a third, which was about noon; and which they called the time of the mina'ba gedolah, or the great meat-offering. [See Psalm lvi. 17. Dan. vi. 10.] In those eastern countries, the roofs of the houses were commonly flat; and the flat roofs, or some of the upper parts of the houses, were the usual places for devout retirement: where it was their custom to pray, with their faces turned towards the temple at Jerusalem.

As it was about noon, and dinner-time drew on; St. Peter acquainted the family that he was very hungry, and desired them to prepare something for him to eat. But, while they were preparing, he (who continued hitherto a strict observer of the Jewish rituals) conformed to the custom, and retired to the top of the house for prayer and devotion. During which retirement, a trance, or extasy, fell upon him. And in a vision, the heavens seemed to open; and something like a large sheet, fastened by the four corners, to be let down to the earth; in which were some of almost all sorts of living creatures, tame and wild; birds, beasts, and reptiles; many of which the

b Dan. vi. 10. 1 Kings viii. 29, 30; 35; 38; 44; 48. Psal. cxxxviii. 2.
Jonah ii. 4.
St. Peter's vision of the sheet.

The law of Moses had prohibited, to the Jews, as polluted and unclean. And, along with the vision, there came, from heaven, the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ, saying: "Arise, Peter; and (now thou art hungry) kill and eat of any of these creatures, without difference, or distinction." St. Peter, not apprehending the design of the vision, answered; "No! Lord, by no means. For I have never yet eaten any thing, which is common to the Gentiles, or unclean to Israel. And I intend not so to do, either now, or at any time hereafter." The voice replied: "What God hath rendered clean, and pronounced lawful, you are no longer to account polluted." To confirm the matter, the thing was done a third time; and then the whole apparatus was immediately received up into heaven.

Before we proceed in the history, it may not be amiss to reflect upon the propriety and decorum, with which things were managed, in erecting Christ's spiritual kingdom. The Lord Jesus Christ himself appeared to Saul; and granted the knowledge of the gospel, unto him, by immediate revelation: because he was to be, first, a superior prophet, and afterwards an Apostle. But Cornelius was admonished, by an angel, to send for St. Peter, and hear him preach the Christian doctrine; because St. Peter was to open the door of faith to the Gentiles; and Cornelius was not designed for so high an office, in the Christian church, as Saul. Again: The angel, who appeared to Cornelius, was not sent to preach the gospel to him, but only to order him to send for an Apostle, who was one of the witnesses, chosen of God, to attest the truth of Christ's life, miracles, death, and resurrection; and, upon these facts, to found the Christian doctrine. And, farther: St. Peter did not go of himself, and attempt the conversion of the uncircumcised Gentiles; even though the body of the Jews in Palestine, that would embrace the gospel, were gathered in. If he had done so, he would have met with a more severe rebuke, from the zealous Jews, at Jerusalem; and could not have offered half so much in his own vindication. But, as he did not go, till he was sent for, and that in so extraordinary a manner; he main-

H h 2

Verse 15. While the Jews were to continue a separate nation, they were to observe the distinction of meats; namely, between such as the law had pronounced clean, and such as it had prohibited as unclean. [Lev. xx. 24, 25, 26.] But here it is intimated that the distinction was to cease; and that God himself now abolished the laws, which, in former times, and different circumstances, he himself had made. [See the essay concerning abolishing the ceremonial law, annexed to Titus.] Ver. 16. Gen. xli. 32.
St. Peter goeth to Cornelius.

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Acts x.

17, &c.

St. Peter goeth to Cornelius.

ained the apostolic dignity, and could allege the determination of heaven in his favor. And, finally; we may observe that an angel was sent to Cornelius; but the Lord Jesus Christ himself spoke to the Apostle, Peter: not only, as he bore an higher character in the church, than Cornelius was to bear; but as he was to execute a new, and a most extraordinary, commission. For such that, of beginning to call in the uncircumcised gentiles, certainly was.

I apprehend, that our Lord, in ordering St. Peter to slay, and eat, of any of the creatures, represented in the vision, without difference or distinction, intended to insinuate, that the Jewish Christians were, by the gospel, absolved from the ceremonial law; and, particularly, from the Jewish distinction of meats, clean and unclean: as well as to teach him, by way of emblem, that the uncircumcised, and particularly the devout, gentiles were no longer to be accounted unclean, or unfit for free and familiar conversation with the Jewish Christians; but were to be accepted into the Christian church, and to all the blessings and privileges of it; as fully and freely as those of the circumcision, who imbraced the gospel. But, so prejudiced was St. Peter, against understanding it in that sense; and yet so unable to put any other sense upon it; that he did not know what to make of it, till the succeeding events taught him to regard it, as an intimation that the gentiles were to be admitted into the church. Upon his first awaking out of his trance, so strange a vision quite astonished him. But, while he was ruminateing upon it, with great wonder and surprise; behold the messengers from Cornelius had found out Simon's house; and were at the gate, inquiring, whether Simon Peter lodged there? Upon which, the spirit directed the apostle himself to go down: for three men at the door wanted him. "Arise," therefore, said he, go down to them. And do not make any scruple of going along with them. For the thing is from God, and I have sent them." Then St. Peter himself went to the door, and said: "I am the person, for whom you are inquiring; pray, what is it that you want with me?" They answered: "Cornelius, a devout gentile, an holy and good man, who is highly esteemed, by all the Jews, that know him, hath had directions from an holy angel, to send for you; and to receive orders and instructions, from you." The apostle had them into the house; and there they lodged that night. The next day, he went along with them; and


James i. 6.
Cornelius meteth St. Peter. 237
and six jewisb christians from joppa accompanied him. It is pro-
able, that the apostle himself desired them to go along with him,
that they might be witnesses of what happened; and might vind-
icate him, afterwards, to the zealous jewisb christians, who (as he
could easily foresee) were very likely to blame him for so extraor-
dinary an attempt.

C H A P. I. S E C T. V.

They arrive at Cæsarea. St. Peter preacheth the gos-
pel to Cornelius, and a considerable number of his
friends. Whilest he was speaking, the holy spirit
fell down from heaven. The jewisb christians were
surprized, that gentiles should have the holy spirit.
St. Peter orders them to be baptized with water, who
had received the baptism of the spirit. He, at their
request, tarried with them several days. Acts x.
24, &c

S T. Peter, accompanied with Cornelius his three messengers,
and six jewisb christians, set out from joppa, and arrived the
next day at Cæsarea. When the apostle came nigh the city,
one of the servants ran before, and signified to Cornelius that he was
approaching. Cornelius was impatient for his coming, and big with
expectation of some signal event. And, therefore, he had called to-
gether his relations and intimate friends, who were devout gentiles, as
well as himself. And, when he heard that the apostle was just
at hand, he went out of his house to meet him. And, approach-
ing him with profound reverence, he fell down at his feet, to wor-
ship him. For he had a most exalted idea of that apostle, and
looked upon him as the ambassador of the most high god; or as
if he had been something more than a man. The apostle him-
sely, who knew that his message was divine, and that he was onely
the medium of conveyance; with great humility raised him up, say-
ing:

Ver. 25. See the reading in the Cambridge manuscript, greek and latin.
His speech. Cornelius his reply.

An. Christ. "Do not prostrate yourself to me. I am only a mere man, as you are; and deserve no such homage." And, after some little conversation at the door, St. Peter went in with him, and found a great company gathered together, waiting for him; to whom he said:

"You know very well, that (according to the decrees of the wise men, and the traditions of the elders, which are generally observed by our nation) it is reckoned unlawful for a Jew to frequent the house of an uncircumcised gentile; or to eat, and drink, and familiarly converse, with him. And this, till within these few days, hath been my own sentiment and practice. But God hath lately showed me, that I ought not to put a difference between Jews and gentiles; nor to account any man common, or unclean, merely for want of circumcision, and the observation of our ceremonial law. I, therefore, when I was sent for, made no scruple of coming hither. And now I desire to know upon what account you have sent for me." Cornelius replied: "Four days ago, I fasted, till about this hour of the day. And then, whilst I was praying, in my own house, (according to the custom observed by the Jews) behold an angel stood before me, in the shape and appearance of a man, but surrounded with a glory; who said: Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are ascended into the presence of God; more grateful than the steam of burnt-incense, or of the most costly sacrifices. God, therefore, out of his great regard to thee, hath sent me, with orders to thee, to send to Joppa, for one Simon, surnamed Peter, who lodgeth with one Simon, a tanner, by the sea-side. For be hath a very important message to deliver unto thee. Immediately, therefore, that very evening, added Cornelius, I sent for you; and I think myself highly obliged to you, that you came so readily. Now are all this company of us assembled in your presence, (as well as in the presence, and under the eye of God) attentively to hear whatever message God shall send us, by you." Then, St. Peter stood up, in a solemn manner, as one about to speak upon a very important subject; and said: "Under whatever prejudices I have formerly labored, I now perceive, of a truth, that God is no respecter of persons, or nations; but that, in every nation, as well as among the Jews, he, who feareth the true God,

Ver. 32. "εὖ γὰρ ἔσκεψας ἐκεῖνην, you have done well in coming. Herodot.

1. V. C. 24. [See other passages to the same purpose, in Wolfius, and Wetstein in loc.]

Ver. 33. "πρὸς ὑμᾶς, according to some manuscripts and versions. [See Dr. Mill.]

Ver. 34. "Ἀριτίας Ἰ πηθεί· τῷ σωμα. See Psal. lxxviii. 2. Matt. v. 2.
St. Peter's speech to the devout gentiles.

and practiseth virtue and righteousness, is accepted of him. My An. Christi
present message to you, from God, is this: And it is the very
same, which God hath, of late years, sent unto the children of Is-
rael; declaring the glad tidings of peace and salvation, through
Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, gentiles or Jews. You must
needs have heard something of it: I mean, that doctrine, which
was published throughout all Judea; and which toook it's rise in 35, &c.
Galilee; immediately after the preparatory baptism and ministry of
John. What I refer to, is, concerning Jesus of Nazareth; how
that (immediately after he had been baptized by John) God anoint-
ed him with the holy spirit; conferring upon him supernatural gifts
and miraculous powers. From which time, he went about doing good,
preaching a most excellent doctrine, and working many benefi-
cent miracles. For God always loved, and assisted, him. You
must needs, I say, have heard the report: For these things were not
done in a corner. But we, his apostles, were eye-witneses of
his actions and sufferings, both in Galilee; in the country of Ju-
dea, and in the capital city Jerusalem; whom the Jews, especially
they of Jerusalem, apprehended and crucified. But, within three
days, God raised him to life again; and showed him openly, se-
veral times. Not, indeed, to all the people. For they had render-
ed themselves unworthy of such a favor, by their obstinate refuse-
al of his doctrine, and disregarding all his former miracles. But,
especially, as his particular mission to the Jews expired at his death..
And God had another way in view, of giving to them, and to the
whole world, full and sufficient proofs of the truth and reality
of his resurrection; by sending out eye-witneses; who should,
The spirit poured out, on their first-fruits.

An.Christi "at the same time, attest the facts and found the doctrine upon them; and, by enabling them to confirm their testimony, by signs, and wonders, and various miracles, and gifts of the holy spirit, bestowed in great plenty, upon them, and upon all such as imbrace the gospel. — For these, I say, and other equally wise reasons, God did not see fit that his son should appear, after his resurrection, unto all the people of the Jews; but only unto us, his own disciples: to five hundred at once; and, by a previous appointment, upon a mountain in Galilee. But more frequently, and more especially, unto us, his Apostles, who were witnesses, chosen before of God, to attend him, during his life; that we might certainly know, and be unexceptionable witnesses, of his death and resurrection. And, as we were intimately acquainted with him, before he died; we had all the assurance of the truth and reality of his resurrection, that eating, drinking, and free conversing, with him, for forty days together, could afford us. Nay; we handled his body; and felt the marks of the wounds, which he received upon the cross. And, after this full conviction, we received an express order from him, to go out into the world, and to testify that he is the Saviour and governor of all; and that God hath appointed him to be the judge, both of the living and of the dead. As you are proselytes of the gate, and attend upon the reading of the law and the prophets, in the synagogue; to those sacred writings would I refer you. For unto him the prophets, in general, bear witness, that whoever believeth and obeyeth his doctrine, shall, through his mediation, receive full remission of sins."—

While these words were in St. Peter's mouth, the holy spirit fell down from heaven, (probably attended with a glory; as when it fell upon the Apostles, and their company, on the famous day of Pentecost. And, perhaps, a glory always attended the immediate effusion of the spirit; from the time of our Lord's baptism, to the calling in the idolatrous gentiles. The spirit was poured down, I say,) upon Cornelius, and his friends; as upon our Lord himself, and upon his Apostles, and the hundred and twenty; and was not communicated, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, as it had been to the Jews, and Samaritan converts. And the reason why God communicated the holy spirit, in this most honorable manner,
The spirit poured out, on the devout gentiles.

to the first-fruits of the devout gentiles, was to remove the prejudices of the Jewish Christians; and to make way for their cheerfully receiving the devout gentiles, into the Christian church, and to all it's privileges.

The Jews had a proverb among them; That the holy spirit would not dwell upon any heathen; nor even upon any Jew, in an heathen country. And, accordingly, the prophets had hitherto commonly risen in Israel, and not among the uncircumcised gentiles. The Jewish Christians, therefore, that had come along with St. Peter, from Joppa, to be eye-witnesses of this great event, were quite surprized, to see that the divine gift of the holy spirit was poured down upon gentiles. For, they presently found that this effusion did produce like effects upon them, as it had done upon the Jewish converts; Cornelius, and his company, immediately exercising the gift of tongues; (most probably, in repeating and explaining some part of the Old Testament, in the original language;) and magnifying God, by singing psalms, or hymns, or spiritual songs, by immediate inspiration. This evident and remarkable effusion of the spirit, upon uncircumcised gentiles, after Cornelius had had the vision of an angel, and himself the signal vision of the sheeptook away all St. Peter's scruples; who now said: "Can any man, how strongly soever he might formerly be prejudiced against such a thing, any longer hesitate, or offer one just reason, why these uncircumcised gentiles should not be baptized; seeing they have received the baptism of the holy spirit, in the same honorable manner, that we, Christ's Apostles, and first converts, have received it?" And, no objection being offered, by any of the Jewish Christians, who had come along with him, St. Peter immediately ordered water to be made ready; and those gentiles to be baptized, by some of these very brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. For, as they were devout gentiles, they already believed in the one true God: and had, just before, been baptized with the effusion of the holy spirit. — Thus St. Peter, who, as the rock, on which the Christian church was to be built; and, as having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, had formerly laid the foundation of a Christian church, among the Jews, and opened the door of faith unto them; — did now, in like manner, to the uncircumcised gentiles. And, though all the other Apostles were foundations of the Christian church, and had the same lifting powers and commission; though they preached the same doctrine, and confirmed it, by like extraordinary

Ver. 45. 1 See Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. 1, p. 285.
ordinary evidences; yet they had none of them the power of the keys, in the same sense that St. Peter had. For it was peculiar to him, first to open the door of faith, or to lead the way to the conversion both of Jews and Gentiles. But, though he began the work; they, as well as he, carried it on, with vigor and success. After all these things had happened, the new converts desired St. Peter to tarry with them, some days longer. To which he readily consented; as willing farther to assist, instruct, and comfort, them.

C H A P. I. S E C T. VI.

St. Peter returning to Jerusalem, the Jewish converts there chide him, for baptizing uncircumcised Gentiles. He vindicates himself. They acquiesce, at present. But this controversy broke out again, with more violence, afterwards. Acts xi. 1—18.

Caesarea being the metropolis of Palæstine, and Jerusalem so very considerable a city in that province; there was a frequent communication maintained between them. And, therefore, the news of so extraordinary an event (as that of the conversion of some of the devout Gentiles) soon reached the ears of the Christian church at Jerusalem; where were then Apostles, as well as brethren. The Jews had, indeed, little or no reason to complain of the reception of the Gentiles, under the Gospel; and of their being admitted to equal privileges with themselves; because their nation had treated Jesus, who was the Messiah, in so cruel and ignominious a manner. But, notwithstanding this, they were alarmed at such an attempt. For most, or all, of them, who had embraced Christianity, continued

Ver. 48. — Walter Moyle, Esq; [vol. 2. of his works, p. 200, &c.] supposes that there were several idolatrous rites required, at that time, of the Roman soldiers, entirely inconsistent with the profession of Christianity. And that, therefore, Cornelius must have quitted the army, upon his becoming a Christian. But he was no idolator, when St. Peter went to preach to him; neither had he been so, for some time. And the scripture is entirely silent about his continuing in the army, or leaving it, upon his taking up the profession of Christianity.
St. Peter blamed for preaching to gentiles.

continued, like the unbelieving Jews, to be exceeding zealous for the law of Moses, and very tenacious of the traditions of the elders. For they had been of the sect of the pharisees; and we read nothing, hitherto, of the conversion of any Sadducee. Upon this news, I say, they took the alarm; even before St. Peter himself returned to Jerusalem. However; not long after, the Apostle returned; and Acts xi. the six Jewish Christians, from Joppa, went along with him, to bear their testimony for him, and vindicate what he had done. As soon as ever the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem saw St. Peter, they (as perfect strangers to his pontifical supremacy) began to call in question what he had done, and to expostulate with him, saying: What do we hear, concerning your last expedition? Have you, indeed, contrary to the custom of our nation (founded upon the decrees of the wise men, and the traditions of the elders) gone among the uncircumcised gentiles; and eat, and familiarly conversed, with them? Nay; and, without first requiring of them to become proselytes of righteousness; it is reported, that you have even received them, into the Christian church, by baptism; making no difference between them and the Jews, who are the ancient church and people of God.” St. Peter could, with no great propriety, blame his warm accusers; because he himself had, till of late, been as bigoted to the Jewish nation, as any of them. And, accordingly, he did not blame them; nor did he pretend to vindicate what he had done, by insisting upon his infallibility and pontifical authority. But he vindicated himself; by laying before them the reason of his conduct, and appealing to their judgments; Whether, in such circumstances, he had not acted according to reason and the divine direction? “I was (said he) in the city of Joppa, praying; and, in a trance, (or ecstasy) I saw a vision; something like a great sheet, let down from heaven, by the four corners, and brought nigh unto me. Upon which, when I had looked intently for some time; and had considered with myself what the meaning of it could be; I saw various sorts of beasts, birds, and insects, tame and wild, clean and unclean, promiscuously mixed together. And, along with the vision, I heard a voice, saying, Arise Peter, kill and eat, of any of these creatures, without difference, or distinction. To which I answered: By no means, Lord. For nothing polluted, or unclean, hath ever yet entered into my mouth. The voice from heaven replied: What

Ver. 1. St. Peter either suspected, or knew, that the Jewish Christians, at Jerusalem, had heard of what he had lately done; and that they were displeased. The reading of ver. 1. of this chapter, in the Cambridge manuscript, intimateth that he knew it. [See Dr. Mill.]
St. Peter's defence of his conduct.

GOD (who formerly instituted that law, about the distinction of meats) hath now cleansed, under the gospel, thou art no longer to reckon polluted, or unclean. And, to confirm the thing, the voice was repeated a third time; and then all the phenomenon was taken up again into heaven. Scarce was the vision finished, and the sheet, with the various creatures in it, withdrawn; before three men from Caesarea, were inquiring, at the door, for me. Upon which, the spirit ordered me to make no scruple of going along with them, any more than if they had been Jews. Accordingly, I went. And these fix of the Christian brethren (here present) went with me, from Joppa; who are witnesses of all that happened, and will confirm what I say. When we came thither, the man told us, that he had seen an angel, in his house; who ordered him to send to Joppa, and to inquire for one Simon, surnamed Peter. He shall teach thee a doctrine, (said the angel) whereby thou and thy house shall be faved. After this, I stood up to speak; and had not spoken much, before the holy spirit fell down, upon them; as it fell upon us, on the signal day of Pentecost. That brought to my mind a remarkable saying of the Lord Jesus, which I have heard him repeat, more than once: John, indeed, baptized with water; but you shall be baptized, hereafter, with the holy spirit, and with fire; or in the appearance of a flame of fire. Seeing the great and wise God, the benevolent creator and ruler of all, saw fit to give unto the uncircumcised Gentiles, like gifts, as he did unto us of the circumcision, who first believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; if I had refused to baptize them with water, after God had baptized them with the holy spirit, I had plainly resisted the will of God. But alas! what am I, that I should oppose, or contradict, the almighty? When they had heard St. Peter's apologetie, they were silent; and acquiesced for the present; turning their accusations of the apostle into praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God, who had granted unto the devout Gentiles, through Jesus Christ his Son, space to repent of their sins; with a promise of full pardon, and acceptance unto eternal life, upon their repentance, faith, and future obedience: and who had received them into the Christian church, equally with the believing Jews; even without their being first circumcised; and brought into subjection to the whole law of Moses. But, though these particular persons now acquiesced; yet this was the foundation of the grand controversy, in the apostolic age. For we shall find, as the history proceedeth, that it broke out again, with respect to the devout Gentiles. [Acts xv.] And was afterwards extended to the converts from among the
Devout gentiles, converted in other places.

The idolatrous gentiles; as appeareth from most of St. Paul's epistles.

And the attentive reader will there find, how very difficult it was to allay the prejudices of the Jews, and Jewish Christians, against the admission of the gentiles; unless they would first become professed of righteousness.

CHAP. II.

Of the conversion of the devout gentiles, in other places, after St. Peter had led the way at Caesarea: particularly at Antioch in Syria; where the great harvest of them was gathered in, by Barnabas and Saul's laboring a whole year. The disciples, there, were first called Christians. Acts xi. 19, 26.

The persecution, which arose about the time of St. Stephen's martyrdom, had dispersed the Christian brethren, into divers countries. And several of them took that opportunity to go about, preaching the gospel, in other places; as Philip had done at Samaria. By which means, Christianity spread as far as Phoenicia, the island Cyprus; and Antioch, the metropolis of Syria. Though, hitherto, they preached to none, except Jews only.

But now, St. Peter having opened the door of faith, and laid the foundation of a Christian church, among the devout gentiles; after God had testified, very plainly, that it was agreeable to his mind and will; other Christians began to imitate St. Peter's example: particularly, some Jewish Christians, of the island Cyprus, and of the country Cyrene, in Africa, travelling, in their dispersions, to Antioch in Syria, preached the Christian doctrine there, to the devout gentiles. And God blessed and succeded their labors. For a great number of them embraced the Christian faith.

In our common copies of the Greek testament, we do indeed read, [ver. 19, 20.] "that they, who had formerly preached to none but Jews, did now preach [πρὸς τὸν ἐλληνικὸν] to the Hellenists, or Graecifying Jews." But, in the Alexandrian manuscript, and in the Syriac, vulgar, Coptic, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, they are represented as preaching henceforward [πρὸς τὸν ἐλληνικὸν] unto the Greeks, or uncircumcised.
Many Jewish proselytes, at Antioch.

246 Many Jewish proselytes, at Antioch. So, likewise, in Eusebius his ecclesiastical history, book ii. chapter iii. and in Chrysostom, and Oecumenius. This last has been approved, as the true and genuine reading, by the following great and learned men; namely, Le Clerc, Grotius, Bengelius, archbishop Usher, Cocceius, Beza, and Drusius. [See Dr. Mill, and Mr. Wetstein, upon this text.] And, indeed, this last appeareth evidently to have been the true and original reading. For St. Luke had spoken of the conversion of heathens, long before. [See Acts vi. 1.] But now he is proceeding to a new period. And, after having intimated that the dispersed Chrisians had hitherto preached to none but Jews; he, with great propriety, acquainteth us, that, when St. Peter had converted uncircumcised Gentiles, they followed his example, and preached to Gentiles also.

The Jews frequently called all nations, excepting their own, Greeks; from the time of the Macedonian, or Græcan, monarchy. Just as the Roman empire was afterwards called the whole world; because it extended over the most considerable part of the then known world.

Antioch was the metropolis of Syria; for magnitude, situation, and other agreeable circumstances, the third city in the Roman empire: being excelled by none, except Rome and Alexandria. It was built by Seleucus; and called Antioch, from the name of his son Antiochus. Grotius appealeth to Josephus, for proof that there was a Jewish university, in that city; and a great number of proselytes. But he hath not referred us to the particular passages in Josephus, as he ought to have done. Upon examining, I have found the following paragraph; to which I suppose Grotius refered: "The Jews are a people dispersed in great numbers, over the face of the whole earth; particularly in Syria, which lieth in their neighborhood, and especially in the city of Antioch, there are great numbers of them: not only, because it is a large city; but chiefly, because of the privileges and immunities, which were granted them, by the kings that succeeded Antiochus. For Antiochus, who was called Ephiphanes, [that is, the great, or illustrious] laid waste the city Jerusalem, and plundered the temple. But the kings, who came after him, restored all the sacred, brazen vessels, which could be found, to the Jews, who lived at Antioch; that they might put them into their syna-

Ver. 20. * Joseph, de bel. jud. 1. 3. c. 2. § ult.
* In prolegom. and Lucam; where he also appeals to the Roman laws, in proof of the same thing.
Barnabas sent, by the apostles, to Antioch.

"synagogue: allowing them the freedom of the city, equally with the greeks. The kings, who succeeded them, did also treat the jews in the same manner. Upon which, their numbers increased exceedingly; their temple [or synagogue] was made very rich and magnificent; and they were always bringing over a great number of greeks to their religious worship, whom they made, in some sort, a part of themselves."

I not only suppose that Grotius had his eye upon this passage; but, from Josephus his saying, that "they brought them over to join in their [synagogue] worship, and made them, in some sort, a part of themselves;" I think it is highly probable, that they were not made proselytes of righteousness, but only proselytes of the gate: such as St. Luke was; and such as Grotius is there inquiring after. And St. Luke's history, in the Acts of the apostles, confirms it; that there was a considerable number of proselytes of the gate, or devout, uncircumcised, gentiles, in that great city of Antioch. Out of them, there was formed, soon after this, a large christian church; which was looked upon, as the mother-church of the gentile churches; as the church at Jerusalem was of the jews, or of all the christian churches. And they were, likewise, the first-fruits of the devout gentiles, out of Palæstine. — The report of their conversion quickly reached the ears of the christian church at Jerusalem. For there, some, or other, of the apostles did hitherto generally reside; to consult how they might propagate the gospel to the best advantage. Upon this news, they (according to their usual vigilance) agreed to send, to Antioch, Joses, the levite, whom they had surnamed Barnabas; that is, the son of exhortation, or consolation: the very person, who had been so generous in contributing to the charitable fund; [Acts iv. 36, 37.] and who had brought Saul to the christians at Jerusalem, and convinced them that he was a sincere convert. [Acts ix. 27, 28.] And, when Barnabas came to Antioch; and saw, with his own eyes, the happy effects of the divine goodness, in taking such a number of uncircumcised gentiles into the christian church; he was not at all envious, but (on the contrary) exceeding glad; and (like the true son of exhortation) he exhorted them to persevere with steadfastness and resolution. And, indeed, he was a very proper man to be sent among the gentile converts. For he was not only a Cypriot, and borne on gentile ground: but he was a man of great benignity, and sweet-
The converts, there, first called CHRISTIANS.

An. Christj of temper. And, therefore, lesse bigoted to his own nation, and against the gentle converts; and lesse likely to lay any unnecessary burden upon them. Besides, he was well qualified to instruct Book II. and establish them. For he was one of the superior prophets, full of the holy spirit, and of faith; thoroughly convinced himself of the truth of christianity, and abounding with such spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, as enabled him fully to convince others also. And he met with proportionable success. For he added a considerable number to the converts, who were there before his coming. Yea; the work, at length, grew so much upon his hands, that he found himself, alone, unable to manage it. Hearing, therefore, that Saul was at Tarsus, his native city; he went thither, in quest of him. And, when Barnabas had acquainted him with what had been done, in the new work, of converting the devout gentiles; and had desired him to go, along with him, to Antioch; and affit him; Saul readily consented. And these two taught great numbers of the devout gentiles; laboring among them diligently, for a whole year together. — In that city, Barnabas and Saul, who had hitherto been superior prophets among the Jews, became superior prophets and evangelists to the devout gentiles. And thus were they trained up, for being Apostles to the idolatrous gentiles, by preaching so long to gentiles, proselytes of the gate.

The Jewish converts had hitherto been called, by their enemies, men of that way, or sect; Galilaens, Nazarenes, and other like names of reproach. And, among themselves, they had been called disciples, believers, the church, the saints; and, to denote the love, unity, and concord, which were among them, they styled one another brethren. But now the gentle converts at Antioch were (possibly, not without a divine admonition) called by the name of CHRISTIANS;

Ver. 26. 'χριστιανοί signifieth, to be warned by a divine admonition. [Matt. ii. 12; 22. Luke ii. 26. Acts x. 22. Heb. viii. 5. and xi. 7. and xii. 25.] 'χριστιανοί is used but once more, in the new testament; namely, Rom. vii. 3. and, perhaps, there it ought to be understood in the same sense. So 'χριστιανοί ought evidently to be understood, Rom. xi. 4. Dr. Mill, upon ver. 25. hath informed us, that the Cambridge manuscript readeth this sentence thus: χριστιανοί χριστιανοί τοῦ θεοῦ, τῆς καθαρτίας, τῆς σωφροσύνης τοῦ κοινωνίας τῆς παθήσεως. Whereby is signified, that Barnabas and Saul first gave them the name of christians. And, indeed, the common reading seems to intimate the same thing. Ε'γὼ ὁ ἀπόστολος, — 'χριστιανοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, τοῦ 'ελθόντος ἐν ἐμάς τῆς καθαρτίας καὶ τῆς σωφροσύνης. "And it came, to pass, that they first called the disciples at Antioch, by the name of "christians." Barnabas knew how much the church, at Jerusalem, was prejudiced against them; and how unlikely it was, that they should allow the name of brethren.

And,
They of Antioch first called Christians.

Tians; taking their denomination, immediately, from their Lord and Master, Christ himself. Just as, among the philosophers, the Platonists had their name from their master Plato; the Pythagoreans from Pythagoras; the Epicureans, from Epicurus; and the Aristotelians, from Aristotle. This name, I say, (which hath since spread far and wide, and whose sound hath filled the earth; which hath been so dear to some, and so odious to others) began first at Antioch, in Syria. For there, the devout Gentiles, who became the disciples of Christ, were first called Christians. As they were uncircumcised Gentiles, it was highly dubious, whether the Jewish converts would allow them to be called brethren; considering how strongly they had been prejudiced against them, and how backward they had been to receive them into the Christian church. Though, afterwards, the appellation of brethren was given them, by the church, at Jerusalem, upon a full and mature consideration of their case. [See Acts xv. 23.] However; as the Jewish Christians could not presently get over all their former prejudices, and allow those Gentile converts to be upon a level with themselves; and, as it was, nevertheless, proper that they should have some name, to distinguish them from such devout Gentiles, as had not embraced the Christian religion: For these, and such like, wise reasons, they were called, and distinguished, by the name of Christians. — By what more glorious, or more honorable name, could they have been called? A name, which, in its genuine and original meaning, includeth in it every thing that is virtuous and amiable, just and charitable, noble and divine! And a name, which would still have had the same glorious meaning; had it not been so frequently and so vilely prostituted, by multitudes, who have made great pretensions to it, while their temper and practice have been very different from their profession: abominable, and provoking, in the sight of God; as well as uncharitable, and highly injurious, to men! Would to God, that Christ had been the only Master, in whose name, Christians had ever gloried! And that all, who had ever been called by this sacred and venerable name of Christians, had answered the character, by their temper and conduct! Then would they not have been ranked, under so many different heads, and leaders; to the promoting of strife and contention, instead of truth and piety, virtue and charity: nor would the enemies

And, if the name of Christians was, also, given them by a divine admonition, (as the original word doeth, in the New Testament, commonly signify) it shows the divine concern for them; and the honor, which heaven put upon them, in dignifying and distinguishing them, by that high and honorable name, or title.
Agabus prophesies of a famine.

In this large city of Antioch, in Syria, was the great harvest of devout gentiles; begun by men of Cyprus and Cyrene; but chiefly gathered in, by Barnabas and Saul. Though, very probably, Saul had never preached to uncircumcised gentiles, till he went, along with Barnabas, from Tarsus, to Antioch.

CHAP. III.

Agabus prophesies of a famine, in the land of Judea. Upon that, the gentile christians, at Antioch, make a collection for the jewiu-th christians, at Jerusalem: Which they sent, to the elders there, by the bands of Barnabas and Saul. Acts xi. 27, to the end of the chapter.

There were not onely apostles, in the christian church, but prophets also; who were of a rank and order, inferior to apostles. And, to them, God saw fit to reveile some events, of lesser importance, which he had not reveiled even to the apostles themselves. About this time, some of those prophets came, from Jerusalem, to Antioch, to visit and establishe the christians there. Among the rest, there was one, Agabus, by name. And, while the christians were gathered round about him, (among whom St. Luke seemeth to have been present; from a reading, which is quoted in the margin:*— While the christians stood round about Agabus, I say,) he rose up; and, by a prophetic impulse, foretold the approach of a great famine of our holy religion have had any, the least, occasion, to glory and triumph over us.

Ver. 28. *Instead of οἵ τε ἐκ ἐκτείνουσα, &c. and one of them rising up, &c. the Cambridge manuscript readeth οἵ τε πολλαὶ ἐγκαλεῖσαν. Ἐκκρατείμησαν τοῦ ἐνον, ἐκ, &c. And there was great joy. And, when we returned, he said, &c.] So, also, St. Austin. [See Wetstein in loc.] According to that reading, St. Luke, the historian, reckoned himself as one of the christians, then present. This agreeth very well with the account, which hath frequently been given of him; namely, that he was a native of Antioch in Syria. And, as he is evidently distinguished from them of the circumcision, Col. iv. 11, compared with ver. 14. he was, most probably, a devout gentile.
The liberality of the gentile christians, &c.

It had been a custom for the Jews and proselytes, in their several dispersions, to send presents to Judea; and especially to Jerusalem. And the Jews in Judea seem to have expected it, as, in some sort, their due. Particularly, we find that Helene, queen of the Adiabenes, and her son Izates, who had lately become proselytes to the Jewish religion, were very generous to the poor, at Jerusalem, in this ensuing famine. For the queen went to see the celebrated temple, and to offer sacrifices there. And, finding Jerusalem oppressed by the famine, and many perishing through want, she sent abroad her officers; some of them to Alexandria, to buy corn; others to Cyprus, to purchase dried figs; who returned quickly, and distributed food to the necessitous. By which means, she laid a lasting obligation upon the whole nation of the Jews. And her son Izates also, having heard of the famine, sent a large sum of money, to the chief men, at Jerusalem. — In conformity to such a laudable custom,

Agabus prophesied that the famine should spread, through the whole world. But, by that, was meant no more than the land of Israel. &c. In like manner, the earth, or rather the inhabited world, must signify one country; in the LXX version, Isa. xiii. 5. and in the New Testament. Luke xxi. 26. compared with ver. 21; 23. Besides, had the famine been to reach through the whole world; those disciples at Antioch would, very probably, have sent relief to other countries; if they had been able. Or rather, perhaps, they would have sent to none at all; as fearing they should want themselves. But, it is plain, they understood the famine would happen in Judea. For there is not the least hint of their thinking of sending relief to any other place. Nor were they afraid of suffering, by it, themselves. No! they sent relief to the place, where it was to happen; every man as he abounded, xalbex wqpsv ike, &c. Whereas, it is intimated, that they themselves had plenty. [See Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel history, part i. p. 318, &c. of the 2d edition; p. 542, &c. of the 3d edition; and Drusius, in critic. &c. vol. 8. p. 1237.]

* Antiq. l. 20. c. 2. § ult.
* Chronicon, p. 79; 204; & Hist. Eccles. 1. 2. c. 12.
* Lib. 7. c. 6. But he greatly mistaketh, in supposing that this Helene was a Christian.

The charity sent to the elders, at Jerusalem.

An.Christom, the gentile christians at Antioch, upon Agabus his prediction of a famine in Judea, determined to give, every man, (in proportion to his own ability and plenty) towards a charitable collection, for the relief of the jewisb converts, in Judea, and especially in Jerusalem, from whence the sound of the gospel first came out. For, "as they were made partakers of their spiritual things, they thought it their duty to minister unto them in temporal things." So remarkably doeth the wife and over-ruling providence of God adapt the common course of things, so as to subserve his own great and beneficent designs: as plainly appeareth, in the instance now before us. For the reception of uncircumcised gentiles, into the christian church, had a little foured the minds of the jewisb converts. But, upon this approach of a famine, here was an early occasion given, for cementing and uniting the jewisb and gentile converts, into one church, and body, under Jesus Christ, their common head and Lord. For kindnesse and charity do, of all things, sweeten men's minds; and beget a favorable opinion of the persons, who are so bounteous and liberal. The helping them in their distress, therefore, was the most effectual way to win over the jewisb converts. And the knowing of the famine before-hand, so as to give them an opportunity to provide for it, when the church was in its tender, infant state, and many had forsaken all, to preach the gospel, doeth plainly testify the excellence and usefulness of the gifts of the spirit; and, particularly, that of prophecy. And, indeed, such extraordinary difficulties and discouragements could hardly have been prevented, or sustained, without extraordinary helps and directions.

When they had made that most charitable collection, they sent it to the elders, at Jerusalem, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. The elders, or early converts, in the primitive church, were of three sorts. — (1.) άναπτωμα, The eye witnesses, or those who had seen our Lord in the flesh; and were among the first disciples, or most early converts. (2.) άναπτωμα, The first converts in any particular place; who were always honored for their early conversion, and ready reception of the gospel; and were the primary elders of particular churches. (3.) The [αναπτωμα] successors of the [αναπτωμα] elders of the second sort. Those elders, to whom Barnabas and Saul carried that charitable collection, were (I suppose) of the first sort. And
St. Matthew; who he was.

And such of them, as were not apostles, were honored as next in dignity and eminence to the apostles.

Upon the persecution, which followed the martyrdom of St. Stephen, most of the christians had fled from Jerusalem, except the apostles. When that persecution ceased (as it did, some time before this) many of them returned again to Jerusalem. Among whom, were (very probably) the elders here mentioned. When they returned, the apostles could the better leave that city, and visit the other churches; as having left the mother-church, at Jerusalem, in safe hands. And the absence of all the apostles appeareth to have been known to the christians at Antioch, from their sending their generous contribution to the elders at Jerusalem.

Barnabas and Saul's delivering that money safe, into the hands of these elders, was their ministry; which they are said to have fulfilled, at Jerusalem, at this time.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the gospel of St. Matthew.

SECT. I.

Some have thought that St. Matthew's gospel was written during this period. Who St. Matthew was. He is said to have wrote his gospel in hebrew, for the use of the converted jews; when they were going to preach the gospel to the gentiles: And (very likely) he published it, afterwards, in greek, for the use of the christians in other countries.

During this period some have thought that St. Matthew wrote the gospel, which to this day goeth under his name. I will, therefore, take this occasion to say some things concerning it.

St. Matthew was the son of Alpheus, or Cleopas: but not of that Alpheus, who was father of James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, the brethren, or kinsmen of our lord. For St. Matthew is never
never once represented as the brother, or kinsman, of our Lord.* He was also named Levi. And, before our Lord called him to be his disciple, he was a publican, or collector of the Roman tribute, by the sea-side; or at the custom-house, in Capernaum. b After he had attended, for some time, upon our Lord, as his disciple; he was, together with the other eleven, chosen to be an apostle of the circumcision. From which time, he conversed familiarly with our Lord; and was an eye and ear-witness of his discourses, actions, and sufferings. And was not only convinced of his crucifixion and death; but fully satisfied, also, of the truth and reality of his resurrection from the dead. Upon the day of Pentecost, he received a most plentiful effusion of the Spirit: by which he was illuminated with the scheme of the Christian doctrine, which was to be founded upon facts; and could preach it in divers languages, as well as work miracles in confirmation of it. Before the conversion of Cornelius, he had preached to none but to the Jews only. Most probably, he had, since that, preached, for some time, to the devout Gentiles, within the borders of Palestine. But now, being determined to travel into other countries, he is reckoned, by some, to have written his gospel, at Jerusalem, c or in some part of Judea; the first of the four evangelists; and left it with the Hebrews, to supply the want of his presence among them. Eusebius says, "That Matthew, having first preached to the Hebrews, and being about to go to other nations, committed to writing the gospel according to him, in his own country-language; supplying, by that writing, the want of his presence and conversation, among those, from whom he was now to depart." c From hence, Dr. Mill concluded, that Eusebius was of

* See the history before St. James, p. 7, 8.
* Athanas. de lib. S. Script. Chrysostome affirms, that Matthew first wrote his gospel at Jerusalem. [Vid. Vales. in Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 3. c. 24.] And several manuscripts, mentioned by Dr. Mill, [in his note at the end of St. Matthew's gospel.] affirm the same thing; or that it was written in some part of Palestine.
* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. 3. c. 24. Baronius, [in his annals.] and Mr. Jones, [in his canon of the n. t. vol. 3. p. 60.] have both asserted, "that Eusebius, in his Chronicle, dateth the writing of St. Matthew's gospel in the third year of Caligula, "that is, in the forty-first year of Christ, or eight years after his ascension." But, upon a careful inquiry, I cannot find that they had any just grounds for that assertion.
of opinion, that this gospel was written in the year of our Lord 41. \( \text{An.Christ} \)
or the eighth year after our Lord's ascension. Several of the antient mss. (as well as the arabic version) agree with this account. According to this calculation, the gospel of St. Matthew must have been written, either in the last year of Caligula, or the first of Claudius; which cometh to much the same thing. For Caligula reigned only three years, and some odd months; and Claudius immediately succeeded him. The calculations, therefore, will differ only a small matter; as they may both fall within the compass of the same year, or thereabouts. Nay; as the last year of Caligula was imperfect; they might (possibly) reckon it to Claudius, and call it the first year of his reign. By which mean, the accounts will almost coincide. These testimonies are so expressive, that, as several learned men have thought, they deserve great regard; especially as the state of things, about this time, conspires to render the account highly probable. For, when the apostles had planted christianity, among the Jews, in Judea; and, by their preaching and miracles, had raised so much discourse, about Christ's life and actions; they would scarce leave their numerous converts to uncertain reports, and without any authentic account of Jesus his ministry. Accounts would, undoubtedly, be inquired after. Things far less remarkable are reported, and heard, with eagerness and an insatiable curiosity. And, if we consider that great zeal and diligence to propagate christianity, which the apostles manifested, in several other instances; together with those treasures of wisdom and knowledge, which were communicated unto them, by the illumination of the spirit; it will hardly suffer us to suppose, that they would leave the Jewish Christians, without a just and credible account of such memorable things, written, or approved, by such as had been eye-witnesses to the facts: especially, as false accounts would be very likely to spread; and the discourses of our Saviour were yet fresh in the memory of the apostles. And, finally, as the great harvest of the Jews, in Judea, was gathered in; and God had opened the door of faith to the devout gentiles, in Judea; and was going to send the apostles to

\[ \text{Prolegom. 61.} \]

\[ \text{Vid. Millum ad calcem Matt. Jones his Canon,} \]

\[ \text{&c. vol. 3, p. 63. Brza. in Matt. xxviii. ult. and Grot. in Matt. c. i. init. Wees-} \]

\[ \text{stein. ibid. F. Simon's critical history of the n. t. chap. 10. p. 84.} \]

\[ \text{Clerici his deter. p. 414. Jones his canon, &c. vol. 3. p. 62.} \]
In what language St. Matthew wrote his gospel.

An. Chrifti 43. 
Claud. 3. 

Book II. 
Ch. IV. 
Sect. I. 
Acts xi. ult.

Do not in what language St. Matthew wrote his gospel.

to the devout gentiles, as well as to the jews, dispersed among the nations. ¹

If the apostles of the circumcision left one authentic account, among the converted jews, in Judea, when they began to gather in the gentiles; this might be be thought a sufficient reason why they did not, for some time, write any more gospels. But the apostles, and other preachers, took care to spread the gospels, after they were committed to writing. And they are particularly said to have carried the gospel of St. Matthew into the eastern dispersions; where the jews, in general, retained the syro-chaldaic, or hebrew, language. ²

Irenæus, who was a more early father, than Eusebius, placeth the writing of St. Matthew's gospel, after the year of our Lord 60. And the antients, in general, affirm that it was written in hebrew. ³ Whereas; our present copy of this gospel doeth not appear to be a translation; any more than the gospels, written by St. Mark, or St. John. ⁴ Now, it seemeth unreasonable, on the one hand, to

¹ Against St. Matthew's writing gospel so early, it may be objected, that it contains many and plain intimations, of God's rejecting the unbelieving jews, and taking in the gentiles to his people. [See Matt. xii. 21. and xx. 1. — 16. and xxii. 33. — 46. and xxiv. 14. and xxiv. 14; 31.] and, that the jews distinction of meats was done away, under the gospel. [Matt. xv. 10, &c.] Now, from St. Matthew's speaking of such things, with so much plainness; some may imagine, that, before he wrote, he understood that gospel, which St. Paul preached, as clearly and fully, as the other three evangelists. And, therefore, could not write so early as the year 41.

Answer. Why might not St. Matthew record our savior's parables and discourses, concerning such things, in the year 41; as well as after the year 60? For (though he speaks of the reception of the gentiles) he nowhere intimates on what terms the gentiles were to be received; that is, whether, as proselytes of the gate, proselytes of righteousness, or as no proselytes to the jews religion at all. And, if we consider, that the devout gentiles had been converted, in great numbers, before St. Matthew wrote his gospel; and that, in preparing St. Peter's mind for the reception of them, God had favored him with the vision of the sheet, in which he was ordered to eat of things, which the law of Moses had prohibited as unclean; we need no longer to wonder at any of the expressions, made use of, in St. Matthew's gospel; supposing it was written in the year 41.

² Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 5. c. 10.
³ Papias apud Euseb. hist. eccl. l. 3. c. 39. Iren. l. 3. c. 1. & Euseb. H. E. l. 5. c. 8; 10. Some of the antients suppos'd that it was translacion into greek, by James, the brother of our Lord; or by St. John. [See Dr. Mill, upon the conclusion of St. Matthew's gospel. And Dr. Whitby's prestation discours to the four evangelists, p. 45, 46.] But Origen (who had opportunity to know the matter fully) seems not to have been satisfied with the tradition, that St. Matthew wrote in hebrew. [See Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel-history, part ii. vol. 3. p. 403, &c. and Wetstein on the beginning of the gospel according to St. Matthew.]
The beginning of St. Matthew's gospel authentic.

"to call in question a fact, attested, and confirmed, by the testi-
monies of such a number of credible persons, who lived nearest 
the time, when the gospels were written. And yet it is evident, 
on the other hand, that the greek copy of St. Matthew is very 
antient; and that it was looked upon, and quoted, as authentic, 
by the christians in the early ages." It might, possibly, clear up 
this difficulty, and reconcile these seemingly different accounts; if 
we were to suppose, that St. Matthew wrote and published his 
gospel in Judea, about eight or nine years after our Lord's ascension; 
[or about the year 41.] for the use of the hebrew christians, especial-
ly in Judea: and, that he published it, again, in other countries, 
after the year 60; for the benefit of other churches and christians. And 
then, it was as proper for him to publish it, first in syro-chaldaic, which, 
in the new testament, is commonly called the hebrew tongue; as it was 
afterwards to publish it in the greek language. For the hebrew jews 
did not commonly understand greek; though it was so generally un-
derstood, among the gentiles, and by the jews of the western disper-
sions. As St. Matthew had received the gift of tongues, he was 
sufficiently qualified to write in both languages.

I own, we have no testimonies for St. Matthew's publishing 
it twice; unless the testimonie of Irenaeus, and what is gathered from 
Eusebius, and the antient mss. be, in general, credited; and the 
frequent assertions of the antients, that it was written in hebrew, be 
compared with the quotations, or allusions, of even the apostolical 
fathers; which seem to have been taken from the greek; by their 
agreement in the words, as well as in the sense. Nor has our pre-
sent greek copy, of St. Matthew's gospel, any marks of it's being a 
translation. — As this solution will take in, and reconcile, all these 
particulars, it seemeth to deserve great regard. Without all dispute, 
the greek copy of St. Matthew is very antient; and was commonly 
looked upon, as authentic and canonical, by the christians, in the 
early ages. And, as the generality of christians understood greek; and so few, comparatively, understood the hebrew; it is no won-
der, that, after the destruction of Jerusalem and the jewis/h nation, 
the hebrew copy should grow into disuse, and by degrees vanish; 
though the greek copy continued, and was most carefully pre-
served.

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See Sixtus Senensis bibliothec. sanct. 1. 7. p. 582. Mr. Jones his Canon, 
&c. vol. 3. p. 64. Dr. Whitby's preface to the four gospels, p. 43; 48.
The beginning of St Matthew's gospel authentic.

That St. Matthew's gospel is authentic scripture, and ought to be received, as part of the canon of the new testament; hath been shown abundantly, by such invincible proofs, as the following:

— That it is mentioned in all the antient catalogues of the books of the new testament: that it was read, as sacred scripture, in the primitive churches; imbraced, and quoted, as scripture, by the fathers; and found in the antient manuscripts and translations of the new testament. But, for a larger account of these particular proofs, I refer the reader to the learned and elaborate performances, quoted in the margin.

CHAP. IV. SECT. II.

The beginning of St. Matthew's gospel authentic.

The genealogy reconciled with that given by St. Luke.

The method, which St. Matthew observed, in writing his gospel.

I believe it will not be expected of me to abridge this gospel; (as I intend to do with the epistles, when I come to the times, in which they were written) because there is already prefixed a short account of what is contained in all the four gospels, as an introduction to this history. But it may not be amiss to make a few general observations, in order to clear up some difficulties, concerning the beginning of this gospel, and the method in which it was written.

"It hath been doubted, whether the beginning of this gospel is authentic." Some of the antient Ebionites (who were a sect that arose, among the Jewish christians, in the primitive church) left out the first and second chapters of St. Matthew, as inconsistent with their parti-

* Dr. Whitby's prefatory discourse to the four gospels. Mr. Jones his Canon, &c. Mr. Richardson's Canon of the n. t. vindicated. But, above all, Dr. Lardner's Credibility of the gospel history, part 2d.

* Euseb. Ecclef. hist. i. 3. c. 27. Epiph. Hæres. 30. n. 13. The second chapter was owned by Hegesippus, an Hebrew christian, in the second century. [See Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c. part ii. vol. 1. p. 318.] And Clemens Alexandrinus affirmer the genuineness of the genealogies, in the first chapter of St. Matthew, and the third of St. Luke. [See Dr. Lardner, as above; vol. 2. p. 487. alias 489.]
The genealogy in St. Matthew’s gospel.

particular sentiments. For, they looked upon Jesus as a mere An.Christi
man: though some of them thought that he was produced by the holy
spirit; but others of them held that he was the son both of Joseph
and Mary. And, besides rejecting the beginning of St. Matthew; they, in
other places, made additions to this gospel, to favor their own pecu-
liar tenets. But the moderns, who have been for rejecting the intro-
duction to St. Matthew’s gospel, have been induced thereto, very
much, upon the account of the difficulties, which they apprehend,
concerning our Lord’s genealogy; and, especially, because it differ-
eth so much from that given us by St. Luke. But these difficulties
do not appear to me, to be either so many, or so great, as to justi-
fie such an alteration. For, as to the difficulties of the genealogy in
St. Matthew, considered by itself: (1.) Though it was a rare,
and unusual thing, for the Jews to mention women, in their genealo-
gies; yet the women, here mentioned, were very properly taken no-
tice of, as not being near a-kin to the persons who married them.
And, therefore, they were exceptions to the general rule, observed
by the heirs of the promised blessing. (2.) Jechonias, ver. 11. and
Jecbonias, ver. 12. must be different persons. For so they are
distinguished, in the old testament; being called Jeboiachim, and Je-
boiachin; who were father and son. And, hereby, the three four-
teens will be complete; as St. Matthew plainly designed they
should be. Whereas; if they are not distinct persons, one of the
three periods will contain no more than thirteen generations. (3.) It
appeareth, from the old testament, that St. Matthew hath left
out some persons, in the genealogy; and yet proceeded, as if he had
enumerated all; that is, he hath left out three persons; [namely, Aba-
ziab, Joasb, and Amaziab;] between Joram and Ozias; ver. 8.
But, as to this difficulty, it is easy to answer: that, as son, in the
Jewish language, doeth often signify a distant descendent; so they are
sometimes said to beget their distant posterity.

And, in many of the genealogies, recorded in the old testament,
we find such omissions designedly made. Thus Cain, and his de-
scendants, are left out; 1 Chron. 1. because they were a wicked race.

L 1 2
Simeon
The genealogy in St. Matthew's gospel.

An. Chrifi. 43. Simeon is left out, by Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 3, &c. because of his great cruelty at Sichem. Six are omitted, in the genealogy, given us by Ezra. [Ezra vii. 1, — 5. compared with 1 Chron. vi. 3, — 14.]

Book II. Ch. IV. So Rev. vii. when the Lord's people were sealed, the tribe of Dan was left out: which is thought to have been, because idolatry began in that tribe. And many other like instances may be produced. — As St. Matthew, therefore, was a Jew, and wrote his gospel, originally, for the use of the Jewish converts; he could not be blamed, for following a well known custom: especially, when it is added, that he kept in the right line; though he omitted particular persons. And, therefore, he sufficiently showed that Joseph, the supposed father of Jesus, whose genealogy he there giveth us, was of the house and lineage of David. Some have thought, that these three persons are omitted, as being the descendents of Joram, [or Jehoram.] who was himself an idolator, and who had married the daughter of idolatrous Ahab. And that, as they copied after his wickedness, God showed his detestation of them, unto the third and fourth generation; according to the threatenings expressed in the second commandment. But, whether that was St. Matthew's reason for omitting them; or whether he copied from a genealogy, taken from the public records, in which there were the same omissions; or omitted them, to reduce the number to three fourteens: — Which-ever, I say, of these ways it happened; it is not very material. It is evident, that the Jews then had public tables of the genealogies of their tribes and families. For Josephus hath given us his own genealogy, as taken from such public records. And, when Augustus Caesar made the general enrollment in Judea, it plainly appeared that Joseph and Mary were of the house and family of David.

The first of the periods, in the genealogy, given by St. Matthew, consisted of just fourteen persons; and, possibly, the last had just fourteen persons also. He, therefore, might leave out a few names, in the second period, as thinking that his account would be more uniform; and that it would be of advantage to his reader's memory, that all the three periods should be reduced to an equal number of generations. — But, which way soever it be accounted for, St. Matthew was not guilty of any deviation from the Jewish public records.

* Judg. xviii. throughout the chapter.
* 2 Kings viii. 16; 18.
* Luke ii. 1, — 5. compared with the next note.
reconciled with that of St. Luke.

And, therefore, the Jews of that age could have nothing to object against his method. And other persons may be abundantly assured, both from St. Matthew's express assertion, ver. 1. and many other hints, dispersed up and down the new testament, that our Lord sprang from the family of David. 1

(2.) "As to the reconciling the genealogy in St. Matthew, with Acts xi. that given us by St. Luke." Julius Africanus hath long since attempted this, by asserting that St. Matthew hath given us Christ's genealogy, according to his natural descent: but St. Luke hath followed the legal account; by which a man was obliged to marry the widow of his brother, or near relation; and raise up seed to his deceased brother, or kinsman. For such were, by the law, accounted the children of the deceased; though the natural descendents of his brother, or near relation. This solution he pretendeth to have received, as a tradition from the kinsmen of our Lord. There seems to me to be something very confused in that chapter of Eusebius his ecclesiastical history, in which this story is related. And Valesius has taken notice of more mistakes than one, in that very chapter. Nay; Africanus himself, who proposeth this solution, doeth afterwards, speak dubiously of it; and recommends it, not from any sufficient testimony that he had met with, but as in itself the plainest and best solution. 2

I acknowledge this might possibly, be the case. But it doeth not appear to me to carry so much clearness, and evidence, along with it, as the following solution; namely, that St. Matthew hath given us the genealogy of Joseph, and St. Luke that of the virgin Mary. As to the first of these, it will be generally allowed. And, therefore, it is the second, which we are principally concerned to defend. And which we shall attempt to do, by the following observations. (1.) I apprehend that the virgin Mary is, in the Jewish Talmud, called the daughter of Heli. 1 For several things are there said of Mary, the daughter of Heli; which plainly show, whom the Jews designed, and how great malice and rancor they continued to entertain against the mother of Jesus. (2.) As St. Matthew wrote his gospel, originally, for the sake of the converted Jews; it was

1 Acts ii. 30. and xiii. 22, 23. Rom. i. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 8. Rev. v. 5. and xxii. 16.

2 Euseb. eccles. hist. l. i. c. 7. and Dr. Lardner's credibility, part ii. vol. 3. p. 167, &c.

1 Hierof. Chagigah, fol. 77. 4. Dr. Lightfoot's works, vol. ii. p. 399, 400.
The two genealogies reconciled.

An. Chr. was very proper for him to give the genealogy by the father's side.

Claud. 3. For it was a maxim, with the Jews, that the family of the mother is not called a family. But St. Luke, (though he so far complied with the Jewish custom, as to omit the name of Mary; and proceeded from Joseph, the supposed father of Jesus, to Heli, whose son, or descendant, our Lord really was; — yet) as he was giving the genealogy of an extraordinary person, who had no earthly father; — as he was a Gentile himself; — and wrote primarily, and more especially, for the use of the Gentiles; — he varied from the common Jewish custom, and gave the genealogy by the mother's side; and from Christ's real, or natural, progenitors. And the following observations appear, to me, very much to confirm this. For, it is said, (3.) That, if the Jews were discourseing, principally, about the ancestors of any person; they used to begin with them, and to descend to the person himself; but, if the person, whose genealogy they recited, was the principal subject of their discourse; they began with him, and went back to his progenitors. Accordingly; St. Matthew, who wrote for the use of the Jews, more immediately, began with Abraham and David, two of the principal persons among the ancestors of the Messiah; to whom, particularly, God had promised that, from them, the Messiah should descend; and for whom the whole Jewish nation had the highest reverence. It must, therefore, have tended very much to remove the prejudices of the Jews, and take away their contempt of Jesus of Nazareth, to be informed, that he sprang from the greatest men, and most renowned kings; the most holy and eminent patriarchs, and the most distinguished of their pious ancestors: from whom, the prophets, in general, had prophesied that Christ was to descend. In the account of the Jews, it added dignity and lustre to Jesus, that he was descended from Abraham and David. Whereas; St. Luke, being a Gentile, and writing for the use of the Gentile Christians, began with Jesus himself; who was (in their account) the principal person in the whole series. And he carried up his genealogy (not only to David and Abraham, the great ancestors of the Jews; but) to Adam, the great and common father of all mankind. (4.) The place and order, in which the two Evangelists have recited the genealogies, is another

* The Lyceans reckoned their genealogy from their mother's family. But that was peculiar to them. [Herodot. edit. Gale, p. 72.]
The method of St. Matthew's gospel.

another argument, which appeareth to me of very considerable mo-
ment. St. Matthew, giving the Jews a genealogy of Christ,
by the father's side, according to the usual custom of their nation,
very judiciously and properly placeth it before the account of his
conception and birth. Whereas; St. Luke doeth not place his ge-
nealogy before Christ's birth; but defers it, 'till he comes to the Acts xi.
thirtieth year of his age. And then, not onely carrieth it up to the ult.
first, and common, parents of all mankind; but considereth him as
borne of the virgin Mary; or, as the seed of the woman, who was
to break the serpent's head. And, accordingly, he hath placed the
genealogy, immediately before our Lord's vanquishing Satan, the old
serpent, who attacked him, with a three-fold temptation, in the so-
liary wilderness. From whence, our Lord returned into Galilee;
and immediately began his ministerial, or prophetic, work. This
order and connection points out St. Luke's design; as would appear
to greater advantage, if we had not mangled the new testament, and
obscured the connection, by an injudicious divideing it into chapters:
and verses.

As to the genealogies, I have nothing farther to add; save one-
ly, that I look upon Cainan, mentioned Luke iii. 36. to be an in-
terpolation; and that it was not in the genuine, original, copy of
St. Luke.

All the four evangelists wrote the life of our Lord, as he was-
the great prophet and savior of the world. And, therefore, they have,
with great justnesse, passed over the private and retired part of his
life; and hastened to the public and prophetic part of it; which
commenced, when he was thirty years of age: — the time, at
which the Jewish high-priest used to enter upon his office. For
our Lord, upon his incarnation, had emptied himself; and did
not receive the holy Spirit, to qualifie him for preaching, and work-
ing miracles, 'till after he was baptized, by John, his great harbin-
ger, or fore-runer.

The method, in which St. Matthew proposed to write his
gospel, seemeth to have been, not so much to follow the order of
time, as the other evangelists have done; but (after the introduction)
first to give a summary account of the doctrine, which Christ preach-
ed; and then, of the miraculous evidence, which attended it; toge-
ther with some of the most material of his occasional discourses with
the pharisees, sadducees, and his own disciples. It is also apparent,
that he (as well as St. Mark and St. Luke) designed to give a
more particular account of the most public parts of our Lord's minis-
try.
The Jewish and Roman History continued.

Sect. I.

The accession of Herod Agrippa raised envy in Herodias. Upon which, she incited Herod Antipas to go to Rome, to petition for a new title, and other favors. Herod Agrippa wrote letters; and accused him of designing a revolt from the Roman State. Upon which, he and Herodias were banished. Acts xi. 1.

Acts xi. 1. It will now be proper to return to the Jewish and Roman History. And, for the more regularly carrying it on, we will begin, where we left off, in the preceding book.

After Herod Agrippa was delivered out of prison, and Caligula had made him king over the tetrarchy, which had belonged to Philip, his father's brother; he set out for his new dominions, and went by the way of Alexandria. The treatment, which he (and the Jews in general) met with there, hath been already related. When he came into his new kingdom, to settle the affairs of it, all were surprized at the sudden
Herod Agrippa's accession incenses Herodias.

sudden change; that he, who had formerly fled from his creditors, and had since been in prison, and in danger of his life, should return to take possession of a kingdom; and be so highly respected by Cæsar, the Roman emperor. But none were more incensed at it, than his own sister, Herodias; who had left her first husband, Philip; and married his brother, Herod Antipas. She had, indeed, assailed her brother, in his former poverty. But, being a woman of great envy and ambition, when she saw him carried through the crowd, with a crown upon his head, and the other usual ensigns of royalty, she could not bear it, with any patience; that he, who had lived upon the bounty of his friends, and run away from his creditors, as unable to pay his debts, should return to such dignity, as to rise above her husband, and eclipse her glory. Full of envy, therefore, and indignation, she earnestly excited her husband to go to Rome, to petition the emperor for like honor and dignity; and for some addition to his dominions; and told him, that he ought to spare neither labor nor cost, 'till he was advanced, so as to preserve that superiority to Herod Agrippa, which became him, and which, as she intimated, was properly his due. Herod was an indolent man, and did not care for the fatigue of applications to the court of Rome. But the never ceased importuning him, 'till she had prevailed with him, even contrary to his own inclinations, to gratify her ambition, by such an attempt. Away, therefore, he went; and Herodias along with him; in a pompous, and magnificent, manner. For they had spared no cost, in their preparation for that extraordinary journey. Herod Agrippa soon had notice of their design, and of their great preparations. He, therefore, to prevent their doing him any disservice, as soon as ever he understood that they were set out, dispatched Fortunatus, one of his freed-men, with presents to the emperor, and letters against Herod: though he was both his brother in law, and his uncle. Withall, ordering Fortunatus, if he had opportunity, to acquaint Cæsar with the same things, by word of mouth. Fortunatus had so good a voyage, that he arrived in Italy, almost as soon as Herod and Herodias. For, when they came to Baia, where Caligula then was; while Herod had the first audience, and was speaking to the emperor, concerning the affair which he was come about, Fortunatus delivered the letters from his master. Caligula happened immediately to read the letters; wherein

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*a Joseph, Antiq. Jud. 1. 18. c. 6. § ult.
*b Joseph, de Bell, Jud. 1. 2.
c. 9. § ult. & Antiq. 1. 18. c. 7.
Herod Antipas and Herodias banished.

Herod Antipas was accused of formerly conspiring, with Sejanus, against the emperor Tiberius; and lately with Artabanus, king of Parthia, against the present emperor. As a proof of which, it was alleged, that he had, in his magazine, arms sufficient for seventy-thousand men. The accusation seemeth to have been entirely groundless; and designed, by Herod Agrippa, purely to prevent their doing him any mischief. But the very mention of such a magazine alarmed the emperor; who asked him, directly, "Whether he had such a quantity of arms?" And, when he confessed he had, (because the thing was so plain and evident, that he could not deny it) the emperor took it for granted, that the rest of the accusation was true. Upon which, he took the tetrarchy of Galilee and Perea from him, and added it to the kingdom of Herod Agrippa; who had been his old friend; and had now (as he believed) discovered to him the conspiracy and designed revolt of Herod Antipas. He, also, besides these new dominions, made him a present of a sum of money. The other Herod he condemned to perpetual banishment, at Lyons, in Gaul. But, when he understood that Herodias was sister to Herod Agrippa, he gave her the money which belonged to her; and, supposing that she would be unwilling to go, with her husband, into banishment, he proposed it to her, to return and live under the protection of her brother. She, knowing that she had made that journey out of envy to her brother, and had been the occasion of her husband's fall, refused to leave him in his adversity; and bravely resolved, that, as she had partaken with him in his prosperity, she would bear her share with him in his calamity. Caligula, taking it ill, that she should, with such stoutness and pride, refuse the favor, banished her also, along with her husband; and (to her still greater mortification) he took away her substance, and gave it to her brother; whose protection she had refused, and who had already her husband's dominions. Thus ended the dignity of Herod Antipas, who had lived in adultery and incest; who had, so cruelly, and upon such a trifling occasion, murdered the pious and excellent John the baptist; and treated our blessed Lord, also, with derision, when sent to him by Pontius Pilate. Josephus concludes his account of this affair, in the following manner: "This punishment did God inflict upon Herodias, for envying her brother; and on Herod, for following the vane counsels of a woman." To which I would onely add, that, from Josephus his account, we may be satisfied the evangelists were not mistaken, in representing Herodias, as the first mover in the barbarous usage, which John the baptist
The advancement of Herod Agrippa.

After Herod Agrippa had settled his new kingdom, he hastened back to Rome. Whilest he was there, Petronius his letters were delivered to the emperor; signifying the state of things in Judea, and the impropriety of setting up the image, in the temple, at that time. Caius was much displeased with his excuses, and delays; though he pretended to be satisfied with his reasons: ordering him, with all, to proceed, in the execution of his commands, as soon as ever the harvest was over.

Though Agrippa was acquainted with many of the afflictions of the Jews at Alexandria yet he appeareth to have known nothing, hitherto, of the emperor's orders, to erect his image, in the temple, of Jerusalem. When, therefore, he went, one day, to pay his respects to Caius, and was received with a stern countenance, and upbraided with the obstinacy of his countrymen, the Jews; he fainted away, and was carried home half-dead. In which dejected condition he continued, 'till the next day. When he came to himself, he dared not to venture into Caesar's presence again; but wrote to him, in an humble, suppliant, manner; bewailing himself, and the unhappy state of the Jews; and pleading for a revoking of the order concerning the temple.* This delayed the affair, for some time. And Caius, who seemed at first to relent a little, upon this intercession, answered: That, "seeing the Jews would not suffer his "image to be set up, in Jerusalem; he would be satisfied, if they "would permit such, as pleased, to set it up, in the other towns

* Dr. Lardner's Credibility, &c. part i. p. 16. 2d edition, p. 27. 3d edition.
* Philo. de Legat. ad Caium, p. 1028, &c. Josephus differeth here again, in several particulars, from Philo. But I have intimated, in a note above, why I prefer the account of the latter.
* Philo de legat. &c. p. 1038.
Herod Agrippa intercedes for the Jews.

“of Judea: and that such, as opposed it, should either be punished upon the spot; or sent to him, to suffer according to justice.”

This greatly tended to fill Judea with confusion; as the Jews had so many enemies ready to molest them; and they, on the other hand, were so zealous and tenacious. And, to create such confusion, seemeth very likely to have been the cruel project of the emperor, in making this proposal. As it happened, things continued pretty quiet. And, as Petronius was their friend, few, or none, of their neighbors, took that occasion to increase their miseries. But it was not long, before Caius himself repented, even of that small favor; and resolved to have an image, made in Italy, which he would carry along with him, when he went to Alexandria, and set up, suddenly and unexpectedly, in the most holy place, in the temple, at Jerusalem. For he had an unspeakable desire to visit the city Alexandria; where he intended to make a long stay, and to have his deity publicly established there. After which, he thought, other lesser cities would readily come into it; in imitation of a city of such magnitude and renown. Both Josephus, and Philo, intimate what danger Petronius ran, in delaying so long the execution of Caligula’s order; and, that nothing, but the death of that emperor, could, in all appearance, have preserved his life. But, by a kind providence, Caligula’s bloody purpose, upon the life of that benevolent governor, was happily prevented; by his own folly, and cruelty’s bringing on himself the death, which he so well deserved.

Flaccus Avilius, the president, apprehended. 269

CHAP. V. SECT. III.

Flaccus Avilius, the president of Egypt, was apprehended, and banished; and afterwards, put to death. Helico and Apelles, the grand enemies of the jews. But they, also, in the end, were put to death.

We left the Alexandrian jews in great calamity, by reason of An. Chrifii the enmity of Flaccus Avilius, the roman president there; who strove to curry favor with Caius, by obliging the Egyptians of Alexandria, and oppressing the jews. But his wicked attempt, to secure himself, proved in vane. I do not know, whether Herod Agrippa might not have represented, to the emperor, the treatment, which he, and the jews in general, met with, there; and, in part, influence the emperor to punish that unjust president. But Flaccus his former behavior to Caligula, and that emperor's resentment, were sufficient. Whatever occasioned it, Caligula sent Baffus, the centurion, with his hundred soldiers, to Alexandria, to apprehend him; who stole privately into the city, by night, for fear of making any disturbance. And, meeting with a soldier in the dark, he inquired for the chief captain; that he might aid him with his troops, if there should be any resistance. It happened, that Stephanio, one of Tiberius his freed-men, had made an entertainment; to which he had invited Flaccus, and the chief-captain. And they were then at supper, at Stephanio's house. When Baffus knew this, he privately befet the house; and sent in one of the soldiers, dressed like a servant, to see what company was there. Who, pressing in, among the servants; and informing the centurion that there were but few; he burst in suddenly, with his soldiers, and apprehended Flaccus: who was hurried away to Rome, in the beginning of winter; where, after some time, he was tried for male-administration. And there he was bitterly accused, by some of those Egyptians, whom he had endeavored, by such unjust methods, to gratifie. They had flattered him, during his being possessed of power; but now (being men of the most corrupt morals) they not only forsook him, in his adversity, but became his greatest enemies. And such, indeed, is the requital, which unjust gover-

*Philo in Flac. p. 980, &c;
The banishment of Flaccus Avilius.

governors must expect, from their base and mercenary flatterers, when they have it not in their power to gratifie them any longer. Flaccus, upon his trial, was found guilty; and condemned to perpetual banishment, in the island Andros. He was apprehended at the time of the feast of tabernacles. But the Jews of Alexandria could not observe the feast, that year, by reason of their great afflictions. However, this apprehending of their grand enemy gave them some hopes of relief. When Flaccus was conducted to the place of banishment, he burst out into tears, upon the first sight of land; bitterly lamenting his unhappy condition. For he could not help comparing his present, with his past, state of life; which he had spent in pleasant countries, and in great prosperity and magnificence. But now, he was fallen from all his glory, and left a prey to his own guilty mind, and melancholy thoughts: not without presages, that his misery would not end there. For guilt is infinitely suspicious; and he was not ignorant of the temper of the cruel and incensed emperor. Nor did his bodeings prove groundless. For Caius, having inquired of a certain person, whom he had recalled from a long banishment, how he had spent his time there; he answered, in a flattering manner, "That he had prayed to the gods, for that which had come to passe; namely, "that Tiberius might die, and Caius succeed him." This answer the emperor often turned over in his thoughts. And one night, in particular, when he could not sleep, he began to ruminate upon the case of the banished; and to think what an happy retirement they must needs enjoy. Which, upon considering it in this view, appeared to him, rather a blessing, than a punishment; and a state of life that ought to be envied, rather than pitied. And, farther, imagining, from the answer, which he had received from that exile, that all, whom he had banished, prayed for his death; he, the next day, gave orders, that executioners should be sent to the islands, round about, and put the banished persons to death: especially such as were the most noble, and persons of the greatest account. Nay; to make sure work of it, he gave a list of their names; and particularly took care to mention his old enemy, Flaccus Avilius. When the executioners arrived at Andros, he suspected their errand, as soon as ever he saw them. And, miserable as he accounted his banishment, before they came; he attempted to fly from them, to save his life. But he in vain endeavored to fly. For they soon overtook him; and, with many wounds, put him

b In this part of the history, I have endeavored to reconcile Suetonius, invit.Caligul. c. 28. and Philo, in Flac. p 991.
He is put to death. The Jews had now reason to hope for some favors. But, after he was gone, they found they had other malicious enemies. Particularly Helico, an Egyptian; who had been a servant to Tiberius, and was highly in favor with Caligula. He had, for some time, incensed the emperor, against the Jews; by throwing out frequent scoffs, and great reproaches, upon the whole nation. Him the Alexandrian ambassadors, with large presents, and larger promises, excited to proceed against the Jews, with greater virulence. And Apelles, the Acalonite, who was also one of Caligula's favorites, joined with Helico, to inflame their master, against the poor, afflicted, Jews. It was some time, before the ambassadors of the Jews could find out, who were their enemies. And, when they had found them out, and would have made their peace with them; the national antipathy was so great, and the prospect of advancing themselves so tempting, that they could work no great good upon them, nor prevail with them to desist from their malicious reproaches and insinuations. They did, indeed, afterwards receive a reward, according to their deserts. For Apelles was apprehended, by Caligula; laid in chains; and, several times, tortured upon the wheel; which was a miserable and lingering death. And Helico was slain, by Claudius, the emperor; who succeeded Caius. But, in the mean time, they occasioned many fears, and great troubles, to the Jews.

CHAP. V. SECT. IV.
The character and death of Caius Caligula, the Roman emperor.

Before we speak of the farther advancement of Herod Agrippa, we must say something of the character and death of Caius Caligula; and of the accession of Claudius Caesar, the succeeding emperor. Caius Caligula was the son of Germanicus; who for his valor, modesty, and other excellent virtues, had been the darling of the Roman people. And they were early prejudiced in favor of his son.
The character of Caligula.

By reason of their great and uncommon affection for the
father. Caius his behavior in his youth, and dureing his private
life, had farther ingratiaed him with the people. Though they,
who were more intimately acquainted with him, could not but observe
some inclinations in him, both to cruelty and debauchery. For he
took delight in beholding the execution of criminals; and frequently
went in disguise; and spent the night in the stews, or in adulterous
intrigues. And there was some reason to suspect that he was con-
cerned in the murder of Tiberius, his grandfather; who had adopted
him, and left him co-heir, with the younger Tiberius, of the roman
empire. However; when he came to the empire, he behaved, for
some time, with such humanity, moderation, and beneficence, that
he gained univerfal esteem. So that one hundred and sixty thousand
victims are said to have been offered up, within the first three months
of his reign, to congratulate his accession. And the most unusual
rejoiceings ran through the whole roman empire. In the eighth month,
a grievous sickness feized him. And then he was as univerfally la-
mented. So that the people were not onely in tears, and made
prayers and vows for his recovery; but some vowed that they would
willingly devote themselves to death, in order to save the emperor's
life.

Thus far he behaved like a prince. The following particulars
show him to have been a monster. It was not long, before he recov-
ered from his sickness. And then he began to throw off the mask;
compelling some, who had devoted themselves to die for his recove-
ry, to perform their vow; out of a pretended concern that they should
not be perjured. Soon after, he forced Silanus, his father in law, a
man of singular virtue, to lay violent hands upon himself, and cut
his own throat with a razor; because he had dealt freely and faithfully
with him, and would be often giving him good advice. Caius was
not without suspicion of having poisoned his grandmother, Antonia.
And as to the younger Tiberius, whom the emperor Tiberius had left
his co-partner in the empire; and whom he himself had adopted, with
a seem-

a Dr. Prideaux [in his connection of the history of the o. and n. t. part ii. book 8.
vol. 2. p. 588. 8vo, edit. 1718.] has asserted "that the posterity of Octavianus never
enjoyed the empire." Whereas; Agrippina, the daughter of Julia, Augustus his daugh-
ter, was the mother of Caligula, the emperor; and of Agrippina, the mother of the
emperor Nero. So that Caligula was the great grandson of Augustus; and Nero, his
great, great grandson. [See Walter Moyle's works, vol. 2. p. 76.]

b Sueton. in Calig. c. 11. c Sueton. in Tiber. c. 73. & in Calig. c. 12.
Dion. 1. 58. ad finem.

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b Sueton. in Calig. c. 11. c Sueton. in Tiber. c. 73. & in Calig. c. 12.
Dion. 1. 58. ad finem.
The cruel temper of Caius Caligula.

a seeming tenderness and affection, and styled the prince of the youth:— An. Chr. 41.

Unto him, I say, he sent orders, by a tribune, that he should also put himself to death. A dreadful message, to come, suddenly and unexpectedly, to so young, and so great, a prince! He, poor, unhappy, creature! had never seen an execution. And, therefore, he begged earnestly of the officers, who stood by, that they would be so kind as to give him the fatal stroke. But Caius pretended, that so great a prince ought not to die by any inferior hand. When they refused, he offered his neck to any body, that he met with; begging it of them, as a favor, that they would put him to death. But no body dared to assist him; any farther, than that some, who stood by, directed him, where he might wound himself, so as would most quickly dispatch him. After that, Caius put Macro to death; a man, who was, indeed, wicked enough, and deserved to die for his crimes. But he had been Caius his friend, in Tiberius his time; had assisted him, in obtaining the empire; and ever since; and deserved not death for his fidelity. Though that was the very reason, why his master condemned him to death. And, along with Macro, Caius flew Emnia, the wife of Macro; with whom he had had an adulterous commerce.

It would be endless, as well as disagreeable, to mention his adultery and sodomy; his incest with his own sisters; and, afterwards, prostituting them to others; and all his abominable and amazing debaucheries. But what were the distinguishing parts of his character, were, his cruelty, and wild extravagance.

The following particulars will sufficiently manifest his uncommon cruelty. In the public shows, he would not only set one man to fight with another; but multitudes to slaughter multitudes. When he had not criminals enow, to cast to the wild beasts, he would order some of the spectators to be thrown to them; causing their tongues first to be cut out, that they might not be able to speak, or complain. He made some of the Roman senators to run by the side of his chariot, for some miles together, in their robes; others of them to wait upon him, at the table, in the habits of servants; and others of them, again, he would privately put to death; and yet afterwards send for them, as if they had been living; and, in a few days, give out that they died a natural death. He would, sometimes, shut up the public granaries; that the people might have no bread, for several days together. To save the charge of keeping the wild beasts, he put to death several male-

\[<\text{Philo, ut supra; p. 996.}>\]

\[<\text{Dion, I. 58, ad finem. Sueton. in Caium, p. 997. E. & p. 1000. D. & Sueton. in Calig. c. 12.}>\]
The cruelty of Caius Caligula.

An. Chr. 43.

Caius Caligula was cruel to malefactors, and fed them with their bodies. He would cause old men, and infirm house-keepers, to be thrown to the wild beasts; that he might get rid of such useless, and unprofitable, persons. Some he caused to be put to death, because they were extremely handsome; and others, because they were some way deformed. He used, frequently, in the midst of his feasts and entertainments, to have several persons examined by torture, before his face; or beheaded, for his diversion, by a dexterous executioner. He would compel parents to be present, when their children were put to death. And, when one excused himself, by reason of sickness; he sent a horse-litter to fetch him, to see his son executed. Another, after he had beheld such a dismal spectacle, he invited to a banquet; and with all imaginable affability, excited him to be cheerful and merry. And another lost his own life, because he could not endure to see his son put to death. He gave orders, that such as were to be slain, should be put to death by degrees; and (as his phrase was) "so as that the person might feel himself die." He lamented that the times, in which he lived, had not been rendered famous, by some public calamities; such as great famine, pestilence, conflagration, or the sudden destruction of some of his armies. Though, I think, it was a too public calamity, that a person of such a disposition should be found among mankind, and advanced to so extensive a dominion. But, what completes his character for cruelty, was, that famous expression of his; "when he wished that the people of Rome had but one neck," that he might cut it off at once. After his death, there were found two little books; the one of which he called a sword, and the other a dagger. In which, he had wrote down the names of such persons, as he designed to put to death. And there was also found a large chest, full of various kinds of poison; which being, by Claudius his order, thrown into the sea, it is said to have affected the waters so, that the fish were killed, and thrown upon the shore, by the tide.

Let us now relate some few of his wild extravagancies; which will be a farther opening to his character. When Tiberius was at a loss, whom to make his successor, Thrasyllus, the mathematician, was once heard to say; "Caius could no more be emperor, than he could ride over the gulf of Baiae, on horse-back." From that saying, it is thought, that he resolved upon the following ridiculous work; namely, to build a bridge, of the length of above three miles, over that arm of the sea; which he did, by ships chained together, and:

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\[a\] Sueton. in vita Calig. c. 49. ad finem.
His wild extravagances.

and covered with earth. And over that, he passed, in a magnificent manner; one day on horse-back, and another day in a chariot. After which, he spent the second day, and the following night, in feasts and entertainments, upon that bridge. But he could not conclude, without giving some specimen of his cruel temper. For, after all his entertaining them with pomp and plenty, he caused a great number of the people, there present, to be thrown off that bridge, into the sea. And, when they attempted to climb up again, in order to save their lives, he appointed men to beat them back, till they perished in the waters. He contrived the most sumptuous baths, and the most expensive diet. He would dissolve the richest pearls in vinegar, and drink them down at one draught. He built several ships of cedar, adorned in the most extravagant manner; and so large, as to contain bathing rooms, porticoes to walk in, and rooms of state. And, upon their decks, were planted variety of vines, and other fruit-trees. Considering all these things, it is no wonder that he soon consumed that vast treasure, which Tiberius had hoarded up; as well as his own large yearly revenues. But, when he came to want supports for his luxury and extravagance, it increased his cruelty; and many lost their estates, and lives too, to furnish him with money, for his farther expences. Another instance of his folly and extravagance, was his usage of a favorite horse; which he dressed up in purple, and decked with precious stones; building him a marble stable, with an ivory manger; and allowing him an house, and furniture; that they, who should be invited, in the horse's name, might be entertained more splendidly. It is reported, that he actually made that horse one of his priests; and that he fully purposed to exalt him to the consulardignity. And, though the horse was incapable of acting the part of a wise governor; yet he would have been less noxious to mankind, than the emperor, his master.

But his greatest, and wildest, extravagance was his pretending to be a god; and claiming divine worship. This led him into the most ridiculous, and shocking, behavior. For he would sometimes fit among the statues of the gods, that he might be adored, as one of them. But that did not content him. He, therefore, built a temple for himself; and set up an image of gold, made very like him; which was cloathed every day, with the same sort of habit, which he himself wore. There the priests (who were, generally, chosen from among some of the greatest of the romans) sacrificed, to the new deity.

1 Dion, l. 59. p. 662. alias, 659.
2 Sueton. in Calig. c. 55.
The wild extravagances of Caius Caligula.

An. Chr. 41. Calig. 4.

Book II. Ch. V. Sect. IV. Acts xii.

2 The wild extravagances of Caius Caligula.

Caligula, the choicest and most beautiful birds; as peacocks, pheasants, and the like. Sometimes, he would whisper the image of Jupiter in the ear, and threaten to send him back to Greece. At other times, he would dress himself up, in the peculiar mantle, with wings and buskins, and carry a caduceus in his hand. And then he was Mercury. When he was dressed with a radiant crown upon his head, holding out the graces in his right-hand, and a bow and arrows in his left; then he was Apollo. So, likewise, he would personate Bacchus, or Neptune, Mars, or Jupiter, Juno, Venus, or Diana; either by his habit, or behavior; or by the homage, which he caused his flatterers, and mercenary dependents, to pay him. Yet this mighty deity (like most cruel men) was cowardly, and effeminate. For he never engaged, but once, in war, or military affairs. And then he behaved with his usual folly, when there was no danger. But, when any danger was apprehended, he was ready to run away with the first. He would shut his eyes, and cover his head, at the least thunder and lightening. But if the thunder and lightening were greater, he would run, and hide himself, under the bed. From the account, given by Suetonius, Dion, and others, it is plain that Josephus and Philo (though greatly exasperated against him) have not wronged him, in the character, which they have given of him; and, particularly, in the account, which they have given, of his madly aspiring to divinity. No wonder that the nation of the Jews were odious to so vane, and wicked, a prince; as their laws stood so directly in his way. Nay; it is a wonder that an emperor, of such pernicious qualities, should be suffered to remain so long upon the earth; rather than that he lost his life so soon, and in such a manner as he did.

The nobility and gentry of Rome, as well as the inferior people, felt the daily effects of his arbitrary and cruel government. Indeed, they could not call either their possessions, or their lives, their own. It was fault enough to have any thing to lose. And informers were everywhere encouraged, that he might increase his revenues. Slaves were heard against their masters, and advanced above them. And his cruel, unjust, government had excited the odium of all, except a few of his flatterers, and vile dependents; so that several plotted his death; some to be revenged for past injuries; and others, to prevent the miseries which they feared. Two conspiracies had been discovered,

Plots against the life of C. Caligula.

discovered, and frustrated. But a third was formed, which proved
effectual. Among the persons, who were incensed against him, Cai-
thus Charea was the chief. He was a tribune of the praetorian cohort,
or a captain of the life-guards. And, being of a pretty advanced age,
Caius would often insult him, as cowardly, and effeminate. And, 
particularly, when he came for the watch-word, he would frequently 
give him Cupid, Venus, or Priapus, by way of reproach. And, 
with the like view, when he offered to kiss his hand, Caius would 
form it into some obscene shape, and so hold it out to him. Which 
generally excited the laughter of the other tribunes; and made Charea 
ridiculous, both in the camp and in the city. But the greatest of mankind should beware of insulting a brave man, though in a much inferior station. It was the custom for the Roman emperors to oblige the people, when they petitioned for any public favor, during the time of their sports and entertainments, in the circus. But, not long before this, when they petitioned, as usual; Caius had used them ill. For, when they desired that he would ease them of some of their taxes; he, instead of granting their requests, put several of the petitioners to death. Which, though it silenced the multitude, for that time; yet it also greatly disoblige[d] them. And no time could be more proper to attempt his life, than when he had lost the favor of the people. Besides the frequent insulting and reproaching him, for want of valor, Caius would set Charea to torture persons, with severity; whom he himself would afterwards pity and lament, as if they had been so used through Charea's cruelty. The danger of the public, together with his own private resentments, inflamed the tribune; and made him long for an opportunity to destroy the grand enemy of mankind. But fear of discovery made him keep his thoughts, for some time, to himself: though, at last, he ventured to revele the brave, but dreadful, purpose of his mind. When he had once discovered his intentions, he was forced to haften the matter, lest some of his associates should betray him. He had often an inclination to have thrown him down from the battlements, as he stood upon the capitol, to scatter money among the people; or to have slain him, at the table, in the midst of his feasts. But his friends dissuaded him; for fear he should misse of his purpose, and in vane perish in so great an attempt. It was, therefore, resolved to put it off; until the games were celebrated; which were instituted in honor of Augustus. But, for the three

The plot of Cassius against Caligula.

three first days, the conspirators could not find any opportunity. On the fourth, and last day, there was a vast concourse of people, struggling for seats, in the theatre, to behold the public games and diversions. For the men and women, senators, knights, and people, slaves and freemen, fate all promiscuously mixed together. And Caius was highly pleased to see the confusion and hurry. He began the solemnity of the day, himself, with offering a sacrifice to Augustus Caesar; in honor of whom the games were celebrated. And, when some of the blood of the victim lighted upon Asprenas, one of the conspirators, it diverted the emperor. But it proved a bad omen to Asprenas; who was actually slain, soon after the emperor himself. After the sacrifice was finished, Caius went to the theatre, and fate down, with several of the great men of Rome round about him. And Carrea, as being one of the tribunes, fate not far from him. There happened several remarkable things; as if they had been designed fore-runners of his destruction. It is said, that the captain of a band of robbers was represented, upon the stage, as crucified, or brought to public justice: that a pantomime introduced the tragedy of Cinyras; in which Cinyras himself, and his daughter Myrrha, were slain: and, that it was the very day, on which Philip, king of Macedonia, was slain, by his friend, Paulanias, as he went into the theatre.

About one e'clock, Caesar seemed undetermined, whether he should continue at the theatre, or go to the bath; and, after that, to dinner. For he had not yet thrown off his last night's debauch. But Asprenas persuaded him to go to the baths; then to dinner; and afterwards return to the shows and diversions again. Minucianus, another of the conspirators, seeing Carrea go out, rose up, in order to incourage him not to defer the execution of the plot any longer. But, as he fate within reach, Caius pulled him gently by the skirt; and said, in a familiar way, "Where is this good man a going?" So Minucianus fate down again. But it was not long, before he arose a second time. And then, Caius did not hinder him; as not knowing what occasion he might have to go out. Carrea had, by this time, got all things ready. But, the emperor not coming out, so soon as he expected, he was very impatient; and was going back to the theatre, to stab Caius, before the whole multitude. Though he could not expect any other, than to perish immediately. But, as he was going back, he understood, by the sudden noise and tumult, that Caesar was up, and returning to his palace.

* Sueton. in Calig. c. 57.  
The death of Caius Caligula.

Then the conspirators were the most busy, of any body, to call out, and make way for the emperor; being very officious to keep off the people, 'till they had got all round him. When he came to the entrance of the palace, he left the public way, and went through a private passage, to see some boys; which had been sent for, out of Asia, to sing and dance upon the stage. There Cœrea came up to him, for the watch-word; which he gave him, after his usual, insulting, manner. The tribune returned the insult; by drawing his sword, and striking him a dreadful blow upon his neck, with these words, "Hoc age. Mind this." But the sword happened to stop upon his collar-bone. Upon which, Cornelius Sabinus gave him a second wound, as he was down upon his knees. Caius made no reply; but struggled to get away. Then the rest of the conspirators cried out, to animate one another; and falling in, upon him, all at once, they dispatched him, by giving him above thirty wounds. Thus ended the life of Caius Caesar Caligula, on the twenty-fourth day of January, in the thirtieth year of his age; after he had reigned almost four years.—When his death came to be reported abroad, it caused a great and general consternation. And the German guards flew about, in a terrible manner; slaying some of the conspirators; and others, who were wholly uncerned in the affair. Though the tumult was soon appeased, considering the greatness and suddenness of the attempt.

Joseph, de Bell. l. 2. c. 11. § 1. Suet. in vit. Calig. c. 58, 59, Dion, l. 59. ad fin.
Claudius made emperor.

C H A P. V. S E C T. V.

The accession of Claudius Cæsar, to the roman empire.

Herod Agrippa was of great service to him, in attaining that dignity. The dominions of Herod were, therefore, enlarged. And the kingdom of Chalcis bestowed upon his brother.

When the report was spread abroad, that Caius was slain; Claudius, the uncle of the deceased emperor, ran away in a great fright, and hid himself in a chamber, behind the hangings, where he thought himself secure. But it was not long, before his retreat was discovered. He had been, in his youth, of a very sickly body; and a dull, heavy, genius: so that he was treated, as a common jest, by the Cæsarean family; and particularly by Caligula, whom he succeeded. But, notwithstanding that, he ascended the imperial throne, in the fiftieth year of his age, by a remarkable accident; and when he himself neither sought, nor expected, it. As he lay concealed, Gratus, a common soldier, happened to passe through the room. And, spying a man's feet sticking out from behind the hangings, he resolved to know who he was. Upon pulling him out, he found it was Claudius; who was ready to die for fear, and fell down upon his knees to beg his life. For he was afraid that he was apprehended, in order to his being put to death. The soldier, having no such intentions, saluted him emperor. And carried him away to some more of the soldiers, who took him by turns, upon their shoulders, and carried him to the camp, to the whole army. Claudius trembled, and was under the utmost consternation of mind. For he apprehended himself in the greatest danger; and was, indeed, thought, by others, to be hurried away to death. But his fears were entirely groundless. For the army proclaimed him emperor. And, when the senate met in the capitol, and made some faint struggles to recover their antient liberty, and form of government; and, consequently, opposed his being emperor; the people, as well as the army, incouraged him not to give up his claim.
Herod of great use, in attaining that dignity.

In this tumultuous season, Herod Agrippa, when he heard what had happened to Claudius, hastened away to him. And, whilest he was in the greatest confusion and terror; and ready to lay aside all pretensions to the empire; Herod fixed him in the resolution, not to give up his claim. Then he went to the senate; and deceitfully inquired of them, "What was become of Claudius?" Who informed him of all they knew; and asked his advice, concerning the present state of affairs. He pretended that he was most heartily concerned for their interest; but thought, that, as Claudius had the veteran troops at his service, the senate were not able to oppose him. And, therefore, they had better send to him, and try if they could not persuade him to drop his pretensions. At the same time, offering to go upon that commission, himself. The senate approved of the proposal; and desired him to go. But, when he came to Claudius, he betrayed the senate; and gave Claudius such advice, as fixed him in the imperial throne. Upon which, the senators, who were afraid of the army, had no way left, but to submit; and confirm what the soldiers had done. So that Claudius succeeded his nephew, Caligula, and was the fifth of the Caesars, or Roman emperors.

In requital for his assistance, in gaining the empire, Claudius not only confirmed, to Herod, by edict, the kingdom, which Caius had given him; but he added to his dominions all Judea and Samaria, which had belonged to his grandfather, Herod the great; restoring them to him, as if they had been his due, by right of consanguinity. He, also, gave him Abila, which had belonged to Lysanias, and which Caligula had designed him; as well as the country in mount Libanus. The articles of alliance between them he caused to be ingraven in brass, and laid up in the capitol. And, at Herod Agrippa's request, he bestowed the kingdom of Chalcis upon his brother, whose name was also Herod.
CHAP. V. SECT. VI.

Caius his death encouraged the Alexandrian jews to stand upon their defence. Herod Agrippa, together with his brother, procured an edict from Cæsar, in their favor; and another for the jews, in general, throughout the roman empire. Herod transfers the high-priesthood from one to another; and had Cæsar's image removed out of the synagogue, at Doris. When he had been, some time, in his kingdom, the persecution of the christians revived; by which mean, James, the brother of John, was beheaded; and Peter imprisoned, in order to be put to death: but he made a miraculous escape. The death of Herod.

Acts xii. 1,—24.

The Jews of Alexandria, understanding that the emperor Caius was dead, began to take heart, and to stand upon their own defence: which occasioned a sedition between them and the greeks there. But Herod Agrippa, and his brother, Herod, king of Chalcis, procured an edict, from Claudius, in their favor; and they recovered their former privileges. That edict was followed by another; which gave full liberty to all the jews, throughout the roman empire, to live according to their own laws, and worship God in their own way: not without acknowledgment of their good offices to the roman state; and, "an admonition to them, not to treat the religions of other people with contempt; but to be satisfied with their own liberty, and to behave themselves modestly." After this, [that is, in the second year of the reign of Claudius Cæsar,] Herod Agrippa was sent away, to his new and enlarged dominions. And it was not long before he arrived at Jerusalem.  

From the

Joseph. antiqu. jud. 1. 19. c. 5. § 2.

Id. ibid. § ult. The edict, which was passed in behalf of the jews in general, is said, in the title of it, to have been made, "when Claudius was second time consul."
Herod transfers the high-priesthood.

The deposing of Pontius Pilate, to this accession of Herod, the Jews do not appear to have had any procurator, residing among them; or any person, invested with the power of life and death. They, therefore, (considering their temper, and frequent practice) would very probably, in such an interval, take an unusual licence. And the Christians were the most likely to feel the effects of their power. Acts xii. 11.

And, accordingly, they had acted towards the Christians; till they saw such a black storm gathering over their own heads; and ready, every moment, to fall upon them. The apprehension of their own great danger, seemeth to have been the onely thing, which made them desist from persecuting the Christians. But now, when that storm was quite blown over; and they had got a king of their own nation, who was ready to gratifie them to the uttermost; they revived their former wicked practices against the Christians; and prevailed with Herod, their new king, to persecute the disciples of Jesus. Upon his coming to Jerusalem, he deposed Theophilus, the son of Ananus, from the high-priesthood; and made Simon, the son of Boethus, who was surnamed Cantheras, high-priest, in his stead. To ingratiate himself with the Jews, he remitted some of their taxes; and did other acts, to establish himself in his new dominions. Particularly, when certain rash young fellows had erected Caesar's image, in the synagogue of the Jews, at Doris; he complained of it, with great indignation, to Petronius, who soon had it taken down, and severely reprimanded the Dorians for such an attempt; letting them know, that the present emperor, Claudius, had passed an edict to the contrary, and showed the Jews great favor. And he required the magistrates of Doris to deliver up the guilty persons to him; — and to prevent such tumults for the future. For Petronius seems to have suspected, that the rulers of that city had either consented to, or connived at, that riot. Herod, soon after, took the high-priesthood from Simon, and would have given it to Jonathan, the son of Ananus, who had once enjoyed that dignity; but he refused to accept of it, a second time. Which was, in those days, a rare example of humility and modesty! However; at his request, it was bestowed upon his brother, Matthias. But he did not enjoy it long, before the king took it away from him, and conferred it on Elianæus, the son of Chitebas; who was likewise deposed, in a little time, and Simon Cantheras made high-priest again. For they then had the high-priesthood, who would give most money for it; or were most in favor with the

And the next thing related, after the edict, is, that Herod Agrippa was sent away to his dominions, c. 6. § 1.
From the erecting Cæsar’s image, in the synagogue at Doris, even after the accession of Herod Agrippa, it planely appeareth, that the Jews were not, before that, delivered from the power of their enemies; and from that fear and consternation, which Caius his attempt, to set up his image, in their temple and synagogues, had occasioned. And, while they were under such great danger, no wonder that they were not at leisure to look after, and harass, the christians. But now, the case was altered; when one of the family of Herod the great was come to the kingdom of his grandfather. A family, which used not to stick at any methods to ingratiate themselves with persons, who could be of service to them. And Herod Agrippa was peculiarly obliging, and complaisant, to the Jews. He had procured, from Claudius, the above-mentioned gracious and just edicts, in their favor. And he himself was even zealous, in the observation of their rites and ceremonies. But, besides the favors, which he procured them, from Cæsar; he sought to gratifie the Jews, by violent and unjust methods. For finding that the christians were under the popular odium; he (not long before the time that Barnabas and Saul came from Antioch to Jerusalem, to bring the charitable collection, as a supply against the approaching famine: Not long before that time, I say, Herod Agrippa 4) stretched forth his hand, to harass and molest several of the christians. [He did not reflect upon the injustice of persecuting the christians; though he had taken it so ill, that the heathens, and particularly Caligula, the Roman emperor, had persecuted the Jews. As if it had been persecution, onely, to molest the Jews, for their religion; but had lost it’s nature, and ceased to be persecution, when practised, by the Jews, upon the poor christians.] Among the rest, he apprehended James, the elder, who was the son of Zebedee, and the brother of John; and ordered his head to be struck off with a sword. * This James was one of them, who (for his zeale and fortitude) was called, by our Lord, the son of thunder. He was an active, leading man, among the Apostles; and had ambitiously aspired


Ver. 1. “The syriac version reads [Herod the king, surnamed Agrippa.]”

Ver. 2. “This early execution of one of the apostles, would illustrate the courage of the surviving apostles, in going on, with their ministry, with so much steadiness and zeale; notwithstanding they evidently saw, that their high character, and all their miraculous powers, would not always secure them from the most fierce persecution, or even from a violent death. [See Clarius and Dr. Doddridge in loc.]”
St. Peter imprisoned.

aspired to the dignity of sitting next to Christ, in his kingdom; which he then imagined would have been a temporal kingdom. But our Lord informed him, that the superiority of his disciples, and apostles, was not temporal grandeur; but that he, who was most active in service, and most humble, meek, and patient, under afflictions, was the most honorable among them: and that he himself, in Acts xii. particular, must expect to be persecuted, like his master; namely, "to drink of the bitter cup, that he was to drink of; and to be baptized with the bloody baptism, with which he was to be baptized." Which prophecie of our Lord [recorded Matt. xx. 23.] was now fulfilled. And this zealous, active, apostle became a prey to the will of his implacable enemies, the Jews; and was the first martyr among the apostles. Hereby the number of the apostles of the circumcision was reduced to eleven. For we do not find that any other apostle was substituted in his stead: nor had the apostles any successors in their apostolic office, authority, and dignity.

When Herod perceived that the beheading of James was grateful to the Jews, he apprehended Peter also; about the beginning of April, or (according to the Jews' way of reckoning) during the days of unleavened bread; which was the beginning of the feast of the Passover. For that feast lasted seven or eight days. It was, most probably, in the third year of Claudius Caesar. For the edict, in favor of the Jews, was not passed, 'till the second year of Claudius; and Herod Agrippa was at Rome, 'till after that edict was passed. If we, therefore, consider the time, which he must spend, in going from Rome to Jerusalem; and the multiplicity of other affairs, which must engage his attention, for one while, when he came into his new dominions; we shall be ready to think, that he could not have leisure to inquire after, and persecute, the christians, so early as the Passover, in the second year of Claudius Caesar, if he was then arrived at Jerusalem.

When Herod had apprehended Peter, the great apostle of the circumcision, he was so intent upon securing him, that he delivered him to the care of no less than sixteen soldiers; that they should watch him, by turns, four at a time; two of them being chained to him, and two of them watching before the door of the prison.

Ver. 6. fSee the second dissertation annexed to the paraphrase and notes on Philemon. One end of one chain was fastened to St. Peter's right arm; and the other end to the left arm, of one of the soldiers. The other chain was, in like manner, fastened to St. Peter's left arm, and to the other soldiers right arm. [See Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part i. book i. chap. 10. § 9.]
St. Peter's miraculous escape.

Very likely, the Jews remembered how all the Apostles had escaped, when they had formerly put them in prison. And perhaps, they suspected the fidelity of the guards. It was, therefore, very probably, at their request, that such a number of soldiers were appointed to guard the Apostle. But the confining him was not all. For Herod intended, after the paschal lamb was eaten, and the seven days festival quite finished, to bring him out to the people, and gratify them, with putting him also to death; and that publicly. During the festival, the Jews used to spend their time in such mirth and jollity, that prisoners were commonly released, rather than executed. But, after all their zeal about rituals, they could submit to be concerned in the vilest immoralities. As one Apostle had been put to death already; and as another, such an eminent Apostle, such a zealous promoter of Christianity, and steadfast support of it, was in so great danger of his life; the whole church prayed for him, intensely, and without intermission. His enemies thought they had him secure. And the next day was appointed, by Herod, for his being publicly put to death. But, the night before he was to have been brought out, and slain in that public manner, Peter (like a man with a good conscience, and engaged in a good cause) was sleeping, very composedly, between the two soldiers; to whom his arms were chained, on each side. And the other two soldiers were placed, as guards, before the door. And behold, an angel of the Lord entered the prison, surrounded with the rays of a glory; and, by striking St. Peter on his side, he awoke him; saying, "Rise up quickly." Upon which, the chains, that had fastened him to the two soldiers, fell off from his hands. And the angel added: "Gird up the cloathes, in which you lie; put on your sandals; throw about you your loose, upper garment. And, after that, follow me." St. Peter did every thing as the angel bade him. But he did not know that it was fact. He imagined that these things were only represented to him, in a vision. The prison was in the suburbs of Jerusalem. And, when they had passed the first and second watch, they came to the great iron gate, which led towards the city. It was an heavy gate, and difficult to be opened. But, to them, it seemed to open of its own accord; or miraculously, and by some invisible agent. And, when the angel had gone the length of one street with him, he disappeared, and left him to shift for himself. For, when things are within men's own power, it is folly and presumption to expect extraordinary assistance. When the Apostle was left alone, and had come to himself again, and found where he was; he was soon
Which greatly astonished the christians.

soon convinced; that it was more than a vision. Upon which, he could not forbear saying: "Now, I am well assured, that the Lord hath sent his angel; and hath, in an extraordinary manner, delivered me out of the hands of Herod; and from the expectation of the vast concourse of the Jews; who thought, this day, to have been spectators of my death." And, having considered a little, he resolved to go to the house of Mary, who was sister to Barnabas, and mother to John Mark: that Mark, I suppose, who was author of one of the four gospels, and St. Peter’s great companion. When the apostle came thither, several of the christian brethren were assembled, and praying for his deliverance. The apostle knocked at the gate. Upon which, a damsel, Rhoda, by name, went to inquire, "Who it was, that came thither, so late in the night; and what he wanted?" The apostle told her, that it was Peter. Upon which, she knew his voice: and was so much surprized and over-joyed, that she had not the patience to stay, and open the gate; but ran in, directly, and told them that Peter was at the gate. They answered: "What, are you mad, to talk at that rate?" She persisted in it, that "the person said so; and that she knew his voice." They replied: "It cannot be Peter himself; it must be only a messenger, whom he hath sent; and who has said something about Peter; which you mistook, as if he said that Peter himself was there." The apostle, the mean while, continued knocking. Upon which, several of them went out; and they opened the gate, and let him in; and were convinced that it was he; though not without great surprize and admiration. There was no time to lose, in inquiries, about all the particulars of his deliverance; for fear his enemies should pursue, and overtake, him. He, therefore, beckoned with his hand for silence; and told them briefly, and once for all, how God had miraculously delivered him out of prison, by sending an angel, that had eluded all the power and vigilance of the guards. And he ordered them to tell it to James, and to the christian brethren. [That was James the less, the son of Alpheus; who was, probably, the only apostle then at Jerusalem, except St. Peter. He was one of great esteem among the apostles; and wrote the epistle, which

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Ver. 15. Αγγέλος doeth often signify a messenger. See Matt. xi. 10.
Mark i. 2. Luke vii. 24; 27. and ix. 52. James ii. 25. Rev. i. 20. and II. 1, &c.
The guards examined, and put to death.

An. Chri. which to this day goeth under his name. After St. Peter had
been given them this brief account of his miraculous escape, he (without
delay) consulted for his own safety; by leaving Jerusalem, and going
to another place. The papists will have it, that he then went to Rome,
to found a christian church there. But they say so, only, because
they apprehend it makes for their purpose, to have men believe so.
For they have no antient and authentic history to support their asserion,
of his going thither so early, if at all.

The next morning, after the apostle’s escape, there was no
small hurry among the soldiers; who most solicitously inquired,
“What was become of Peter?” And, when the king had sought,
and could not find him; he called the guards to an account, and nar-
rowly examined them. But, they being unable to give any satisfac-
tory account of the matter, he ordered them to be hurried away to ex-
ecution; as suspecting that they had been off their guard, or some
way accessory to his escape.

Herod the great, after he had built Caesarea-palestinae, had instituted
games, to the honor of Cæsar; which were to be celebrated every fifth
year. Not long after the apprehending of St. Peter, the usual time
came about; for the celebrating those games. Herod Agrippa went
down to Caesarea, upon that occasion. And another affair, which
called him to that part of his dominions, was, his being highly of-
fended with the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon; against whom he in-
tended to enter into a war. But they, being trading cities, and
unable to carry on their traffic, without a free commerce in Galilee,
and other parts of Herod’s dominions; from whence they used to pur-
chase large quantities of corn and other provisians; they bribed
Blasius, the king’s chamberlain, who had a very great influence over
his master. And, by that mean, they obtained peace; and prevent-
ed the designed war.

Upon occasion of the games, and approaching festival, there was
a great resort of the governors, and great men, of the neighboring
provinces; and of persions of figure, from all the surrounding coun-
tries. On the second day of that solemnity, Horod Agrippa came,
early in the morning, (most probably, into the amphitheatre, built by
his grandfather, Herod the great,) dressed in a robe of most curious
work-

Ver, 17. See the history of him, prefixed to the paraphrase and notes on the
epistle of St. James.

Joseph. de bell, jud. l. r. c. 21. § 8. & antiqu. l. 150. c. 5. § 1.

Weltas in loc.]
workmanship; all made of silver. That glorious garb, reflecting the beams of the rising sun, gave him a most awful and majestic appearance. And, in that magnificent manner, he sat upon his throne, and made an oration to the people. Which, when he had finished; they, with flattering acclamations, cried out: "Surely this is the Bath col,\(^1\) the speech of God; and not of any mortal man." Acts xii. 21, ad finem.

With which blasphemous applause, the king was pleased; and did not reprove the persons, nor reject the impious flattery. But God, who resists the proud, and will not give his glory to another, instantly smote him with a sore disease; because he gave not the glory to him, whose due it was. And worms bred in his putrefied flesh, and devoured him alive. In which wretched condition he continued five days, and then expired; as an instance of God's just judgment upon the tyrants, and persecutors of the earth.\(^2\)

There is a wonderful harmony between the accounts, which St. Luke and Josephus have given, of Herod's death.\(^3\) Only, Josephus is larger, and more expressive. And has particularly taken notice, that the king himself could not but acknowledge the hand of God; and how flattering and unjust the acclamations were, which had ascribed divinity to him, who was a mortal man, and seized by a disease, which would shortly hurry him out of the world.

He left behind him a son, called Agrippa; then seventeen years of age: before whom St. Paul did afterwards appear, and made an apology for christianity; and thereby almost persuaded him to turn christian. He left, also, two daughters, taken notice of, in the new testament; namely, Berenice, who was married to Herod, king of Chalcis, her father's brother; being sixteen years of age; and Drusilla, who was afterwards married to the governor Felix: as well as Mariamme,\(^4\) of whom there is no mention in the scripture.

After the death of king Herod Agrippa, the kingdom was again reduced to a roman province. And then the persecution of the christians did abate, for a while. In which interval, they were established in faith.

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1 Joseph, de antiq. jud. 1. 19. c. 8. § 2.
2 See the syriac version.
3 See the Cambridge manuscript, greek and latin, in Dr. Mill. In this manner died two other famous persecutors; Antichus Epiphanes. 2 Maccab. ix. 1; 9; and Herod the great. Jof. Antiq. l. 17. c. 6. § 5. And in this manner died Pheretime, after her great cruelty to the inhabitants of Barcas. Which Herodotus supposed, was by the just judgments of the gods. Melop. ad finem. As to the disease itself; see Dr. Mead's medicar sacra, p. 101, &C.
4 As to this harmony in the main things, and difference in lesser matters, see Dr: Lardner's credibility, &c. part i. p. 22, &c. 2d edition; p. 32, &c. 3d edition.
5 Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. 19. c. 9. § 1, &c. & de Bell. l. 2. c. 11. § ult.
The conclusion of the second Book.

An. Chrilli 43. faith and holiness; being more and more confirmed in the belief of christianity. And their numbers increased every day.

Book II. Ch. V. Sect. VI. Thus endeth the second book of this history; which chiefly treat-eth of the conversion of the devout gentiles, otherwise called proselytes of the gate.

Acts xii. And here the history of the apostles of the circumcision is very naturally dropt. For it doeth not appear, from the new testament, that they ever preached to idolatrous gentiles; at least, before the destruction of Jerusalem. — That was the province of the apostles of the uncircumcision: whose labors with, and success among, the idolatrous gentiles, will be the subject of book the third.

The end of the second book, and of the first volume.
THE

HISTORY

OF THE

FIRST PLANTING

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

Taken from the

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
FIRST PLANTING
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION:
Taken from the
Together with the
Remarkable facts of the Jewish and Roman history,
which affected the Christians, within this period.
To which is annexed, A
DISSERTATION:
To prove, That
St. Luke wrote the acts of the Apostles: And to show,
That, if the acts contain a true history, Christianity
must be true.

VOLUME the SECOND.
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By GEORGE BENSON, D.D.

LONDON:
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in Lombard-Street, MDCCLV.

BOOK III.

Which containeth an account of the spreading of Christianity among the idolatrous gentiles; (together with its farther progress among the Jews, and devout gentiles.) Acts xiii. to the end of that book; and from the year of our Lord 44, to the year 63.

CHAP. I.


SECT. I.

They carried the charity from Antioch to Jerusalem. While Saul was praying, in the second court of the temple, he had his trance, or ecstasy: During which, he was taken up, into the third heavens; and made an apostle of the idolatrous gentiles. His thorn in the flesh; and extraordinary gifts.

We are now proceeding to the last; and to us, of the race of the gentiles, the most material; part of this history, Book III. Ch. I. Sect. I. Christianity had been preached, for about eight years, among the Jews only: and, for about three years more, Acts xii., among ult.
Barnabas and Saul,

An. Christi 44. Claud. 4.

Book III. Ch. I. Sect. I.

Acts xii. ult.

among the Jews and devout gentiles. It's last removal was to the idolatrous gentiles. And the persons, who were first to carry it to them, were prepared, and commissioned, in the following manner.

When Agabus prophesied of an approaching famine, which should affect Jerusalem, and the whole land of Judea; Barnabas and Saul were, both of them, at Antioch in Syria. And, when the christians of that church had made a generous collection, for the use of the jewish converts in Judea, they sent it to the elders of the christian church, at Jerusalem, by the hands of those two prophets, Barnabas and Saul; who had faithfully labored, for a whole year, among them. It seemeth to me highly probable, that, after Herod had killed James, the brother of John, with the sword; and Peter had escaped with his life, by a miracle; — the other James left Jerusalem; — and that that was the occasion of there being no apostle then, in that great city. For the persecution raged so, that, very likely, it was unsafe, for any apostle, to continue there, at that time. But, whatever was the occasion of the absence of all the apostles, the christian church at Antioch appeareth to have been acquainted with their absence. And, therefore, they sent that charitable contribution, to the elders, at Jerusalem; that is, (as I apprehend) unto some of the hundred and twenty, who were of the apostles company, when the holy spirit was first poured out: and who were such early converts, as to have seen Christ, before his death, as well as after his resurrection.

The wife and great God, who had long before designed to call the idolatrous gentiles, into the christian church, did now vouchsafe to constitute Barnabas and Saul, apostles of the gentiles, or uncircumcision; when no other apostle was at Jerusalem, from whom they might be suspected to have received their instructions, or commission. They had, both of them, been superior prophets, in the christian church, for some time. And Barnabas was (I suppose) an elder of the first rank; that is, had seen Christ in the flesh; had been an eye-witness of his being alive again, after his crucifixion; and had received the holy spirit, on the day of pentecost; as being one of the hundred and twenty. And Saul had preached, as a superior prophet, about seven years, to the jews onely; and about two years more, to the jews and devout gentiles. They had both, been borne

*St. Paul has omitted this journey, from Antioch to Jerusalem, Gal. i. ii. ch. very probably, for this very reason; namely, because there was no apostle, then, at that city, from whom he could be suspected to have received his knowledge of christianity, or his apostolic commission.
borne in gentile countries. And, therefore, may be supposed to have had more respect and affection for the gentiles, than most of the Jews, who were natives of Judea. Saul had been converted, and had hitherto preached, chiefly, on gentile ground. And he had joined, with Barnabas, in teaching devout gentiles, for a whole year together, at Antioch in Syria. By all which, they were, in some sort, trained up, for the next step; which was, to go to the idolatrous gentiles.

It was necessary, in order to the being an apostle, to have seen our Lord Jesus Christ alive, after his crucifixion. It is very much to be questioned, whether Saul saw Jesus his person, when he was converted, nigh the city Damascus; or any more than a great light from heaven, which shone round about him and his companions. For he appears to have been instantly struck blind; as well as to have fallen prostrate on the ground. And, it is remarkable, that St. Luke never mentioneth his seeing any more than the light from heaven; either when he himself telleth the story, or introduceth Saul as reciting it. The onely objection to this, arises from Ananias his words, Acts ix. 17. namely, that "the Lord Jesus had appeared:"

And, ver. 27. that "Saul had seen the Lord, in the way" to Damascus. But, possibly, Ananias might mean no more than the other accounts of this matter, which are given us, by St. Luke and St. Paul. For the nobles of Israel are said "to have seen God." [Exod. xxiv. 10, 11.] And, in order to deliver the ten commandments, God promised, that he would come down, "in the sight of all the people, upon mount Sinai." [Exod. xix. 11.] And he is said, [Deut. v. 4.] "to have talked, face to face, with Israel, out of the midst of the fire." And yet, notwithstanding all these expressions, they saw onely his glory. For, [Deut. iv. 12.] it is expressly said, "that they saw no similitude; onely they heard a voice." And, [John i. 18.] that no man hath seen God, at any time. So that Ananias his words may signifie, that Saul saw the glory; but not the person, of Christ. And all the relations of that miraculous appearence, seem to me to imply no more. However, Ananias very plainely informed Saul, three days after his conversion, [Acts xxii. 14.] that "he was still to see Jesus, that righteous person; and to hear his voice, out of his own mouth. And then to be a witnese, unto all men, [gentiles, as well as jews,] of what he had seen and heard." If Saul had seen Jesus, upon the road to Damascus; it would not follow, that he had then received his apostolic commission from him. But, I suppose, he did not then see Christ's person. And, consequently, wanted one necessa-
Saul's rapture into heaven.

An.Christi. 4. qualification, in order to his being an apostle. This, therefore, was, I think, the reason, of which he himself speaks, Acts xxiii. 17, &c. When he returned to Jerusalem; [that is, the second time after his conversion, b] even whilst he was praying in the court of the temple, commonly called the court of the women, he was in an extase, [or trance;] during which, he saw the Lord Jesus Christ, appearing to him, in person; who spoke to him, and commanded him, saying: "Go quickly out of Jerusalem. For the Jews will not regard thy testimony concerning me. And, therefore, I will send thee among the gentiles." Saul was so much leavened with the national prejudices, that he was startled at the thoughts of going to the idolatrous gentiles; and began to make an apology; and, in effect, petition that he might continue preaching to the Jews. "For, faith he, Lord, they have good reason to think me sincere; and to regard my testimony, rather than another's: seeing they know, very well, how great a persecutor of the Christians I have been. And, therefore, they must needs suppose that I had full evidence and conviction, before I would attempt so great a change." To which the Lord replied: "Thou must depart hence; for I intend to send thee, into remote places, and distant nations, to convert the idolatrous gentiles. Thou art, indeed, to go through great trials and calamities. But I will support thee under them; and deliver thee, both from the Jews, who will often persecute thee; and from the gentiles, to whom I am now sending thee; to open their eyes, and to turn them from error and ignorance, to knowledge and holiness; and from their idolatry, to the true God, that they may obtain forgiveness of their past sins; a share in the privileges of the church, and people of God, upon earth; and the happiness reserved for the virtuous, in the world to come." According to the ancient prophecies, "Out of Sion the law of the Messiah's kingdom was to go; and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." d And, from St. Paul's own words, it is plain, he had this remarkable trance, or extase, at Jerusalem; whilst he was praying in one of the courts of the temple.

That such an extraordinary trance, or vision, happened to him, at this time, we may gather, from 2 Cor. xii. 1, &c. where he is vindicated.

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He had no occasion, in that speech, to be more particular about the time. And, therefore, he hath not said there, whether it was the first or second time of his returning to Jerusalem. But, by the chronology of the new testament, it plainly appeareth to have been the second time of his coming thither, after his conversion.

Saul's rapture into heaven.

Vindicating himself, from the aspersions, thrown upon him, by the false apostle at Corinth, who called in question the truth of his doctrine, and represented him as one that deserved no regard; because his bodily presence was mean, and his speech contemptible. "Though it would not be, otherwise, expedient (faith he) for me to glory; yet, as you, by the aspersions, which you have cast upon me, compel me to it: Acts xii. I will proceed to give some account of the extraordinary visions and revelations, which I have been favored with, from the Lord. I knew a Christian, above fourteen years ago; by which he meant himself; though he modestly speaks of it, in the third person; whether it happened in a vision, presented to his spirit; or he was really carried, soul and body, into heaven; I cannot tell; God himself knoweth. But this I know, that (one way, or the other) he was taken up into paradise, (as well as into the third heavens,) the habitations of the blessed; where he saw and heard things, which it is impossible for mortal man to utter." Saul was favored with this bright discovery of the paradisical and heavenly glory, and with hearing such exquisite and unutterable things; to encourage him, against all the difficulties, which he was to meet with; and the persecutions, that he was to undergo; in preaching the gospel, unto the world; and, particularly, to the idolatrous gentiles.

That second epistle to the Corinthians was written in the year of our Lord 58. And, as his rapture, or extasie, was a little more than fourteen years before that, it fixeth it to this very time; that is, to the beginning of the year 44. Some, indeed, have supposed that he had his rapture, or extasie, at Damascus; immediately after his conversion; when he lay there, three days, blind and fasting. Others have fixed it at Lystra, when his enemies had stoned him, till they thought he was dead. And others again, at Antioch in Syria; about the time that the prophets separated him and Barnabas, for the work, unto which the holy spirit had called them. But I would place it at Jerusalem, and at this time of his being there; because I think it the onely way of accounting for all the hints and expressions, concerning:

"The first sense which arises in one's mind, upon reading these words, [whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell,] is, "I cannot tell, whether my soul was separated from my body; or I was taken up, soul and body together." But if St. Paul's soul had really been separated from his body, and reunited to it again, that would have been his death and resurrection. I am, therefore, inclined to the sense now given; as satisfied that St. Paul did not suppose that, in his rapture, he dyed, and afterwards rose again; though he might doubt, whether it was a mere vision, or he was really taken up into the celestial regions."
Saul's rapture into heaven.

Concerning it, that are dispersed in the Acts of the Apostles, and St. Paul's epistles. Though he could not tell, whether it was by vision, or by his soul and body's being actually carried up into paradise, and into heaven; yet this he was sure of, that he saw the Lord Jesus, alive again, after his crucifixion; and in a state of transcendent glory and exaltation. And, from his mouth, he received the revelation of that gospel, which he was to preach to the idolatrous gentiles; and a full commission, as apostle of the uncircumcision. Hence it was, that he could justly say, "I have received of the Lord, [Jesus,] that, which I also delivered unto you;" — and call himself "An apostle, not of men, neither by man; but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." And could certify the Christians, to whom he wrote, "That the gospel, which was preached by him, was not according to any mere human instructions. For he receiv'd not his knowledge, from any man; neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Nay; even what he preached to the Jews, before he was an apostle, was only what he received, by immediate revelation. And so also was, most evidently, what he afterwards preached to the idolatrous gentiles.

I have intimated above, that Saul appeareth to me to have been very young, at his conversion; and not fit to have been made an apostle, immediately; either upon the account of his age, or of his standing in the Christian church. But, by preaching about seven years among the Jews, and about two years more, to them and to the devout gentiles, he had given sufficient proofs of his sincerity, and unfeigned zeal for the gospel; and convinced the Jewish converts, that he acted with the greatest integrity, in professing the Christian religion. Had he, immediately upon his conversion, gone and preached to the idolatrous gentiles; it would have been one of the hardest tasks in the world, to have convinced the Jewish Christians, that he was not still an enemy, in his heart, to Christianit.y itself. Nay; the Jews, even to this day, blame him for preaching to the gentiles, without requiring them first to become proselytes of righteousness to the Jewish religion.

As St. Peter had his trance, and the revelation of the gospel, which was to be preached to the devout gentiles, whilest he was praying, on the house-top, and (most probably) with his face turned towards the temple, at Jerusalem; so Saul had his trance, and the revelation of the gospel, which he was to preach to the idolatrous gentiles, whilest he was praying, in the very court of the temple itself. This
His thorn in the flesh.

This revelation is what he glories in; and calls his gospel, by way of peculiar eminence and distinction. For, not unto any of the apostles of the circumcision; but unto him, was this mystery first revealed: even unto him, I say, who (by reason of his having once persecuted the christians) accounted himself lesse than the least of all saints, was this unspeakable favor shown; that he should be first acquainted with what had been hid from all former ages and...
Saul's thorn in the flesh.

Ancient prophets, who were sick and faint, several days; after visions which were much inferior to this of Saul. Very probably, therefore, he was struck with a shaking palsy, or some other great bodily disorder; which made his speech difficult and stammering, caused convulsive and distorted motions in the muscles of his face; and so rendered "his bodily presence mean, and his speech contemptible." This (to say the least) is much more likely to have been his thorn in the flesh, than any of the other things, which have been conjectured; and deserves great regard, as it so well agreeth with all the particulars, recorded by St. Paul himself. God had chosen the rest of the apostles, from among unlearned fishermen, and publicans, and the like; that it might appear that it was not owing to their own learning and eloquence, that they had so great success. And, though Saul had learning and eloquence; yet the force of his eloquence must have been much impaired, by such a disorder. Now, being to go among the heathens, and to such polite places, as Greece and Rome, where eloquence, and a graceful appearance, were in high esteem;—he thought this would prove a great obstruction, and was thereby much discouraged. So that he besought the Lord Jesus, three times, with great importunity, that it might be removed from him. To which the Lord answered: "My favor, and extraordinary assistance, will be sufficient for thee; and my strength will be perfected in thy weakness." Upon which, Saul gloried in his bodily infirmities; in as much as the less likely he appeared to succeed, in such a great work, the more evident was it that a divine power rested upon him. For this reason, he took pleasure in those bodily infirmities; and in the reproaches cast upon him, because of them. For, though he was weak in himself; yet he was strong in Christ, and in the power of his might. And it was manifest, that the excellence of the power was of God, and not of him; and that his success did not arise from the enticing words of human wisdom, but from the demonstration of the spirit, and of power. And, that the weapons of his warfare were not carnal, but mighty, through God; pulling down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the gospel; and bringing into captivity every thought, to the obedience of Christ.

See Dan. viii. 27. 12 Cor. x. 1; Gal. iv. 13, 14.
Spiritual gifts conferred on Saul.

CHAP. I.  S E C T. II.

A more particular account of the spiritual gifts, which Saul received, when he was constituted apostle of the gentiles.

We have already given an account of what spiritual gifts and miraculous powers Saul received, at his conversion; in order to qualify him to be a superior prophet, or evangelist, unto the Jews. We are now to inquire into the gifts and powers, which he received, when he was made apostle of the gentiles. 1. By the sight, which he had, of the Lord Jesus Christ, he was enabled to testify several things; and, particularly, that Christ was alive again, after his crucifixion. This he is never said to have done before. But, after this, he is frequently said to have borne his testimony. He had preached Christ, [or the gospel doctrine] in the synagogue; and proved Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah. He had spoken boldly, in the name of the Lord Jesus; and taught the people at Antioch. But, now he was to be made an apostle, he was to bear a testimony, which the Jews at Jerusalem would not receive. He was, therefore, to carry it to the gentiles, to whom the Lord Jesus was now going to send him. Or (as it is elsewhere expressed) to be a witness of the things, which he had seen; as well as of those, in which Christ would further appear unto him. After this, he bore witness that God had raised Jesus from the dead; as well as intimated that the other apostles were his witnesses; and testified, both to Jews and gentiles. Upon which testimony, he grounded his exhortation, of repentence towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. And, upon Christ's appearing to him, when he was confined, in the tower of Antonia, he said: "Be of good cheer, Paul. For, as thou hast testified of me, at Jerusalem, so thou must also bear witness of me, at Rome." Thus be continued witnessing, both to small and great; and testifying the kingdom of God. And, it is remarkable, that bearing witness, or testifying, is a phrase, which is very rarely used, after Christ's ascension, of any, but Apostles.
Spiritual gifts conferred on Saul,

For they were witnesses, chosen of God, to bear their testimony to the facts, upon which Christianity was founded.

2. Saul must now have received "that branch of the word of wisdom, which related to the idolatrous gentiles." He had, upon his conversion, received the scheme of the Christian doctrine, as far as it was common to all mankind; and, as it particularly concerned the Jewish converts, at that time. But there is no reason to think, that he then had any notion of preaching to the idolatrous gentiles; when St. Peter had not, at that time, so much as opened the door of faith to the devout gentiles. But now, as one branch of this word of wisdom, he was acquainted with the grand mystery, of his immediately calling in the idolatrous gentiles. And another branch of it, was, the terms, on which they were to be accepted; namely, upon their renouncing idolatry, and submitting to the Christian institution, without any subjection to the law of Moses. Accordingly; from this time, he addressed himself to them, and received them into the Christian church, upon these terms. And he had great success, and brought over multitudes. Nay, farther; unto Paul, the Apostle, other mysteries were revealed: such as God's casting off the body of the Jewish nation, because of their unbelief and disobedience; the mystery of iniquity; and concerning the man of sin, and son of perdition, whereby great corruptions would be introduced into the Christian church; the mystery of recalling the Jews, into the church of God, and adding unto them the fulness of the gentiles; and the mystery, that the last generation should not die at all, but be transformed.

3. Saul did now receive the word of knowledge; as far as it related to the gospel, which he was to preach to the idolatrous gentiles: that is, "A clear view of those prophecies, which related to the calling in of the gentiles; and a full understanding of the confirmation, which the old testament gave, to this remarkable branch of the Christian revelation." He had, upon his conversion, received so much of the word of knowledge, as enabled him to show, how the old testament made way for the gospel, which was then preached unto the Jews. And, therefore, he could not only argue from the prophecies, to convert the Jews. But, when he had taught them the Christian doctrine, which was founded upon facts, he could build them up, in their most holy faith; by taking off their false glosses and interpretations, and pointing out to them the true sense of the law and the prophets. Both his reason and extraordinary illumination taught him, not to appeal to the prophecies of the old testament, in converting idolatrous.
the apostle of the gentiles.

trous gentiles; who neither acknowledged the authority of the jewisb An.Christi
canon, nor were they so much as acquainted with what it contained. But, when those idolators had embraced christianity; and were told, that many of the things had been praédicted, long before-hand, which were now come to passe; it was a circumstantial and confirming evi-
dence, to show them such prophecies, and compare them with the ac-
complishment; and to point out, to them, the connection between ult.
christianity and former divine revelations. The word of knowledge in-
able saul to do this. And he did not fail to make use of it; and
that with great justnesse and propriety.

4. Saul now received the gift of discerning spirits. It is du-
bious whether he received it, in any considerable degree, upon his con-
version. But that he now received it, in an high degree, appeareth
very euidently. For, soon after this, he detected the secret malice and
wickedness of Bar-Jesus, who fîly endeavored to turn away Ser-
gius Paulus from embracing the ehrisian faith; and perceived, that
the lame man at Lystra had faith to be healed. By this gift, he could
try the spirits, and detect the wickedness of the false apostles; as
knowing who preached christ, out of a good design; and who, out
of contention, and a spirit of opposition. And, by this gift, he
could “ appoint some of the first-fruits of his conversions to be bishops
and deacons, in particular churches; having first proved, or tried
them, by the spirit.”

5. Saul did now receive the power of binding and loosing, re-
mittting and retaining the sins of men. He could, upon his conver-
sion, point out to the jews their duty; and loose them from, or bind
them over to, future punishments; as they complied, or neglected to
comply. But, he never understood their being freed from their for-
mer obligation to the ceremonial law, till now, that he was made an
apostle. Nor did he, before this, understand what laws would
be obligatory upon the christians, who should be converted from among
the idolatrous gentiles. But, from this time, he could declare, with
certainty, that they were bound to forsake their idolatriy; to believe in
the one true god, and in his son, jesus christ, our lord; and
that (though the jews would be zealous to bring them into subjection;
yet) they were free from all obligations to the law of Moses; the gos-
pel being to them, upon that very account, the perfect law of liberty.
He could, after this, with certainty, declare to the gentile converts the
consequence of their behavior; namely, that such as lived according to
what the christian rule required of them, should be freed from future
punishments; but that such as neglected, or lived in contradiction to
what
Spiritual gifts conferred on Saul, what was their plane duty, were bound over to suffer the righteous judgments of God.

But, besides the general power, of remitting or retaining the sins of men, he could, in some cases, apply this to particular persons. For, as he thoroughly understood the gospel-terms of acceptance, and had the gift of discerning spirits; he could infallibly declare unto such, whose secret thoughts he knew, whether their sins would be remitted, or retained, if they persisted in the same temper of mind, and course of life.

Again: Saul now received, what I take to be principally meant, by the phrase, of remitting, or retaining, the sins of men, namely, "a power of striking bold, daring, and incorrigible offenders, with some bodily diseases; and (if occasion required) with death itself." This was retaining their sins, or denouncing divine judgments; which were immediately [bound, or] inflicted upon them. But, when the persons, so chastised, became penitent, he could miraculously cure them; as he could likewise miraculously cure the diseases of some other persons; and so remit their sins, or cancel their obligations to farther punishments. This power, as it concerned the retaining of the sins of men, may be called, the having the apostolicrod.

For, of this power, I apprehend St. Paul was speaking, [1 Cor. iv. 21] when he saith, "Which do you (disorderly Corinthians) desire? Shall I come to you with a rod; or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" And, [2 Cor. x. 6] where he declareth, "that he was fully able to revenge all disobedience; after as many of them, as would take the warning, were reduced to obedience." And again, [2 Cor. xiii. 2, &c.] where he assures them, "that, if he came again, and found any of them intractable, he would not spare them; but would give them such a proof, as they would repent, who had so long questioned his having such a power; and persisted audacious and incorrigible." By this power, Elymas, the sorcerer, was struck blind; for endeavoring, wickedly and insidiously, to turn away Sergius Paulus from embracing the gospel. And the Apostle threatened to deliver the incestuous Corinthian, and did actually deliver Alexander and Hymenæus, "over to Satan, to be tormented in their flesh; that the spirit might be saved, in the day of the Lord." — The gospel is a mild dispensation. And this power was committed to the apostles, agreeably to the nature of the gospel; that is, for edification, and not for destruction. And, therefore, it was used very seldom, and sparingly.
6. Saul now received the gift of prophesying; not only as it signifies the prediction of lesser events: for the prediction of greater events belonged to the word of wisdom: but also, as it enabled him, by inspiration, to carry on the several parts of Christian worship: such as "making discourses, suited to particular occasions; singing psalms, hymns, or spiritual songs; praying, or praising, God."

7. Saul now received the gift of tongues. How small a degree soever of this gift he received, upon his conversion; he appeareth, from this time, to have had it, in a very high degree. For he saith, [1 Cor. xiv. 18.] "he could speak with tongues, more than the whole church at Corinth:" though they seem to have abounded with this gift. The gift of tongues was now bestowed on Saul, that he might preach the gospel to men of any nation, without an interpreter. And he had great occasion for it; when he was setting out, to go among the idolatrous gentiles, in distant countries.

8. Saul did, now, receive the gift of the interpretation of tongues. Possibly, he might receive it, in some degree, when he was converted. But, now he was to be an apostle, it is likely he received it, in the highest degree. For the inferior prophets had it. And much more he, who has not a whit behind the chief of the apostles. Hereby he could interpret the old testament, from the original language, or turn, into the vulgar (or any other) tongue, what had been spoken, in a language, which some of the audience did not understand.

9. Some have supposed that Saul had also one gift peculiar to himself; or, at least, there is no intimation that any other of the apostles had it: namely, "A power of seeing what was done at a distance; or of knowing, in some cases, what passed in his absence, as clearly and exactly as if he had been present." The texts, from which it is collected, that he had such a gift, are, 1 Cor. v. 3, 4. and Col. ii. 5. In the first of which, he speaks "of being absent from the church, in body; but present in spirit; and thereby sitting as judge, in the first instance, and condemning the incestuous person:" And, in the last, as "beholding the order, regularity, and steadfastness, which were among the Colossians; and rejoicing greatly at the prospect." Some few, both of the antients and moderns, have so understood these texts. And, therefore, I mention this interpretation. But I do it with diffidence; because the generality are not of this opinion. However; it ought to be observed, that there is a very plain intimation of Elija the prophet's having such...
The miraculous powers,

such a gift. For the heart of Eliphaz is said to have gone along with Gebazi, when Naaman, the Syrian, turned back to meet him, and made him a present. [2 Kings v. 25, 26.] And it will be hard to assign a reason, why an apostle might not, in some cases, have this gift, as well as an old testament prophet: especially, if we consider the vast extent of the province of the great apostle of the gentiles; the great number of churches, which he had under his care; and the continual anxiety he had for their welfare: under which, this extraordinary gift might, in some cases, relieve him; as well as greatly redound to their advantage.

C H A P. I. S E C T. III.

The miraculous powers conferred on saul, when he was made apostle of the gentiles.

Besides the spiritual gifts, which saul had, when he was made an apostle, he received several miraculous powers. For instance, (1.) He had a greater degree of fortitude, than he had, upon his conversion. Though he seemeth, then, to have received superior courage, to what he had, naturally, and before he imbraced christianity. Hereby, he had a door of utterance; or a proper firmness, and resolution of mind, to speak freely, and to deliver even harsh and ungrateful truths, before the greatest personages, the most august assemblies, or the greatest and most implacable enemies. He did, indeed, upon his conversion, go and preach christ publicly, in the synagogues, at Damascus; and confounded the jews, who disputed with, and opposed him. And, soon after, his fortitude appeared, in preaching, at Jerusalem, in the name of the lord jesus. But, notwithstanding that, when he was in danger of suffering, he with great caution avoided it, before he was made an apostle; being let down by the wall of the city of Damascus, and fleeing to jerusalem, to avoid the malice of the jews; who had the gates of the city watched, day and night, that they might apprehend him. And, again, when the hellenistic jews, at jerusalem, fought to

a Acts ix. 20, 21, 22.
b Acts ix. 28.
c Acts ix. 23, 24, 25.
conferred on Saul. to take away his life; he was conveyed, from thence, first to Cæsa-
rea, and afterwards to Tarsus. But, now he is made an APOSTLE, it is observed that he and Barnabas waxed bold, when they first began to preach to a number of idolatrous gentiles. He suffered stoneing at Lystra, 'till his enemies left him for dead. And, at Philippi, he not only suffered his clothes to be rent off, and endured a severe scourging; and, after that, imprisonment; but, when the doors of the prison were opened, by an earthquake, he would not go out, 'till the magistrates came, and besought him to depart. He went up to Jerusalem, bound in the spirit, [or foreseeing, by the spirit of prophecy, that he should be bound there;] and not knowing what other afflictions might befall him, in that city; any farther, than that the spirit had assured him, in general, that bonds and afflictions everywhere awaited him. Nay; when the prophets at Tyre would have dissuaded him, from going up to Jerusalem; and Agabus, at Cæsarea, prophesied, that, if he went up thither, at that time, the Jews would bind him, and deliver him into the hands of the Romans; and the Christians thereupon besought him, with tears, not to venture himself among his enemies: yet none of these things moved him to desist from his purpose and resolution. Notwithstanding the tumult at Ephesus, he would have ventured into the theatre, in the midst of his enemies; if some of the masters of the theatre, who were his friends, had not sent privately to him, and desired him not to go. Though he was confined, for two years, at Rome; yet he went thither a second time; even after the Christians had undergone a violent persecution, in that imperial city. And there, at last, he bravely laid down his life, as a martyr for the gospel; which he had, so long, and so faithfully, preached. What courage was required in him, who was to undergo stripes above measure, frequent imprisonments, indefatigable labors, and repeated dangers of death? Who was to be scourged, and stoned; to suffer shipwreck; and go through long, tedious journeys? In perils from waters; in perils from robbers; in perils from his own countrymen, the Jews; and from strangers of the gentiles? Not only in cities, but also in the wilderness; by sea, and by land; from treacherous friends, as well as open and professed enemies? Whose lot it was, to have many sleepless nights, and fatiguing
**The miraculous powers,**

And who, besides these troubles, had, upon his mind, a continual care and anxiety for all the churches? To be brought before fanbe-drims, kings, and governors; and make an apology for a doctrine, which was contrary to all men? A doctrine, that was not only ridiculed, by the gentiles; but exasperated his kindred, the Jews; nay, and offended even many of the christians! To oppose the insincere, and daring gainsayers; and patiently to bear with the weak and scrupulous! To go, from a place, where he had been used with severity, and the greatest indignity; and yet to begin preaching, in the next city, that he came to, with as much cheerfulness and resolution, as if he had every where met with the greatest encouragement, and the kindest treatment imaginable! Not to count life itself dear, so that he might finish his apostolical office with fidelity; and to stand up for christianity, when all his friends forsook him, and fled! What a degree of courage was requisite in such a man, and in such a station?

2. Though it is highly probable, that he received a power of working some miracles, upon his conversion; yet the power of working greater miracles; or of doing common miracles, in some superior manner; was, very likely, conferred upon him, when he was made apostle of the gentiles. Accordingly; [Acts xiv. 8, 9, 10.] we find him, not long after this, healing a man who had been lame from his birth; and who could never walk, till he commanded him to stand upon his feet. And then, immediately, he both leaped and walked. After that, he raised Eutychus from the dead.1 These were great and extraordinary miracles; such as were worked, by few, or none, but apostles. And, as to his doing common miracles in a superior manner, we have a noted instance, Acts xix. 11, 12. For handkerchiefs and aprons, which had touched his body, were carried to sick persons, at a distance. And they were immediately healed of their diseases.

3. From this time we find him possessed of the power of conferring spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers, upon others, by the laying on of his hands. It is altogether unlikely that he should have this power, upon his conversion; because it was peculiar to apostles, and he was not then constituted an apostle. But, after this, he communicated the holy spirit to Timothy,2 to the Galatians,3 to the

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1 Acts xx. 9, — 12.  
2 Tim. i. 6.  
3 Gal. iii. 2, 3; 5.
conferred on Saúl.

Tbessalonians, to the Corinthians, and to twelve disciples of John the Baptist, at Ephesus. He longed, also, to go to Rome, that he might impart unto the Christians, there, some spiritual gifts; to the end they might be confirmed in their Christianity. Nay; he seems, from many hints in the Acts, and in his epistles, to have imparted the holy spirit, by the laying on of his hands, to all the adult Christians, where-ever he came: unless they had received it before.

Thus was Saúl qualified, for going out, as one of Christ's Apostles, to the idolatrous gentiles.

CHAP. I. SECT. IV.

Barnabas constituted apostle of the gentiles, at the same time with Saúl. What gifts and powers were bestowed upon him.

Though Saúl was thus qualified, and put in commission, as apostle of the gentile world; yet we have not so clear and full an account, when and where Barnabas received his qualifications, and commission. I have already intimated, that I take him to have been a distinct person from Joseph, surnamed Bar-sabas; who was set up, along with Matthias, as candidate for the apostleship, from which Judas Iscariot fell.

This Joses was a Levite, borne in the island Cyprus; whom the apostles surnamed Barnabas; that is, the son of consolation; when he contributed so plenteously to the charitable fund. I think it not improbable, but that he might have seen our Lord, before his ascension. For the fathers say, that he was one of the seventy disciples, whom our Lord sent out, during his own personal ministry upon earth. And he is said to have been full of the holy spirit. A phrase, which seemeth commonly to denote, that the spirit was poured

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* 1 Thess. i. 5. and v. 19, 20.  
* 1 Cor. i. 4. — 7.  2 Cor. i. 21, 22. and xii. 12.  

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Barnabas constituted Apostle


Poured down, immediately, from heaven; and not communicated, by the laying on of the hands of the apostles. From whence, it is likely that he was one of the hundred and twenty, upon whom the holy spirit was poured down, at the beginning. But, whether he had seen our Lord, before his ascension; or was converted afterwards; it is evident, that he was a superior prophet, and full of the holy spirit. And, as such, he had preached among Jews and devout gentiles. But now, he became an apostle, and went among the idolatrous gentiles. For he had been called, by the spirit, unto the same work with saul; and was set apart, in the same solemn manner, by the prophets, at Antioch, in Syria. The Lord had commanded him, as well as saul, to go and preach unto the gentiles. He is expressly called an apostle. And went, along with saul, to the same work, of converting idolatrous gentiles. When saul and he separated, he took a minister along with him, like an apostle. He is often called an apostle, by the fathers. And, what is more, saul, his fellow-apostle to the gentile world, asserteth that Barnabas had as good a claim as himself, to the apostolic authority and privileges. [1 Cor. ix. 4, — 7.] And the three of chief repute among the

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It must be owned the fathers used the word [apostle] in a lax sense; extending it, sometimes, to such, as, properly speaking, were not apostles. And though, in some places, they call Barnabas an apostle; yet, in other places, they term him apostolical only; and say, that he was one of the seventy, and fellow-laborer of Paul. But, I think, we ought to regard the scriptural representation, more than that of the fathers. And the scriptures seem, to me, to represent him as an apostle.

It may be objected, (1.) That Barnabas was not esteemed an apostle, properly speaking, by many of the antients. (2.) There is no account, in the new testament, of his being advanced to the number of the apostles. (3.) Gal. ii. 9. St. Paul says, “when they perceived the grace given unto me;” [which seems to be his apostleship.] And, if Barnabas had been an apostle, Paul could not have avoided saying, — “The grace, that was given unto us.”

To the first objection I would answer, that the fathers were not the most critical and exact interpreters of scripture. And that no sect, nor party, of christians will, now, be determined by their interpretations. To the second, I would say, that the scriptures have represented Barnabas as an apostle, and even expressly called him so, though they have not mentioned the exact time and place, when he was constituted an apostle. To the third, I would answer, that Barnabas had the right-hand of fellowship, given him, by James, Peter, and John, equally with St. Paul. And the reason, why there is nothing said about their perceiving the grace given unto Barnabas, might be, that there was then no opposition made to him, in the churches of Galatia, as there was most evidently to St. Paul. It is there plainly supposed, that the grace was given unto Barnabas; though it is not expressly said so.
of the gentiles.

the apostles of the circumcision; namely, James, Peter, and John, acknowledged him for a brother apostle; giving unto him, and Paul, the right-hand of fellowship, that they should go among the heathens, as the other apostles went among the Jews. [Gal. ii. 9.] Book III. Ch. I. Sect. IV. Acts xii.

As Barnabas, therefore, was an apostle of the gentiles. And after this, (but never before,) went and preached unto the idolatrous gentiles. As he is intimated to have been called, by the spirit, unto the same work, and at the same time, with Saul. And they were set apart together, by fasting, prayer, and laying on of bands. And went out; and, both jointly, and separately, labored in converting idolatrous gentiles. — Considering these things, I say, it seems highly probable, that he received his commission and qualifications, at Jerusalem, from our Lord, about the same time that Saul received his. It was not sufficient (I think) that Saul should, in his vision, be ordered to take Barnabas along with him. For, though he had seen Christ in the flesh, and could (possibly) bear witness of his being raised again; yet that was not all, which was required to constitute him apostle of the gentiles. He must have had proper revelations, as well as a commission. And it was not agreeable to our Lord's usual method, to give such a commission; much less such extraordinary revelations; mediately, and by a third person. I, therefore, suppose that Barnabas did now receive proper revelations, as well as a full commission, to constitute him an apostle of the gentile world: perhaps, by a fresh effusion of the spirit; or, rather, by a vision; in which our Lord Jesus Christ, himself, appeared to him, in person. For the apostolic commission used to be given, immediately, by our Lord himself, to the person, who was honored with that high office. And Saul, who was to be his fellow apostle, was now favored with receiving, both his commission, and qualifications, immediately from our Lord. Nay; I should think it very likely, that Barnabas had such a vision, while he was praying in one of the courts of the temple. For a more likely, and proper, time and place, cannot readily be assigned.

It may be deemed a very considerable objection against all this, that St. Luke, in the history of the Acts of the apostles, is entirely silent, as to the time when, and the manner in which, Barnabas was constituted an apostle of the gentiles. But, to this, it is easy to reply; that, antecedent to Saul's going out, upon this commission, St. Luke hath taken very little notice of his receiving it. We are left to collect it, from St. Paul's speeches, afterwards; and from the short and transient hints of it, which are dispersed, up and down,
in his epistles. And, were it not for these last helps, we should not have been able to give any more account of it, than we can of Barnabas his receiving his illumination, and apostolic power. From the history, which followeth, and from the epistles, we may collect a general account of both. Indeed, that concerning Saul, is much more perfect. For the history of him is related much more largely. And (very probably) he received more abundant revelations; though their power and authority, as apostles, were equal.

I do not know whether the divine wisdom might not choose these two men, for apostles to the gentile world, for this reason, among others; namely, that Barnabas his singular softness of temper, and remarkable goodness, and Saul’s zeal and warmth, might make a proper mixture for so great and extraordinary an undertaking. For it was, undoubtedly, an honor to the divine wisdom, that he raised up men, whose natural tempers, as well as supernatural gifts, were well suited to their functions.

At the first view, it appeareth very strange, that there should be twelve apostles of the circumcision, and but two apostles of the gentiles; when the gentiles were so much more numerous than the Jews. But, if we consider that the gentiles were, many of them, better disposed to receive the gospel; that these two apostles had numerous affiants, who attended upon them, or went and came at their directions; and that Paul labored more abundantly than all the twelve apostles of the circumcision; — it will abate our wonder; and convince us, that the method, which God took, was sufficient to attain the end proposed.

CHAP.
Barnabas and Saul, thus qualified, and put in commission, as Apostles of the heathen world, fulfilled their ministry, at Jerusalem; which was "the faithfully delivering the charity into the hands of the elders there." And then they returned to Antioch in Syria; taking along with them John, whose surname was Mark. He was nephew to Barnabas. And it was at his mother's house, that St. Peter found the Christians praying, when he was miraculously delivered out of the hands of Herod. Of all the Apostles, Mark seemeth to have had a peculiar regard and affection for St. Peter. But, as that Apostle was now gone from Jerusalem; and whither, John Mark (very probably) knew not; he set forward, with his uncle Barnabas, and with Saul, upon their first apostolic journey. But, before they go out, they are, by the immediate direction of the Spirit, recommended unto God, for his blessing: and that in the following manner. The church at Antioch in Syria (which...
The prophets pray over Barnabas and Saul.

An. Chri 44. (which appeareth to have consisted of converts from among the devout gentiles) was, from this time forward, looked upon, as the mother-church to the gentile churches; as that of Jerusalem was of the Jewish, or of all the Christian, churches. For, as the apostles, and apostolic men, were sent out, from the church, at Jerusalem, to convert Jews, Samaritane, and devout gentiles; and afterwards returned thither, to give an account of their success:—so the apostles of the gentiles, and their attendants, were sent out, from Antioch, in Syria, among the idolatrous gentiles; and returned thither, to give an account of their success. In that church, at Antioch, there was no apostle, before this return of Barnabas and Saul; nor were they, as yet, declared to be apostles. But there were, some superior prophets; and others, who were doctors, or teachers. And they had, among them, the care of that church; governing and teaching it, by an extraordinary assistance of the spirit; namely, Barnabas; and Simeon, called Niger, [or the Black;] Lucius, a Cyrenaean, and Manabem, who had been brought up with Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee; and, lastly, Saul.

One day, while they were assembled for religious worship, and were spending their time, in prayer, fasting, and other acts of devotion; the spirit made known, to that church, their apostleship; and, by the mouth of some of the prophets, there present, said: "Separate me Barnabas and Saul, unto the work, to which I have already called them." They readily obeyed that divine direction. And, having, in a very solemn manner, recommended them unto God, for his blessing, by fasting, and prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the prophets and teachers; they very affectionately took their leave of them; when they went out, as apostles, to the idolatrous gentiles. Not that, by the laying on of their hands, they conferred any

Ver. 1. Niger.] This is one instance, out of many, of St. Luke's latinizing; where he prefers the even the latin termination. Some have conjectured, that this was Simon the Cyrenaean, the father of Alexander and Rufus; who was compelled to bear the cross after Christ, when he went up mount Calvary. For, it is very probable, that he was of a tawny, or black, complexion; as the Africans generally are. The only objection to this, is, that Lucius, who is next mentioned, is called a Cyrenaean, by way of distinction from the other; as if he had been the only Cyrenaean there present. But this Simeon, called Niger, might be a native of some other part of Africa. Whoever this Simon, or Simeon, was; the romanists, most likely, had given him the surname of Niger, or the black.

So συνέτατος signifies. [See 2 Maccab. ix. 29.] See, also, Plutarch and Polybius, as quoted by Raphaelius; who hath observed that it was customary for princes and great men to have boys brought up along with them, as their play-fellows and companions.
Their first Apostolic journey.

any spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers. For Barnabas and Saul were already full of the Holy Spirit. And none but Apostles could confer such gifts, or powers. Where they were wanting, neither could the prophets at Antioch give a commission, or authority, to these two Apostles of the Gentiles. For they had already received full commission and authority, from our Lord Jesus Christ himself. They, therefore, did no more than pray with, and for, them; and earnestly implore the divine blessing, upon their future labors. In which sense, Christ's ministers are ordained, now a-days: period of or separated unto their great and solemn office. For they derive no power or authority from men; nor can bishops, or presbyters, confer the Holy Spirit, by the laying on of their hands. For the age of miracles is ceased. And none but Apostles could confer the Spirit, whilst it continued.

CHAP. II. SECT. II.

Barnabas and Saul (with John Mark to attend upon them) go to Seleucia. From thence they sail to Cyprus. They preach to the Jews, and devout Gentiles, in the synagogues, at Salamis. They go through the island, to Paphos; and there convert the Roman proconsul. Saul, from this time, is called Paul. They afterwards sailed to Perga in Pamphilia; from whence John Mark returned to Jerusalem, leaving them to prosecute the work without him. Acts xiii. 4, 13.

Barnabas and Saul, thus commissioned, by the Lord Jesus Christ; and sent out, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia of Pieria. It lay fifteen miles below Antioch, upon the same river, Orontes; and five, from the place, where the river falls into the sea. It was built by Seleucus Nicator; from whom it had the name of Seleucia. From thence, they sailed to the island Cyprus, situated in the eastern part of the Mediterranean sea;
26 Sergius Paulus converted.

An. Chr. 45: Claud. 5 Book III. Ch. II. Sect. II. Acts xiii. 4, Gr.

being Barnabas his native country. As this island was not far from Judae, it abounded with Jews; and, that they were very numerous there, is confirmed by several antient authors. The first place, which they arrived at, in that island, was the city Salamis; which lay upon the eastern extremity, and was one of the nighest ports to Syria. Christianity had already been planted, in some parts of the island; though it was onely among the Jews. [Acts xi. 19.] But, now, Barnabas and Saul frequented the synagogues, at Salamis (where there were more than one) and preached the gospel, both to the Jews, and devout gentiles. And thus far, John Mark, as their minister, or assistant, waited upon them; and did other lesser offices for them, and at their direction; as the ministers did, to the rulers of the Jewish synagogues. After that, they travelled, almost the length of the island, till they came to Paphos; which was situated upon the western extremity, and famous among the heathens, for the temple, and the obscene worship, of Paphian Venus. There resided Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul; who was a man of good understanding, and well-disposed to receive the truth, and obey it. And, as he had heard of the character of these two apostles; and (very probably) some imperfect rumor of the Christian religion; he sent for them, and desired that they would give him an account of the Christian doctrine. As he was the first of the idolatrous gentiles, that ever the gospel was preached to; Barnabas and Saul did not go to offer it to him. For they had scarce shook off their Jewish prejudices. But he sent for them; as Cornelius, the first-fruits of the devout gentiles, sent for the Apostle Peter; requesting it, as a favor, that he might hear them preach the gospel. But with the proconsul, there was one of the magi; a false prophet, of the nation of the Jews, whose name

Ver. 7. Strabo faith [l. 14. sub. fin.] that Cyprus was a prætorian (and not a consular) province. And, therefore, one would think, that, in propriety of speech, Sergius Paulus should have been called cæsariæ, vel. divi cæsariæ, a proprætor; and not ἀστυπλόρος, a proconsul. But Dr. Lardner hath, with great clearness, and most satisfactory evidence, shown, that the governors of prætorian provinces were commonly called proconsuls. See his credibility of the gospel history, part i. p. 31, 32. 2d edition, &c. 3d edition. & Dio, p. 505. B, C. collat. cum p. 504. C.

b That Sergius Paulus might leave off his idolatrous rites, from this time, even though he continued in that office; much more if he quitted it; — See Moyle's works, vol. 2. p. 196, 197. I suppose, if he had quitted his office, upon the account of his having imbraced the Christian religion, the sacred historian would have taken notice of it.

Ver. 8. See the note on Acts viii. 9. Herodotus [edit. Gale, p. 44.] represents the Medes as one of the nations of the Medes. However; he afterwards speaks of some of them as interpreters of dreams; [p. 46; 51. ad fin. p. 52; 55.] and as singing over the Persian sacrifices, and necessarily praefideng. [p. 57.]
Bar-Jesus struck blind, by Saul; called also Paul

name was Bar-Jesus. He had a great influence over that governor. And, when Bar-Jesus, who was otherwise called Elymas (which, in the arabic tongue, signifieth the magian) found that the proconsul was inclined to hear, and imbace, the christian faith, he secretly, and with all his might, endeavored to dissuade him from it. Saul soon detected his malice and wickedness, and severely reprimanded him; denouncing against him the approaching judgments of God. Just as St. Peter had reprimanded the hypocrisy and wickedness of Simon Magus; and, by his apostolic power, inflicted death upon Ananias and Sapphira, for their fraud and lying, when they pretended to contribute all they had, towards the charitable, christian fund. For Saul, being full of the holy spirit, and fixing his eyes intently upon Bar-Jesus; he, in an awful and affecting manner, thus addressed him: "You deceitful, malicious, and monstrously wicked, man; who, by your enmity to truth and holiness, prove yourself a child of Satan, that grand apostate. Dare you still persist in perverting men from the straight ways of knowledge and virtue, in which the Lord Jesus Christ would have all men to walk? Have you not already too long seduced men into error and wickedness, by your lying and hypocrisy? You have, indeed, hitherto escaped with impunity: but you shall no longer escape. For the hand of the Lord Jesus, whose gospel you oppose, is upon you; the divine judgments will speedily overtake you. And you shall be, for some time, entirely blind, and deprived of your bodily sight; which will be a lively emblem of the wilful and affected blindness of your understanding, or conscience." Scarce had Saul spoke the words, when suddenly there fell upon Bar-Jesus his eyes a total blindness. And he went about, gropeing, like one in the dark; and seeking for somebody to lead him by the hand. His being thus instantly struck blind, did effectually open the proconsul's eyes. Upon which, he imbraced the christian faith; being quite astonished at the doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ, which was attended with such divine power, and amazing evidence. And this proconsul was the first convert to christianity, among the idolatrous gentiles. Now, therefore, did Barnabas and Saul begin to execute their apostolic commission, by laying the foundation of the christian church, among the idolatrous gentiles; and making use of the apostolic rod. And they, very probably, communicated the gift of the holy spirit to the proconsul, by the laying on of their hands. For (as it will hereafter appear) they usually did so, to all their adult converts.
About this time, also, saul began to be called paul. The reasons, which have been assigned for this, are various and many. I shall only mention the two, which are most probable. (1.) Some think that he had the name of paul given him, from converting Sergius Paulus; as Scipio was called Africanus, from his conquering Africa; and other romans had names given them, from subduing other countries. But, I rather approve of the second way of accounting for it; namely, That he had received, at his circumcision, the two names of paul and saul; that is, paul, as his roman name; for he was borne a freeman of Rome: and saul, as his jews name; for he was a jew, and even an hebrew of the hebrews. As, therefore, he used to be called saul, whilest he continued among the jews; that being a more common and acceptable name among them; so hereafter, being to go among the gentiles, he goeth by the name of paul, as what would be better known, and more acceptable, to them. For the same reason, Silas, who was afterwards st. paul's great companion, seemeth to me to have had also the name of Silvanus; and to have gone, by the former name, among the jews; and by the latter, among the romans. For I take him to have been a freeman of Rome, as well as st. paul. From this time, it is observable that st. luke, in the history of the acts of the apostles, generally mentioneth paul before barnabas. Whereas; he had, hitherto, always mentioned him last. Nay; in reckoning up the five, who were only prophets and teachers, in the church, at Antioch, he put barnabas the first, and saul the last: because (very probably) barnabas was one of the oldest, and saul the youngest, convert, among them. But now, when he became so eminent an apostle, as not to come a whit behind the chief of the apostles, he is mentioned the first; as the principal person of the story, and the most honored of them all.

paul, barnabas, and mark, loosing from Paphos, sailed (most probably, up the river Cestrus) to Perga, a town of Pamphilia, not far from the coast of Asia minor; nigh to which there was a temple dedicated to Diana. There seemeth to have been neither a jews synagogue, nor proselytis, in that town. For we read nothing of their attempting to preach the gospel there, at this time. But there it was, that john mark left them, and went back to jerusalem; as supposing, perhaps, that st. peter (in whose company he seemeth to have most delighted) might be returned thither: especially, as king Herod was...
They both go to Antioch in Pisidia.

was dead; who had formerly made such an attempt upon the life of

that APOSTLE.

Whether John Mark made any scruple of receiving idolatrous gen-
tiles, into the christian church; or was discouraged by the dangers and
difficulties of such an attempt; or was prevailed upon to return,
merely out of his extraordinary regard and affection for St. PETER; AActs xiii.
cannot now be determined, with any certainty.

CHAP. II. SEC. III.

Paul and Barnabas go to Antioch in Pisidia; enter
the synagogue there. Paul made a long discourse; by
which he converted several Jews, and devout gentiles.
Acts xiii. 14, — 43.

From Perga, Paul and Barnabas went, farther into the
country, and came to Antioch in Pisidia. There they,
according to custom, entered into the Jewish synagogue, on the sabbath-
day, and sat down; most probably in the chairs of the doctors, to
intimate their errand. The ancient Jews had divided the law into 53,
or 54 sections; and the prophets into as many. And, by usually
reading a section of each, every sabbath-day; and joining two of the
shortest together, for two sabbath-days; they read the greatest part
of the old testament over, once every year. Some say that the
custom:

Ver. 15. See Prideaux his connexion, &c. vol. I. p. 333, 334. 4th edition,
8vo. 1718. I had once thought that the Jews, in their synagogues, had read through
the whole of the old testament, once every year. But, in Dr. Wotton's misna, [vol.
2. p. 107.] I find the following observations.

"The old testament is divided, by the Jews, into the law, the prophets, (except
"Daniel) and what the Christian writers call the hagiographa, the Jews only [cha-"vahim] writings. The law and the prophets (under which they comprehend Job,
"Judges, the books of Samuel, and the Kings) were read, in the synagogues, every
"sabbath day. The law, in its course, as St. James observes, Acts xv. 21. and
"some particular sections in the prophets, which they call haphtaroth, that cor-"respond to the respective parahbas, or sections, in the law. The other books, or
"writings, are Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, Chronicles, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes,
"Ruth, Canticles, Esther, and Lamentations. These were not read, in the syna-
gogues, in the ordinary sabbatic service. As for the Psalms, which are a very con-
 siderable
St. Paul's speech, in the synagogue,

An. Christi custom was introduced by Ezra. And, indeed, it appeareth to have been of an antient date; though scarce so antient as Ezra. Till that reading of the law and the prophets was over, Paul and Barnabas fuste as hearers. But, after the reading of the scriptures, the rulers of the synagogue used to permit, or desire, whom they pleased, to explain what had been read; or to make some useful exhortations to the people. And, either knowing something of the character of these two apostles; or, perhaps, merely from their sitting in the chairs of the doctors; the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, desiring, that, if they had any doctrine, or pious exhortation, to deliver unto the people, they would speak freely and openly, in the synagogue. Then Paul, (who was generally their mouth, or speaker; as St. Peter was, among the apostles of the circumcision) beckoning with his hand for silence, addressed himself, both to the Jews and devout gentiles, saying: “You, Israelites; and you, gentiles, who also fear and worship the true God; attend to what I am going to say. The God of Israel, the one only living and true God, chose our fathers, to bear their testimony against idolatry, and considerable part of the hagiographa, they were never (as I believe) read in course, in the liturgic offices, as they are with us; but some of the most remarkable of them, especially of those which related the wonderful things, which God had wrought for their forefathers, were inserted in their daily offices, and in the particular offices of their solemn festivals; among which, the Sabbath was the chief.” This is confirmed by what Dr. Lightfoot has said, vol. 2. p. 1102. of his works.

Vitringa de vetera synagoga, l. 3. part. ii. c. 10.

Ver. 17. b The apostles preached the same God, in whom the Jews already believed; and would have persuaded them, likewise, to have believed in Jesus of Nazareth, as the promised Messiah. To convince them that he was so, they argued, both from facts, and from the prophecies of the old testament. This was their usual method of treating both the Jews and devout gentiles. But, when they addressed devout gentiles alone, they did not recite the history of the old testament, and take their rise from the renowned ancestors of the Jewish nation. No! then it was, “In every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable unto him.” [See Acts x. 34, 35.] But, when the Jews were the only, or the principal, persons addressed; then they took their rise from the history of past dispensations: and, particularly, from Abraham, the father of the nation; who was the first that was separated from an idolatrous world, and had the most express promise, “that, in his seed, all the nations of the earth should be blessed:” as they were, very eminently, in Jesus Christ, his great descendent. Abraham, for his probity, faith, and cheerful obedience, was intituled the father of the faithful; and good men were styled the children of Abraham. His name was in great esteem among the Jews, and was as likely as any thing to procure attention. St. Matthew, who wrote his gospel more immediately for the use of the converted Jews, begineth our Lord’s genealogy with Abraham. St. Peter introduceth his discourse, to the Jews, with the name of that great patriarch. [Acts iii. 13.] So doeth St. Stephen. [Acts vii. 2.] And,
and to receive the former revelations of his mind and will. And
he increased their numbers, and made them considerable, even
when they were strangers, in the land of Egypt; and, when they
were oppressed there, he, miraculously, and by his mighty power,
raised them from their low estate; brought them out from thence;
and as miraculously preserved them, for about forty years in the
wilderness; bearing with them, though they were a perverse and
obedient people; feeding and cherishing them, as a nursing mo-
other does her own children. He hedged them in, by peculiar
laws, from mixing with the nations: lest they should learn their
evil customs; and, particularly, lest they should be infected with
their idolatry. And he destroyed seven idolatrous, and exceeding-
ly wicked, nations, in the land of Canaan; namely, the Hittites,
the Girgasites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the
Hivites, and the Jebusites; in order to plant his people Israel,
there, for a testimony against the idolatry and wickedness of the
world around them. And there they continued, for about four
hundred and fifty years, governed sometimes by judges, whom
GOD

And St. Paul, in this place, very naturally, and with great propriety, mentions
the name of Israel; taking occasion, from the history of past dispensations, to intro-
duce the gospel-doctrine. Which was, in brief, that the great promise, made of old
to the fathers, was now accomplished; and the Messiah actually come. For the Abra-
hamic covenant and the gospel had a great affinity. The law of Moses being only an
intermediate state; to preserve, at least, one nation, from idolatry, and prepare
them for the reception of the Messiah. May we not hence conjecture, whenever they
are said to go to the Jewish synagogue, and discourse, or preach, or teach the word of the
Lord, or the kingdom of God, or the word of God, or the word; that this was their
common method, which they used more largely, or briefly, as they saw occasion?

Ver. 18. *Eppopóxov, according to the Alexandrian and Cambridge manuscripts,
and the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions. [Vid. Millium & Drujium.] See how
the divine care over Israel is expressed, Deut. xxxii. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 19. *There are seven nations mentioned, Deut vii. 1. Josh. iii. 10. and
xxiv. 11. But, Exod. iii. 8. there are only six. For the Girgasites are there
wanting. The Hebros say, that they fled before the face of the Israelites, and
settled in Africa. And Procopius mentioneth them among the Africans. Vandal-
orum, i. 2. [Vid. Grot. in loc.]

Ver. 20. *Sir John Marsham, and others after him, have conjectured, that the
judges, in Israel, did not reign over the whole nation, one after another; but, some-
times, more than one reigned, at the same time, in different parts of the land. How-
ever; the reigns of the several judges, when added to one another, amount exactly to
450 years. And it is likely that that was the common computation of the Jews,
in St. Paul's days; from which the Apostle had no particular occasion to va-
ry. [See Whifton's short view of the chronology of the old testament, p. 43, &c.]
Others reckon that the Apostle begins his computation from the birth of Isaac,
when Canaan was promised unto Abraham and his seed; and carries it down unto their
getting
St. Paul's speech, in the synagogue.

GOD raised up, as occasion was. And, when they desired a king, like the surrounding nations; he gave them Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin; who (together with Samuel the prophet) governed Israel forty years. And, having removed him, God raised up David, from a mean and low state of life, to be king over his people Israel. Of whom he testified his approbation, saying; I have found David, the son of Jeph; (who will not, like Saul, disregard my commands; but will prove) a man according to mine own heart; and govern Israel, just as I shall direct and appoint. From king David, GOD promised that the Messiah should descend. And he hath now fulfilled that promise. For he hath actually raised up that Savior, to Israel, out of the house of David. And Jesus of Nazareth is the very person. Before him, came John the baptist, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to prepare the way for his appearance; by preaching up the necessity of repentance unto all Israel, and baptizing multitudes of such getting possession of that land, and it's being divided unto them by lot, which was about 450 years. And they point and interpret this verse, thus, — "After these things were transacted; which took up the space of about 450 years; then GOD gave them judges, &c." So that, according to this interpretation, the time, in which the judges reigned in Israel, is not determined in this place.

Ver. 21. Josephus [Antiq. Jud. I. 6. c. ult. § ult.] hath these words, concerning Saul. "Ecce ille, Samualus, ex eo, qui adhuc te nascere voluit, quem David, quinquaginta annorum ortus est, primum domini regnum accipit, et postea filium eius Salomonem." He [that is, Saul.] reigned 18 years, while Samuel was alive; and 22 years, after his death. The copies of Epiphanius leave out [auctos 20.] and they are judged, by some learned men, to be the most correct copies, that do so. (Vid. Hudson in loc.) But, as all the greek copies of Josephus retain the word [auctos 20.] and the common reading there, is supported, by this part of St. Paul's speech, at Antioch, I should be rather inclined to retain it, provided the exact chronology of the old testament would admit of it.

Ver. 22. When it is said, that king David was a man after GOD's own heart; it ought to be understood of his public (and not of his private) character. "He was a man after GOD's own heart, because he ruled his people Israel, according to the divine will." He did not allow of idolatry. He did not set up for absolute power. He was guided, in the government of the nation of Israel, by the law of Moses, as the standing rule of government; and by the prophet, or the divine oracle, whereby GOD gave directions upon particular emergencies. Whatever Saul's private character was, he was not a good king in Israel. He did not follow the law, the oracle, and the prophet; but attempted to be absolute; and thereby to subvert the constitution of that kingdom.

That this was the meaning of David's being a man after GOD's own heart, will easily appear, from comparing the following texts, 1 Sam. xiii. 13, 14, and xv. 28, and xxvii. 17, 18. 1 Chron. x. 13, 14. Ps. lxxviii. 70, &c. and lxxxix. 20, &c.

Ver. 23. 1 Fa. ix. 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. compared with Pial. lxxix. 3, 44 24; 28.
at Antioch in Pisidia:

such as professed repentence; that they might be pure, and meet subjects for that holy kingdom approaching.

And, though the people in general accounted John a prophet, and many took him for the Messiah; yet, when he had almost filled the course of his ministry, he declared, that he deferred not the honor done him. For he was not the Messiah. But there was one coming after him, whose shoes he was not worthy to stoop down and loose; and that was the Messiah himself. The great and eminent person, who came after John, and who was actually the Messiah, was Jesus of Nazareth; whose Apostles we are, travelling through the world, qualified and commissioned by him, to publish these glad tidings of great joy, among all nations. And, at present, more particularly to you, Jews, and to you, devout gentlemen, who worship the true God, and whom we look upon, as brethren, as well as the Jews: — Unto both of you, I say, is this doctrine of salvation sent; though you live not in the promised land of Canaan. Whereas, the Jews, who dwell at Jerusalem; and especially their rulers, being ignorant of his being the true Messiah, through their misinterpretations of the prophecies concerning him; those very prophecies, I mean, which are read in their synagogues, every sabbath-day; — have, by condemning him, fulfilled what was there predicted. Nay; though they could not justly accuse him of any crime; much less of any capital crime; yet they petitioned Pilate, the Roman procurator, that he might be crucified. And, when all the prophecies, concerning his death, and the manner and circumstances of it, were fulfilled; Joseph of Arimathea, a person of distinction, who was one of his disciples, was permitted to take down his body from the cross; and he, together with Nicodemus, imbalmed and buried it; laying it in a new sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock. But, though a great stone was laid, to stop the mouth of the sepulchre, and Pilate’s signet fixed upon it, and a guard of Roman soldiers set to watch the body; yet God raised him from the dead. And, by all their care, they could not prevent his resurrection, or resist the divine power. Of the truth and reality of his resurrection, there were sufficient witnesses. For he appeared, once and again, for several days together, unto them, who had been well acquainted with him before his death; who had gone up with him, from Galilee, to Jerusalem; and who were so thoroughly satisfied that he was risen again, as to be competent, and unexceptionable, witnesses.

Ver. 27. — More particularly the liii. chapter of Isaiah; and Dan. ix. 26.
St. Paul's speech, in the synagogue,

An. Christi witnesses unto the people. And we join with them, in bearing testimony. For this is our message to you, at this time: namely, That the grand and antient promise, of a Messiah, which was frequently made, and repeated, to our fathers, God hath now fulfilled, unto us, their children; and that, by raising up Jesus from the dead, he hath given a strong and remarkable evidence of his being the very person. For of him it is written, in the second psalm, ἴου art my son, this day have I begotten thee; that is, Thou art Lord and heir of all things, as being the first-begotten (or first-borne) from the dead. And, by having raised him from the dead, (not as the other persons, who were raised before him, to die again; but) so as that he should never die any more; he hath fulfilled other prophecies: particularly, Isa. lv. 3, &c. where he promiseth to make an everlasting covenant, and to grant the sure mercies of David, or of the son of David; who was to be a witness to the people of Israel, and likewise to accept the other nations, into his kingdom. Now, if the Messiah had continued in the grave, and never been exalted to his power and dominion, he could not have performed his part of the everlasting covenant; nor blessed the world with the great mercies, promised to the house of David. Wherefore, in another psalm, he thus addresseth his father, ἴου wilt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption. Which expressions cannot, with that propriety and emphasis, be applied to king David, as they may to Jesus, his great descendant. For David, after he had done the work of his day, did, by the will and appointment of God, fall asleep; and was gathered to his mortal progenitors; and his body is long since reduced to corruption and rottenesse. But this was literally fulfilled, in Jesus of Nazareth, whom God raised from the dead, on the third day; that is, before his body was corrupted. Seeing, therefore, God of old promised him; the antient prophets prophesied of him; John the baptist prepared the way before his coming; and pointed out Jesus of Nazareth to the people, as the very person. See-

Ver. 32. Some manuscripts and fathers read here the first psalm. [vid. Mill.] Which hath made some to look upon what we call the first, to have been either an introduction to the whole book of psalms; or to have been formerly joined to the second, as a part of that psalm. And, accordingly, by some of the antients, the first and second were reckoned as but one psalm. — The psalms were originally divided. But the division of the other parts of scripture, into distinct chapters, is not so antient. And in many places, the divisions are not sufficiently judicious and accurate.

Ver. 35. Psalm xvi. 10.
ing God hath raised from the dead, never to die any more; and An.Christi
so many hundreds, now living, can bear witness of the truth
and reality of his resurrection: — Be it known unto you,
that faith in him, and a conformity to that doctrine, which he
hath sent us to publish among you, will justify you, from all your
past sins; from the guilt of many of which, you could not be just-
tified, by the law of Moses. And let me intreat you to take heed, 38, &c.
last, by your rejecting this proposal, that be applicable to you,
which one of the ancient prophets spoke, upon another occasion,
unto such as were then wicked and disobedient: Be bold, you, that
dispite my message, be astonished; and go away and hide yourselves,
with shame and confusion of face. For, though I am doing such a
thing, in your days, as is great, extraordinary, and surprising;
yet you will not believe and regard it; even though it be declared
unto you, with so much planeous and convincing evidence.”

When Paul had made an end of speaking, the Jews, went out of
the synagogue, and the devout gentiles (who were, of all others, the
best disposed for the reception of Christianity) tarried behind; and they
defired of Paul and Barnabas, that this doctrine might be preached
to them, in the following week, and before the next sabbath-day;
that is, on the second and fifth day of the week, on which they used
to assemble, at the synagogue, as well as on the sabbath-day. When
the congregation was broken up, several of the Jews, and devout gen-
tiles, followed Paul and Barnabas, and imbraced the Christian reli-
gion: whom the apostles farther instructed in the scheme of the
Christian doctrine; and exhorted them, by all means, to persevere in that
religion, which they had now imbraced.

Ver. 40. = Hab. i. 5. The twelve latter prophets used to be bound together, and
quoted as one book. And, therefore, instead of mentioning the particular prophet,
the Jews used to say, “The prophets have said so and so.”

Ver. 42. — Παρακάλεσα γάρ ὑμῖν, They besought the gentiles; or the gentiles besought
them.] The words are capable of either interpretation. But I prefer the latter, be-
cause we have no other instance of the apostles beeaehing persons to hear them;
bUt several, of persons begging, or desiring, to hear them. And the latter was more
becoming the dignity of their high office. We have an instance, ver. 48, of this
chapter; where the nominative case follows its verb, as I suppose it doeth here.
There are other instances, John ii. 11. Rom. xi.7.
* See Lightfoot’s works, vol. i. p. 291. But the words should be read thus, ἄρα
μετάξος τοῦ σιωπάτου. See Grotius, Duyfius, Scaliger, & Casaubon, in loc.
The idolatrous gentiles flock to the synagogue, the next sabbath-day. The jews, being exasperated, blaspheme. Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and preached to the idolatrous gentiles; gathering the first church of them, there. The unbelieving jews, upon that, raise a persecution against the two apostles; who, notwithstanding, behave with great meekness and patience. Acts xiii. 44, — 52.

The coming of the two apostles, and their preaching in the synagogue, the first sabbath-day, had made a great noise, and alarmed all the city; and their teaching the devout gentiles, in the succeeding week, had increased the rumor. Upon which, almost all the inhabitants flocked to the synagogue, the next sabbath-day, to hear them preach the christian doctrine; that is, the idolatrous gentiles came now, as well as the jews, and devout gentiles. But, when the jews saw the multitude of idolatrous gentiles flocking to their synagogue, and that the two apostles were the occasion of it; they lost all patience. And, envying them, upon the account of the same and reputation, which they had acquired, in so short a time, they openly opposed the christian doctrine; contradicting what Paul said, and that with reproachful and railing speeches. For the temper of the jews was every where alike, inveterately bent against the reception of the gentiles; unless they would first be circumcised, and become subject to the whole law. The two apostles, having gained most of the jewish converts, which they expected there; and the rest being thus notoriously hardened; they indeavored to provoke them to jealousy, by taking in the idolatrous gentiles; whom the jews had never, in the least degree, regarded as the people of God. But, as this was the first time of preaching

Ver. 45. * Now the beautiful parable of the elder brother’s murmuring, at the return of the prodigal son, was remarkably fulfilled. [See Luke xv. 25, &c.]
to hear the apostles preach. and was a new, a vast, attempt; and, in the account of the whole nation of the jews, an attempt that was exceeding odious; it required no small degree of resolution and fortitude, to set about it. Accordingly; it is taken notice of, by the sacred historian, St. Luke, that, upon this occasion, Paul and Barnabas waxed bold; that is, Acts xiii., they were animated with sufficient courage, publicly to tell the jews so harsh and ungrateful a truth, saying: “It was necessary for us, according to the wise order and appointment, which we received from heaven, to preach the gospel, first, unto you, jews. But christianity is not, like the Mosaic dispensation, confined to you alone. No! as you so generally reject the gracious offer, and therefore by condemn yourselves, as unworthy of the blessings and privileges of the Messiah’s kingdom; and, particularly, of that greatest blessing of eternal life and happiness; behold we will, for the future, apply ourselves only to the gentiles, in this city; (that is, such as have formerly been idolatrous, as well as devout, gentiles;) and receive, as many of them, as will imbrace the gospel, into the christian church. For, so hath the Lord Jesus Christ commanded us. And it is agreeable to what the antient prophets have predicted; particularly, Isaiah, [chap. xlix. 6.] where the Messiah having complained of his laboring in vane, among the jews, God answereth him: “Though Israel should not be gathered, yet be should be glorious in the eyes of the Lord; and God would be his strength and support. However; he adds, that he should have success elsewhere. For it is a light thing (faith God) that thou shouldst be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel. I will, also, give thee for a light to the gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation, unto the ends of the earth.” And, when even the idolatrous gentiles heard that such things had been prophesied, concerning them, many ages ago; and that the Lord Jesus had commanded his apostles to make them the offers of salvation, and accept them into the christian church, without circumcision, and observing the law of Moses; they were exceeding glad; and highly applauded the gospel-dispensation, for it’s benevolence and extensive charity. And as many of them as were disposed for an eternal life of perfection and felicity, openly imbraced the christian religion.
A persecution thereupon, of the apostles.

as the most apt and proper mean to prepare them for that perfect and glorious state. Thus was the kingdom of God taken from the unbelieving and disobedient Jews, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

After this, the Christian doctrine was carried through all the surrounding country. For it was their common, and wise method, to begin with a city; and afterwards to plant Christianity in the adjacent towns and villages.

As Antioch in Pisidia was a gentile city, the Jews had not the civil power in their hands. But they were so incensed at the success of the two apostles; and particularly at the reception of the idolatrous gentiles, without requiring them first to become professed of righteousness; that they exasperated some women, who were devout gentiles, and persons of some quality and distinction. And, by their means, drew their husbands, or such other leading men of the city as they could influence, into their quarrel. And so raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their territories: though they had deserved other treatment at their hands. In return for such cruel and unjust usage, they did not call for fire from heaven to destroy them; nor work a miracle to do them any, the least, harm; no; nor did they so much as curse them, or thunder out their anathema against them. They only, according to the injunction of their Lord and Master, [Matt. x. 14. Luke ix. 5. and x. 10, 11.]

meekly disposed, or set in order. And hence it is very frequently used, as a military term, for the regularly drawing up, or setting in order, an army. So it is used by St. Luke, chap. vii. 8. and by Xenophon, Cyropæd. edit. Hutchison, 4to, 1. 2. p. 148. — Et µακαριος τοπογραφησεις: & 1. 5. p. 328. Καὶ ἡ ἄλλη ἡ περιοχὴ ἐπισκευασμένη and in many other places, [See Wolfius in loc.] So, also, it is said to be used by Plato, Thucydides, Julian, Elian, and Philo Judæus. And what showeth that it doeth not here refer to the decrees of God, but to the disposition of the minds of these gentiles, is, it's being used by way of antithesis to the persons mentioned, ver. 46. that is, to the unbelieving Jews; who, by their obstinacy and wickedness, condemned themselves, as unworthy of eternal life. Whereas; on the contrary, several of these gentiles, by their candor and probity of mind, manifested in so readily submitting to truth and evidence, and embracing a religion, so different from what they had received, and so contrary to their worldly interest; — showed themselves to be well disposed for the reception of the gospel. And, as many of them as were so disposed, embraced the Christian religion; as the best mean to prepare them for an endless life of the greatest virtue and purity; as well as of the greatest glory, and most perfect happiness.

In this sense, the Syriac, one of the most ancient versions of the New Testament, hath rendered these words. Which is of great moment: as that translation was made, before the sense of this place was disputed, by the different sects and parties of Christians.
meekly shook off the dust of their feet, to testify that they had been preaching the gospel among them: and that, if they did perish in their sins, they were free from their blood, and had delivered their own souls. The next place, which they went to, was Iconium. But the disciples, whom they had made, at Antioch, were (notwithstanding the persecution) filled with joy, and with the holy spirit. Acts xiii. Which phrase, [of being filled with the holy spirit,] is generally made use of, to intimate that the spirit fell down from heaven, immediately; and was not communicated, by the laying on of the hands of the apostles. And that was, perhaps, the case with this first church of idolatrous gentiles; as we are assured it was, with the first-fruits of the devout gentiles. [Acts x. 44, &c.] And we may also observe, that, as the first, and most considerable, church of devout gentiles, was at Antioch in Syria; so the first church, gathered from among the idolatrous gentiles, was at Antioch in Pisidia.

CHAP. II. SECT. V.

Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium; preached in the synagogue there; made several converts, both among the jews and devout gentiles. The unbelieving jews and gentiles conspired against them; and drove them from thence, to Derbe and Lystra. Acts xiv. I, — 7.

Being driven from Antioch in Pisidia, they went yet farther into the country; and came to Iconium, a town, or small city, of Lycaonia, situated at the foot of mount Taurus. And there, also, was a synagogue of the jews; into which, Paul and Barnabas entered, and preached the christian doctrine, so successfully, that many were converted, both of the jews, and of the devout gentiles. [But the unbelieving jews, their ever implacable enemies, by wicked and unjustifiable methods, exasperated the minds of their neighbors, the idolatrous gentiles, against the new converts to christianity.] However; as they had such success, the two apostles tarried a considerable time there, speaking openly and undauntedly in the name of the
They fled to Derbe, &c.

40 They fled to Derbe, &c. who gave testimony to the truth of the gospel-doctrine, by enabling them to work miracles of several kinds. And, though the unbelieving Jews were active, and with great malice stirred up as many of the Gentiles, as they could influence; yet the people of the city were divided; some taking part with the unbelieving Jews; and others with the Christians, and the two Apostles, which kept off the persecution, for some time longer. And, at last, when that party of the Jews and Gentiles, who were against them, had conspired together, and prevailed, upon the magistrates of the city, to use them in a base and cruel manner; and to stone them, as blasphemers of the law of Moses; the two Apostles got information of the violent attempt, that was going to be made; and fled, first to Derbe, and afterwards to Lystra, two other cities, or towns, of Lycaonia; and to other places in the neighborhood. And there, also, they preached the gospel; till the people were astonished, and much affected with their doctrine. For God often bringeth this good out of evil, to spread the gospel, by the persecution raised against such as preach it.

Ver. 3. a I apprehend that verse the 2d should be read in a parenthesis. For the connection of these three verses seems to be this, "As many of the Jews and Gentiles believed, (though the unbelieving Jews exasperated others of the Gentiles against them) therefore they tarried there a long time, &c." [See ver. 4.]

Ver. 5. b Deut. xiii, 6, &c. Ver. 6. c Matt. x. 23. e Some reckon them cities of Isauria, the neighboring province. I suppose St. Luke knew that they then belonged to Lycaonia. But towns upon the borders of two provinces were sometimes taken into the one, and sometimes into the other.

Ver. 7. e See the different readings of the manuscripts and versions, mentioned by Dr. Mill.
The lame man at Lystra, miraculously cured.

CHAP. II. SECT. VI.

The lame man at Lystra miraculously cured. The heathens would have sacrificed to the two apostles, as two gods. The apostles with difficulty restrain them, and preach the gospel to them. Acts xiv. 8, — 18.

At Lystra, there happened the following remarkable occurrence. St. Paul was preaching to a multitude of the inhabitants of that city, who were most of them idolatrous gentiles. And among the rest of his hearers, there was a man, who had been lame from his birth; and so impotent in his feet, that he had never been able to walk. This man gave great attention to the apostle's discourse. And St. Paul, looking intently upon him; and, (by the gift of discerning the secret thoughts of men) perceiving that he had faith sufficient to receive the cure; he instantaneously, and miraculously, healed him. Just as St. Peter, the great apostle of the circumcision, cured the man, at the beautiful gate of the temple, who had likewise been lame from his birth. For, as soon as ever St. Paul had said, with a loud voice, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I command you, and give you power, to stand upright, upon your feet," the man tried to do so, and found himself, at once, strong and sound. And immediately, before all the people, he leaped up, and walked. And, when the people saw what a miraculous and instantaneous cure the apostle had worked, they shouted aloud, in a kind of extasie and surprize; and, in the Lycaonian, or Cappadocian, language, (which many take to have been a dialect of the greek) they said: "The gods are come down to us, (as we have heard they do sometimes) in the shape and appearance of men." And they called Barnabas Jove; who was their chief god: very probably, because Barnabas had a better presence, and a more grand and majestic appearance. And, because Paul was the chief speaker, they called him Mercury; whom the heathens have represented as the god of eloquence, or as the messenger of the superior gods; and, particularly...
The apostles preach Christianity at Lystra.

An. Christi 46.
Claud. 6.
Book III.
Ch. II.
Sec. VI.
Acts xiv.
12, &c.

4.2 The apostles preach Christianity at Lystra. An.christi of fove; and the interpreter of his mind and will. For Jove was thought to carry Mercury along with him, when he appeared, upon earth, in an human shape. The image of Jove stood before one of the gates of Lystra. For they looked upon that god, as the peculiar guardian and protector of their city. And, upon this miracle, the priest of Jove, and with him a great multitude of people, brought oxen crowned with garlands, to the gates of the house, where Paul and Barnabas lodged; and were going to sacrifice the oxen to the two apostles; as they used to do to their deities. But Paul and Barnabas (far from receiving such homage, with pleasure and elation of mind; as king Herod did the blasphemous applause of the people, upon a far lesser occasion) ran, with great zeal, in among them; and, as unable to bear the very mention of such a thing, without horror and concern, they rent their cloaths, (by which the eastern nations used to show their grief, or indignation,) and with great earnestness spoke to them, to this effect: “Alas! we designed no such thing; but had quite other views, than setting up ourselves to be worshiped. For we are only frail and mortal men, like yourselves, liable to the evils and afflictions of life, and subject to death, as well as other men. We neither claim, nor deserve, any such homage. On the contrary, our business and errand unto you, at this time, is, to persuade you to turn from these vanities, these lifeless idols, unto the living and true God: that one God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are therein. Who, for many ages, hath left all nations (except the Jews) to the light of nature alone; to use, or abuse it, as they were disposed. Nevertheless, they are culpable, for their idolatry, and other abuses of the light afforded them; in as much as the works of creation always manifest the being of the true God. And it is a plane evidence of his goodness, power, and providence; in that he, the one true God, is the author of all good; and sendeth rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, to the just and unjust; not only

Ver. 13. b See Grotius on this place, who thought that the two apostles were to be crowned with the garlands. But that it was usual to put garlands upon the heads of the victims, see Lucian de sacrificiis, p. 368. ΛΑΛ ΟΙΣΕ ΗΠΟΙΗΣ, ΣΩΚΡΑΤΑΝ ΤΟΣ ΣΕΛΙΟΝ ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝΗ ΣΩΤΟ. Others, therefore, have thought that the oxen were already crowned with the garlands; or were to be so crowned. [See Wolfius and Doughtius in loc.]

Ver. 15. c Not men of like passions, or as wicked, lustful, and passionate, as you are. [See on James v. 17.]

Ver. 16. d No prophet (except Jonah) seems to have been sent to the gentile world, from the days of Noah, or Abraham. 1 Pet. iii. 20. Acts vii. 2, 3.
Timothy's conversion.

"only providing necessaries for mankind, but filling their hearts with "joy and gladness; and thereby inviting sinners to repent, and hope "for mercy." And, with all these arguments, they could scarce re- 
strain the people from sacrificing to them. —— This remarkable 
humility, in so uncommon an instance of popular applause, plainly 
showed by what spirit they were acted.

It appeareth to have been, in this city of Lystra, and at this time, 
of the Apostle's being there, that Lois, Eunice, and Timothy, 
were converted to the Christian faith. For St. Paul calleth Timothy, 
is own convert, or son, in the Christian faith. [1 Tim. i. 2.] Some 
have thought that Timothy's parents came from Thessalonica; because 
he is reckoned among the messengers of the church of the Thessalon- 
ians. [Acts xx. 4.] However; he appeareth to have been a native 
of Lystra; and to have been converted, there, at this time. For, 
when they came hither again, [Acts xiv. 21, 22.] they onely con- 
firmed the disciples, whom they had already made. And, the next 
time of St. Paul's coming to Lystra, [Acts xvi. 1, &c.] it is inti- 
mated that Timothy had distinguished himself among the Chris- 
rians. And, consequently, had been converted, some time before. But, if 
Timothy was now converted, it is highly probable that he had not 
as yet, any of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or any miraculous powers, 
impert to him, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles. 
They did, indeed, usually impart the Holy Spirit to all adult converts, 
immediately after baptism. But Timothy seemeth now to have been 
some years under twenty. And, thererfore, he could not yet be 
reckoned among the adult.
CHAP. II. SEC. VII.

The unbelieving jews, from Antioch and Iconium, follow them to Lystra; and incite the people to stone St. Paul. When they had left him for dead, he recovered; and went to Derbe, where he preached with good success. Acts xiv. 19, 20, 21.

When the two apostles had continued, some longer time, preaching the Christian doctrine, at Lystra, the malicious jews, their most constant enemies, followed them from Antioch and Iconium; and inciting the populace against them, as impostors, and ill-designing men, they prevailed with them to stone St. Paul; (upon the same account, as he himself had formerly consented to the stoning of St. Stephen.) And, when they had (not in a legal, but merely tumultuous, manner) stoned him, they dragged him out of the city, as thinking that he was quite dead. To this, very probably, the apostle alludeth, [2 Cor. xi. 23; 25.] when he saith, that he had been in death often; and that once he had been stoned.

So short-lived are human passions, not moderated by reason and principle; that, from imagining him to be a god, that thoughtless multitude were easily persuaded to stone St. Paul, as one of the vilest of men. Thus Israel fell into idolatry, within forty days from God's giving them the law, from Mount Sinai; and soon broke the promises, which fear and precipitant zeal had drawn from them. Nor could St. Paul expect any better treatment; if he considered, that his Lord and Master was applauded, as king of the jews, and followed with the acclamations of the same multitude, which, about six days after, petitioned Pilate that he might be crucified; and followed him, up Mount Cavalry, as a malefactor, to suffer that death, which they had desired the Roman procurator to inflict upon him. But, though Paul's enemies left him for dead, yet the Christians would not leave him; but stayed with the body, to receive him with joy, if he recovered; or to bury him, if he was actually dead.

Ver. 19. * See the manuscripts mentioned by Bena and Dr. Mill.
They return to Antioch; ordain elders, &c.

dead. And, while they were standing round about him, with much anxiety; he, to their unspeakable joy, revived, [by a miracle, as many think,] and got up, and went privately with them, into the city. And, the next day, he departed, with Barnabas, to Derbe, another neighboring town, or city; where, with all his bruises and sores about him, he began, with his wonted vigor and fortitude, to preach Christianity. And there, also, he made several converts. Acts xiv.

To his treatment, in those places, and at this time of his being there, doth St. Paul most evidently allude, [2 Tim. iii. 10, 11.] where he saith to Timothy; "You have fully known — the persecutions and afflictions, which befel me, at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra; what [or how great] things I there indured. But, out of them all, the Lord hath delivered me." As Timothy was a Lystrian, he had been, very probably, an eye-witnesse of the sufferings of St. Paul, in that place; and (particularly) one of them, who stood by, when the Apostle revived, after he was stoned, and left for dead.

C H A P. I I. S E C T. V I I I.

The apostles returned to Antioch in Syria, by the way, which they had gone from thence; and ordained elders, in every church, as they passed along. Acts xiv. 21, to the end of that chapter.

When they had preached the gospel, and made several converts at Derbe, they went no farther into the country; but returned back, the way they came; namely, through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia; visiting the several churches; and establishing the converts, which they had made before; exhorting them, by all means, to persevere in the christian faith; notwithstanding the evil treatment, which they [the apostles] met with; and the discouragements, which they themselves had hitherto labored under. And warning them not to expect, at that time, the happy kingdom of the Messiah, which the Jews promised themselves; but rather to expect
The conclusion of the first apostolic journey:

expect (as things then stood) that, through much tribulation, both they and their instructors must travel heaven-wards; as the antient Israelites travelled, through the wilderness, into Canaan.

Upon their first planting churches, in those cities, there is no mention made, of their ordaining bishops, and deacons; to præside over them, and manage their public affairs. But now, when they had made some progress in christianity; and some of them had distinguished themselves from others, by their zeal and diligence; the apostles returned, and ordained some of their elders, or most early and wisest converts, in every church, to be their bishops; that they might instruct the ignorant, strengthen the weak, comfort the dejected, and præside in their public and religious assemblies. And others of them, to be deacons; to take care of the poor, the fatherlesse, and the widows; and of such persons, as travelled about, to preach the gospel. And the two apostles, having appointed the particular persons, they recommended them to the Lord Jesus, (in whom they had believed) for his blessing, by fasting and prayer; accompanied (most probably) with the laying on of their hands. For that was the usual method of ordaining bishops and deacons. And, returning through the rest of Pidia, they came again to Pamphilia; and particularly to Perga, where they now preach the christian doctrine; I suppose, to the idolatrous gentiles. For there is no intimation of there being any jewishe synagogue, or proseucha, in that place. After some stay at Perga, they went down to Attalia; and preached the gospel there also. And then they took ship, and sailed, from Attalia, to Antioch in Syria. From which place, they had been sent out, after they had been recommended to the divine blessing, for the work, which they had now fulfilled. For that was regarded, as the mother-church of the gentile churches. When they had gathered the church of Antioch together, they (as persons, who had been sent out, from thence) related, very particularly, what miraculous and extraordinary things

Ver. 22. a Matt. v. 10, 11, 12. and xvi.24, 25. Rom. viii.17. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

Ver. 23. b Though χειρασία was originally used, by the greeks, in a peculiar sense; namely, to stretch out, or lift up, the hand; as the people did, when they gave their votes, in popular elections: yet it came, in time, to be used in a laxer sense, and to signify nothing more, than barely to appoint, or constitute. For it is used, by several greek authors, concerning one person's appointing another to an office; as Dr. Hammond, on this place, has abundantly shown. [See Acts x. 41. Lucian's Philopatriis, p. 589. and Philopoeides, p. 334. See, also, Wolfius in loc. And here it is predicated of the two apostles; and not of the people.

Ver. 25. c See the reading in the Cambridge manuscript; in Dr. Mill.
The controversie, at Antioch in Syria, &c.

things God had done, by them; and, especially, that, by their ministry, he had opened the door of faith to the idolatrous gentiles.

This was their first Apostolic journey; which was through Cyprus, Pamphilia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia: and ended, as it began, at Antioch in Syria.

There Paul and Barnabas tarried with the christians, for some considerable time; farther instructing and establishing them in the christian religion; rectifying disorders, and making up what was deficient; and, in one word, doing every thing, which they could, that might conduce to the growth and increase of the gospel.

CHAP. III.

Containing an account of the controversie concerning the devout gentiles; namely, "Whether they should, upon imbracing christianity, become subject to circumcision, and the whole law of Moses?" Acts xv. 1, 34.

SECT. I.

The jewish converts would have had the christians, that had been devout gentiles, to have become proselytes of righteousness; as absolutely necessary to their salvation. Acts xv. 1.

Whoever would have a clear and comprehensive view of this history, must always bear in his mind the grand distinction of the three sorts of persons, to whom the gospel was at first preached; namely, jews, devout gentiles, and idolatrous gentiles. They, each of them, held themselves to be under different obligations, both as to polity, and religion; antecedent to their imbracing christianity. But, after their imbracing the gospel, it was to be, to all of them, their religious law; and the sole method of their justification, or acceptance with God. Though it made no alteration as to their national, or political, duties, or privileges. In the preceding book, it hath been shown, at large, what was the difference, between a profes-
The controverfie, at Antioch in Syria.

An Chrifi a profeye of righteoufness, and a profeye of the gate. And, parti-
cularly, that the latter were such, as were descended of gentile pa-
rents, and continued uncircumcised. But they were distinguished,

from the idolatrous gentiles, by their having renounced idolatry and
worshiping the one true god. Otherwise, indeed, they could not

have lived in Judea, where idolatry was high-trea-
son, and punishable with death. But, besides their obligations to
things of an eternal, unalterable, nature; and the necessary laws of
civil society; they were also obliged, by the law of Moses, to some
things peculiar to the jewiʃ polity: that is, "They were carefully to
abstain from whatever was likely to tempt them to forfake the true
God, or would have made them look like idolators. And, to that
end, they were particularly prohibited to eat, or drink, thins of-
fered to idols; or the blood of any animal; either pure, or mixed
with anything else. They were, also, to abstain from eating the
flesh of such animals, as were strangled, with a design to keep the
blood in them; and from all sorts of impurity. The particulars of
which are enumerated, Lev. xviii." That these things were pro-
hibited to the profeyes of the gate, Lev. xvii, xviii. hath been
largely shown above, Book ii. chap. 1. sect. 1. To which I would
refer the reader, without repeteing what hath been said already.

Upon a conformity to such parts of the law of Moses, the prof-
eyes of the gate had several privileges, of a civil nature, among the
jews: as well as liberty to join in all such acts of religious worship, as
were not peculiar to the jews; but used among the patriarchs, before
the giving of the law of Moses. However; the profeyes of the
gate were not admitted to equal privileges with the jews, and profeyes
of righteoufness, antecedent to the revelation of the gospel. When,
therefore, the news of St. Peter's having converted Cornelius, and
his company, who were uncircumcised profeyes, had reached Jeru-
alem, it alarmed the jewiʃ converts; and they chid that apostle, for
receiving them into full communion with the christian church, and
maiking them equal to the jewiʃ converts, without having first re-
quired of them to become profeyes of righteoufness. The apostle
did, indeed, silence them, at that time; by recounting the several
steps, which God had taken, to convince him, that it was his duty
to go and preach the gospel, among them; and to put no difference
between them and the jews. And they, upon hearing St. Peter's
apologie, then acquiesced. But the controverfie now broke out again;
and gave the apostles, and more especially paul and barna-
as, no small trouble. For, though the gentiles, who had been pro-
seyes
about gentiles submitting to the law of Moses.

Several of the gate, had not been required, upon their conversion to Christianity, to observe any more of the law of Moses, than they were obliged to, antecedent to their reception of the gospel; nor had Paul and Barnabas, the two apostles of the gentiles, since that, required any such thing of them; yet some of the Jewish converts went out, from Jerusalem, to Antioch in Syria, and taught the gentile christians, that the gospel alone, and of itself, was insufficient; and that, unless they would be circumcised, and conform to the whole law of Moses, they could not be saved. Nay; to procure the greater regard to that their imposing doctrine, they pretended that they were sent out, by the apostles, who were the great fountains of Christian knowledge; and that they had ordered them to carry that message among the gentile converts.

It appeareth, from several expressions in the writings of the Jews, and from two famous instances recorded by Josephus, that, though the more moderate Jews thought the uncircumcised proselytes might be saved; yet the more warm and zealous Jews, who were, by much, the most numerous, had very little, or no, charity for an uncircumcised proselyte; and insisted upon the necessity of their being circumcised, and complying with the whole law of Moses, in order to full communion with the church of God here, and to salvation and happiness hereafter. Such of the Jews, as had embraced Christianity, were, generally speaking, of the latter opinion. And it was a great while, before the benevolence of the Christian religion could sufficiently sweeten their tempers, so as to conquer those narrow notions, and old prejudices.

Ver. i. Εξανθαμένοι, according to two of the antient mss. [See Dr. Mill. See, also, the note on 1 John ii. 19.]

b See two manuscripts, mentioned by Dr. Mill.


It was a common maxim among the Jews, “That all uncircumcised persons go to hell,” Vid. P. Elierer, c. 29. p. 66. laudat. a Whitby in loc.
The controversy grew, at last, to a great height; and gave no small disturbance to Paul and Barnabas, the two apostles of the gentile world; who had received idolatrous gentiles into the christian church, without any submission to the law of Moses; and who clearly understood that the gospel altered nothing in men’s civil rights, or duties. They, therefore, endeavored to put an early stop to this imposition, by arguing with such as pleaded for it; and showing them, how God had received the gentile converts, without requiring them to submit to the whole law of Moses; and had given them spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers, as clear evidences of his accepting of them, equally with the jewisb christians, though they were not circumcised. But all, that they could say, could not silence them; or quench the flame, which they had raised. It was therefore agreed, that Paul and Barnabas, and some of the christians of Antioch, should go up to Jerusalem, to have the opinion of the apostles and elders there, concerning the matter in dispute. Not that they were to send for all the twelve apostles of the circumcision, where-ever dispersed; in order to make an œcumenical council, or general synod: but they were to take the advice of such of them, as were already upon the spot. And Paul, in particular, besides his being sent, by the church of Antioch, had likewise a revelation; by which, God ordered him to go to Jerusalem, at this time, along with Barnabas. And now it was, that he took Titus, also, along with him. [Gal ii. 1, 2.] Titus was, very probably, a native of Antioch in Syria; and one of the devout gentiles, who had been converted there, by Barnabas and Saul, about the year of our Lord 42. For, as he now went to Jerusalem, to consult the apostles and elders, concerning the liberty of the gentile
Jerusalem, to consult about that question.

gentile converts; we cannot suppose that he was a novice, or one that had been lately converted. He is expressly called a gentile; [:ELA\nu, Claud. 9.
Gal. ii. 3.] and St. Paul's genuine son, according to the common faith. [:Tit. i. 4.] And, as he went up to Jerusalem, from the church at Antioch; there is no reason to think that he was an idolatrous gentile. For that church, at Antioch, seemeth to have consisted entirely of converts from among the devout gentiles. There is, indeed, a brief intimation, [:Acts xi. 19.] that the Jews had been preached to, in that city. But there is no hint of their imbracing Christianitv; nor one word, in the scriptures, of the idolatrous gentiles being preached to, or converted, in that place. And then, the affair, which he went upon, is another proof, that he was a devout gentile. For, concerning them, the dispute was; about which the Apostles, and elders, at Jerusalem, were to be consulted. And, possibly, Titus might be sent thither, by the church of Antioch; as well as go at the request of St. Paul. But, what appeareth to me of great moment, to determine it, that Titus was a devout gentile, is, that the conversion of the idolatrous gentiles was, as yet, unknown to the church at Jerusalem; and St. Paul was, with good reason, desirous to keep it secret. Which he could not well have done, if he had carried, along with him, a convert from among the idolatrous gentiles.

Paul and Barnabas, together with Titus, and the other messengers of the church, being sent out, by the Christians of Antioch, (probably at their charge) and respectfully conducted, by some of them, part of the journey; they went up to Jerusalem, through Phœnicia and Samaria; declaring to the Christians, as they went along, that they had made a numerous conversion of the gentiles. At which they, all of them, greatly rejoiced. So much had they of the true Christian spirit!
They were kindly received by the church at Jerusalem. But the false brethren, creeping in, made St. Paul keep upon the reserve. He communicated the gospel, which he had preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, only to James, Peter, and John: and would not suffer Titus to be circumcised. The Apostles of the circumcision gave to him and Barnabas the right-hand of fellowship. Acts xv. 4.

When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were very kindly received, by the Apostles, and elders; as well as by the large church there. And, when they had met them in a body, they declared what great things God had done, by their ministry; in that they had converted several of the Jews, in distant countries; and added, to them, a number of the Gentiles. But they, not specifying particularly, what sort of Gentiles they had converted; and the Jewish Christians, at Jerusalem, not expecting the conversion of any, but devout Gentiles; and knowing, likewise, that in most, or all, of the places, where the two Apostles of the Gentiles had been, there were synagogues, and proselytes of the gate; they appear not to have understood any thing, that these two Apostles had said, to refer to the conversion of the idolatrous Gentiles. What St. Paul himself hath said, [Gal. ii. 2, &c.] is a strong confirmation of this: namely, that “he communicated, what he had preached to the Gentiles, only to James, Peter, and John, the three most renowned Apostles of the circumcision; and that under the seal of the greatest secrecy.” Whereas; the whole church at Jerusalem knew of the conversion of the devout Gentiles; and what gospel had been preached unto them; ever since the reception of Cornelius, and his friends. But, if they had now been made acquainted with the calling in of the idolatrous Gentiles; there would have been such an astonishment and joy in some, and such zeal and resentment in others, as the sacred historian would not have failed to have taken notice of: — as he has done, of the effects of the first news, which they received, concerning the conversion
only to James, Peter, and John.

version of the devout gentiles; [Acts xi. 18.] which was a lesser remarkable event; and of the effects, which the knowledge of this produced, when it was (long after) communicated to them. [Acts xx. 18, 19, 20.] The reason of St. Paul’s now communicating the gospel, which he preached to the idolatrous gentiles, only to the three apostles; and to them so very secretly; was; left the zealous Acts xv. among the Jewish christians should have come to the knowledge of it; and so have destroyed what he had done, and frustrated all his labors. For he observed that some false brethren had crept in, unawares, among the christians, who were then come up to Jerusalem; maliciously to spy out the liberty, which christiansity had granted to the devout gentiles; in order to bring them into bondage to the law of Moses. And, if they had got any hint of the conversion of idolatrous gentiles, and of their entire freedom from that law; their zeal would, the more warmly, have incited them to have run, up and down, among the churches of St. Paul’s planting, to undo what that great apostle of the gentiles had been doing, for some time. He knew the spirit of the men. And, therefore, very prudently, kept upon the reserve; and concealed, from them, such truths, as they would have made a bad use of. But that was not all. For he publicly opposed them. And, when they would have compelled Titus, a gentile convert, to have been circumcised, and brought under bondage to the whole Mosaic law; he would not, by any means, suffer such an imposition; nor yield to them, for one single hour: that he might preserve the liberty of all the gentile converts; or their freedom from circumcision, and the burden of the Mosaic law. For, if St. Paul had acknowledged it necessary, that the christians, who had been devout gentiles, should be circumcised; the necessity of circumcision to all the christians, who had formerly been uncircumcised gentiles, would have been established. And the judaizing zealous would readily have transferred it, from such as had been devout, to such as had been idolatrous, gentiles; as soon as they should have come to know of the conversion of any such. Which would have made circumcision, and an entire subjection to the law of Moses, look like one of the terms, on which the gentile christians were to obtain justification, and eternal life. Whereas; that was not one of the terms of acceptance; either to the jewisht, or gentile, converts. For the gospel was the perfect law of liberty, which freed them from that yoke of bondage.
James, Peter, and John, who were the three apostles of chief repute among those of the circumcision, had a great deal of conversation with Paul and Barnabas. And, when they compared the revelations, which God had made to them, with those made to the apostles of the uncircumcision, they could add nothing to what they had already received from heaven; either of knowledge, or miraculous powers. But, being convinced, by all the distinguishing gifts and powers, which had been conferred upon them, that the apostolate of the Gentiles was committed to Paul and Barnabas; and that they had as clear revelations, as full miraculous evidence, and as remarkable success, among the uncircumcision, as they had, among those of the circumcision; they gave, unto Paul and Barnabas, the right-hand of fellowship: that is, they acknowledged them to be brother-apostles; sent unto the beaten world, as they were to the Jews.

And they requested, that they would make a collection, among the Gentile churches, for the use of the Jewish converts; especially those of Judea. To which, Paul and Barnabas readily consented. For Paul had, of himself, designed to do so, before they made any such proposal.

CHAP. III. SECT. IV.

The apostles, elders, and brethren, met about the question. After a free debate, they agreed to send a letter to the Christians, who had been uncircumcised proselytes; wherein they insisted upon their observing only what parts of the law of Moses they had been formerly obliged to observe, as they were proselytes of the gate. Acts xv. 5, — 29.

Paul and Barnabas seem to have had several meetings, with a number of the Jewish Christians, at Jerusalem; as well as frequent conversation, with many of them, in private; to satisfy them of the reasonableness of the Gentile Christians continuing free from such a sub-
The apostles, elders, and brethren, assembled.

a subjection to the whole law of Moses. But, for all, that these two apostles of the gentiles could say, they could not convince them; any more than such, as had opposed them, at Antioch. Perhaps the warm jewish converts, at Jerusalem, might look upon them with a sort of jealousy; as the chief authors, and promoters, of the liberty of the gentile christians. But, whatever sentiments they entertained of Paul and Barnabas; some of the christians, who had been formerly of the sect of the pharisees, and consequently zealous for the law rose up, even at Jerusalem; and affirmed, that it was absolutely necessary, that such gentiles, as had embraced christiannity, should be circumcised, and charged to observe the whole law of Moses. And when nothing else could put an end to the controversy; the apostles, elders, and brethren, met together in a body, to consider of the matter. And, when they had disputed a long time, St. Peter cut short the debate, with a speech to this effect. "My christian brethren: You know very well, that some years ago, among us, apostles, God chose me, that I should begin to preach the gospel among the gentiles; and first make converts among them: As I also did, in the memorable case of Cornelius, and his friends. And the great God, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts, and can easily distinguish the sincere and virtuous, from the wicked and hypocritical, did bear them witness, that they were as acceptable to him, as the jewish converts; by his giving them the holy spirit, immediately from heaven, and without the laying on of the hands of any man; as he did unto us, on the signal day of pentecost. And he put no manner of difference between us jews, and them; though they were uncircumcised gentiles: but made them clean; purifying their hearts by the doctrine of the gospel; and baptizing them with the holy spirit, accompanied with the appearance of a flame of fire. Seeing, therefore, my way was plain; and God gave such clear

Ver. 5. * Some have taken this verse to be a continuation of the speech of Paul and Barnabas. And then it would not lead us to conclude that a new diffension broke out, at Jerusalem, at this time. When the ellipsis is supplied, this text would then run thus. "And they declared what things God had done, by them. But [as they proceeded to relate] there arose certain of the sect of the pharisees, [that is, at Antioch,] who said that we must circumcise them, [the gentile converts,] and command them to keep the law of Moses." St. Luke has, indeed, as most writers do, made use of ellipses, sometimes; and altered, from an oblique, to a direct speech; and vice versa. [See Luke vii. 4, 5.] But, I must confess, I look upon this fifth verse as St. Luke's narration; and not as any part of the speech of Paul and Barnabas, and am persuaded that the christians, of the sect of the pharisees, at Jerusalem, would be as apt to shew their zeal for bringing the gentile converts into subjection to the law; as those at Antioch, or any other place. [Vid. Wolf. in loc.]
St. Peter's speech, on that occasion.

clear proofs of his readiness to receive them, into the Christian church; and to full communion with us, who had believed and embraced the gospel, before them; and that, without their first submitting to the whole law of Moses; why would you offer to teach God, or direct him what to do? Dare you call in question the proceedings of infinite wisdom? Or do you envy their happiness, and their liberty; in that you go to put a yoke upon their necks, which neither our fathers, nor we, have been able to bear? No! you ought not, certainly, to do any such thing. For, I am fully satisfied, that these gentile converts, without any farther subjection to the law of Moses, will, through the favor of our Lord Jesus Christ, be saved; as well as those Jewish brethren, who are so zealous for the observance of that law.

This speech silenced all the multitude. And the zealous had nothing to reply to such clear and convincing arguments. The whole body of the assembly, therefore, were then disposed, patiently to attend to what Paul and Barnabas thought fit to communicate to them, concerning the wonders and miracles, which God had enabled them to do, among the gentiles; which was a plain confirmation, that God had sent them, and approved of their attempt to convert such persons; though they were not circumcised, nor subject to the burthen of the Mosaic law.

The silence being renewed, the Apostle James made a speech; and, in the following manner, summed up the debate, and formed the question. To which, they all unanimously agreed. "My Christian brethren, (faith he) permit me to speak my sentiments of this matter. Simon Peter hath just now declared, how God, at first, vouchsafed, by him, to take the gentiles into the number of his people. But this accepting of the gentiles is no such strange, and unheard of, thing; as you may imagine. For God designed it, long before he sent Peter to Cornelius. And, I remember that some of the antient prophets have prophesied to this effect: particularly Amos, [chap. ix. 11, 12.] After these things, I will return, (faith God) and will build again the tabernacle or house of David; and I will raise it from it's ruins; (by sending the Messiah, out of that decayed family; and erecting his spiritual kingdom; into which, not only my people, the Jews, shall be admitted; but) that the residue of men might seek after the Lord:

Ver. 17. b It is in the hebrew, [the remnant of Edom,] one of the nations, that was the bitterest enemy to Israel, and a remnant of the most profligate and abandon-
St. James sums up the debate.

"LORD: and, more especially, [the devout gentiles] the gentiles, up-
'on whom my name is called, faith the LORD; who bringeth to pass all
these great and remarkable events. Nor ought we, in the least, to
wonder at GOD's speaking thus, seven or eight hundred years ago;
though it refer to the present case. For, known unto him are all his works, from the begining of the world. Seeing, there-
fore, my brother, PETER, hath shewn, so evidently, that he was ordered, of GOD, to go and receive these uncircumcised gentiles,
into the Christian church, without any farther subjection to the law
of Moses. And, seeing GOD (who knew the end from the begin-
ing) hath signified, several ages ago, that he intended such a thing.
It is, therefore, my opinion, that you ought not to give these gent-
tiles converts any farther trouble; but only send them a letter, and
exhort them to abstain from those few things; (from which, as they
are proselytes of the gate, they are already obliged, by the law of 
Moses, to abstain;) namely, from pollution of idols; that is, from
any meat, or drink, devoted to an idol; or that had been offered,
before the image, in the idol's temple: from fornication, or whatever is condemned, as, contrary to chastity, by the law of Mo-
es: from eating the flesh of whatsoever is strangled, with a de-
sign to keep the blood in it: and from blood, separated from
the flesh of any animal; either pure, or mixed with any thing
else. As these things tempted men to idolatry, were the usual con-
comitants of it, or made them look idolators; they were justly
forbidden, in the law of Moses, unto all such as were permitted
to live under that polity. For that polity was designed to preserve
the Jewish nation from so unreasonable, and so common, a wick-
edness, as idolatry; and to point out the knowledge and worship
of the true GOD, unto such of the other nations, as would at-
tend. Now, if the devout gentiles should not, after their con-
version to Christianity, continue to abstain from these things, as for-
merly: the Jews will not only suspect them of idolatry; but they
Vol. II. H
"them-
ed idolators. And, if they were to be received; the Jews might, consequently, ex-
pect that the other gentiles would much more be reconciled to the true religion.
Ver. 19. ① Δέ γυνέω κεινώ.
Ver. 20. [And from what is strangled.] See this reading vindicated, in Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel history, part 2d. vol. 4. p. 780, &c.
by Spencer, in his dissertation on Acts. xv. 20. chap. i. § 3. and by Wolfius in loc.
② As to the addition, in some copies, see on ver. 29.
③ Exod. xxxiv. 15, 16. Numb. xxv. 1, 2, 3. 1 Cor. x. 7, 8; 21. Rev. ii. 14; 20. Wisd. xiv. 22.
Judass and Silas sent to Antioch.

themselves cannot claim those privileges among the Jews, to which
the law of Moses giveth them a right, as long as they continue to
observe what it injoineth them. And it is highly fit, as long as the
law of Moses is a national law, and binds such injunctions upon
the gentiles, who are proselytes of the gate, that they should most
carefully comply. For the law of Moses is (according to an an-
tient custom) read, in the synagogues of the Jews, and explained
and inculcated, every sabbath-day. And there these proselytes of
the gate attend, and hear that it is their duty to abstain from such
things. And the Jews, also, attend; and will be exceedingly
disgusted, to hear the law read, which prohibiteth these things
to the proselytes of the gate; if they should be released from such
abstinences, and yet pretend to claim their usual rights and pri-

When they had so thoroughly canvassed the matter, it was agreed,
by all the apostles, and elders, then present; (that is, by the
three apostles of the circumcision, James, Peter, and John;
and the two apostles of the gentiles, Paul and Barnabas: to-
gether with as many of the hundred and twenty, the apostles-
company on the day of Pentecost, as were then at Jerusalem; by
whom I understand, the elders, here mentioned; they being some
of the oldest christians, or the first, and most early, converts. It was
agreed, I say, by all the apostles, and elders, then present;) and
the brethren, or the whole body of the christian church, at Jerusa-
lem, approved of it; that some persons should be chosen, from
among themselves; and sent, to Antioch in Syria, along with Paul
and Barnabas, to certify, to the church there, that these were
their unanimous and real sentiments; and not a determination procur-
ed by the two apostles of the gentiles. One of the persons, whom
they chose, upon that occasion, was Judas; who was surname-
Barfakas. [As he had the same surname, some have thought him
to have been brother to Joseph, called Barfakas; mentioned Acts i. 23.
And then he was son to Alpheus, or Cleophas; and brother to two
of the apostles of the circumcision.] The other was Silas; who
was also frequently called Silvanus, after he went, with St. Paul, to
preach among the gentiles. And that was his roman, as Silas was his-

The
The letter to the devout gentile christians.

The LETTER, which the Jewish church, at Jerusalem, sent to the gentile church, at Antioch; and to other gentile churches.

An. Christi

In the name of all the three ranks, or orders, of persons, who were in the church at Jerusalem, at that time, namely, [the apostles, elders, and brethren,*] was the letter written. The contents whereof, were, to the following purpose. "The apostles, elders, and brethren, of the Christian church, at Jerusalem, send their love and salutation, and wish all manner of happiness, to their Christian brethren, who have been converted, from among the gentiles, [proselytes of the gate,] whether in Antioch, the metropolis; or in other parts of Syria; in the province of Cilicia; or wherever dispersed. For as much as we understand, that some went out, from among us, pretending to come, to you, in our name, and by our direction; and that they have made a disturbance among you, with their new doctrine; and subverted the souls of some of you, by affirming that you are obliged to be circumcised, and to observe the whole law of Moses; or else you cannot possibly be saved: — We thought fit to acquaint you, that we gave no such orders; and desire you for the future to beware of such deceivers. However, as this affair hath been so warmly agitated among you; and you have sent several persons, to know our sentiments; we have taken it into our consideration. And, in a full and unanimous assembly of apostles, elders, and brethren, we have chosen proper persons, to send, as our messengers, back to you; along with our two beloved brethren, Barnabas and Paul;* (men, of such dignity in the Christian church; and of such great sincerity; that you ought, by no means, to slight them, or think meanly of their knowledge, or skill in the Christian doctrine. For they are) men, who not only understand it; but they have hazarded their lives, in spreading the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. If any should, in the least, doubt of their account of our proceedings, as apprehending them prejudiced, and prepossessed; — to take away all grounds of scruple, or suspicion, we have

Ver. 23. *See a different reading, Millii prolegom., 1550. namely, the apostles, and elder brethren.

Ver. 25. *Though St. Luke hath, himself, generally named Paul before Barnabas, from the time that they were constituted apostles; yet, in reciting this letter, he is so punctual, as to place Barnabas before Paul: most probably, because they were so placed in the original letter itself.
The letter to the devout gentile christians.

An. Chr. 11

have sent, along with them, Judas and Silas; who will tell you,

Claud. 9.

by word of mouth, the same things, which we have said, in this

letter. For we have strong vouchers; since it hath pleased the holy

Book III.

spirit to signify his mind and will, so evidently, in this matter, by

Ch. III.

falling down upon Cornelius, and his friends, in like manner as he

Sect. IV.

did upon the most eminent Jewish converts; and that, without their

Acts xvi.

being first circumcised, and submitting to the whole law of Moses.

And it seemeth good unto us, also; amicably debating this ques-
tion, and comparing antient prophecies with present, or late, facts.—

Thus did it formerly seem good to the holy spirit; and, upon such
accounts, doeth it now seem just and proper, in our opinion, to lay

upon you, no more of the positive institutions of the law of Moses,
nor any greater burthen, than those things, which that law hath in-
joined upon you, as long as you live under it, and claime the privi-
leges of profaneness of the gate: namely, That you abstain from such
meats, and drinks, as have been offered unto idols; from blood, sepa-
rated from the flesh of any animal; from eating such creatures, as
have been strangled, with a design to keep the blood in them: and from
fornication; that is, from marrying within the prohibited degrees of
consanguinity, adultery, incest; and (in general) all kinds of impu-
rity, forbidden by the law of Moses. If you abstain from these four
things; it is all the obsercation of the law of Moses, which, we
apprehend, is required of you. And, in complying with christian-
ty in general, and with these few particulars out of the law of
Moses; you will do your duty, and may expect to be finally and
perfectly happy. Adieu.

Ver. 29. See Dr. Mill's various readings; and the Essay, concerning the abolish-
ing of the ceremonial law; in the notes; p. 88, &c., first edition; p. 482, &c., 2d edi-
tion. The addition to the common text, here, and ver. 20. found in some mss.: versions and fathers, is, [And whatever things you would not that others should do unto
you, neither do you unto others.] Which reading is not genuine; as may be seen, in Dr. Mill, and the essay here referred to.

k See the antient manuscripts; and Irenæus, mentioned by Bema.
The solution farther supported.

CHAP. III. SECT. V.

Some farther considerations, to show, that this decree never related to any christians, but such as had been proselytes of the gate. Several queries, and objections; with their answers.

Notwithstanding this solution appeareth so easie, and natural; yet some have doubted of it. It may, therefore, be proper to add something farther; to show, that this decree (as it is commonly called) related to the christians, who had been devout gentiles; and to them alone. (1.) The body of the assembly, who came to that determination, or agreement, knew nothing, as yet, of the conversion of any idolatrous gentiles. For now it was, that St. Paul went up, by revelation; and communicated the gospel, which he had preached to the idolatrous gentiles, only to James, Peter, and John: and that as a very great secret; which they were, by no means, to communicate to the elders and brethren. [Gal. ii. 2.] Whereas; all the church at Jerusalem knew of the conversion of the devout gentiles; and what gospel, St. Peter, and others, had preached unto them.

Suppose it be inquired, “Would not the church at Jerusalem have been for extending it to the idolatrous gentiles; if they had then known of the conversion of any such?” I answer; Perhaps the majority of them would have been desirous to have extended this injunction to all the gentile christians; and the zealots were very likely to have done so. But the query is, “Whether that attempt would have been right, or wrong?” I think, it would have been wrong; if we consider the decision of St. Paul, concerning the christians, who had been idolatrous gentiles; when the judaizers would have imposed circumcision, and the whole law, upon them. [See Rom. xiv. 14, 17. 1 Cor. viii. 8. and x. 23; 25; 27.]

2. Here are no references to the case of the idolatrous gentiles, Acts xv. 1, — 34. that is, through the whole period of the sacred history, where this affair is mentioned. The dispute arose, at Antioch, in Syria; where the church consisted of christians, who had been devout gentiles. At last, it doeth not appear that there were any christians, belonging to that church, who had been either jews, or idolatrous.
The solution farther supported.

An. Christi 49. 
Claud. 9. 

The gentiles, of whom St. Peter speakeath, ver. 7; were evidently devout gentiles. For he himself had led the way to the reception of such gentiles, into the christian church. But he did not open the door of faith to the idolatrous gentiles. The gentiles, upon whom the name of God was called, ver. 17, was exactly their character. And when they said, It seemed good to the holy spirit; they plainly refered to the holy spirit's falling down upon Cornelius, and his friends. And, to what purpose did St. James mention "the law of Moses being read in the synagogues, every sabbath-day;" if it had not been that the proselytes of the gate attended upon the reading of it; and frequently heard that these abstinences were thereby injoined upon them? Whereas, the idolatrous gentiles used not to attend at the jewishe synagogues?

3. Why were these four things pitched upon; but that they had been, long before, prohibited to the proselytes of the gate, by the law of Moses? Why not abstinence from swine's flesh, and some other things, which the Jews abhorred; as much as things offered to idols, fornication, ibings strangled, and blood?

4. There is nobody pretendeth that the decree concerned the jewish christians. And it is evident, to me, that it concerned not the christians, who had been idolatrous gentiles. For, with what consistency could St. Paul have now agreed, that it was necessary, for all the gentile christians, to abstain from these four things: And yet, long after, tell the christians, at Corinth, who had been idolatrous gentiles, that "they might lawfully eat of meats offered to idols, and even in the idol's temple: provided they did it not, out of reverence to the idol; or so as to harden idolaters, or offend weak and scrupulous consciences?" [1 Cor. viii. 8, 9, 10. and x. 23; 25; 27, &c.] Whereas; if we suppoze that this decree related, peculiarly, to the christians, who had been proselytes of the gate; he might, very consistently, declare it lawful, for such christians, as had been idolatrous gentiles, to eat of such things; and assure them, that they were under no such engageaments, as the devout gentiles were, to abstain from them. A by-law, of a particular corporation, concerneth not the greatest part of a kingdom. It is true; a law might have been inacted for a time; and abolished again, when the reason for it's being inacted should cease. But, if condescension to jewish prejudices, was the reason of inacting these laws; then; certainly, they ought not to have been abolished so soon. For, when St. Paul wrote that epistle to the Corinthians, the jewish christians, there, seem so far from having laid aside their prejudices, that they appear rather more...
Objections answered.

praedjudiced; and more averse to the gentile christians: upon the account of the liberty, which they took, in eating promiscuously of all sorts of meats.

The sum of their case, therefore, seemeth to have been this. "As christianity altered nothing, in men's civil duties, or privileges; they continued still subject to the great law of nature; by the eternal reason of things; and by the national law of the country, where they lived, as far as the law of nature was incorporated into that civil law. And they came under new obligations to the law of nature, as it is adopted into the christian law. As to the ceremonial parts of the law of Moses; and whatever parts of it they were not subject to, before they became christians; the holy spirit determined, that, to such parts of it, they should never become subject. Though the zealous jews christians would have imposed the observation of the whole law, upon them, after their imbracing christianity. — They were still bound to obey the political law of the country, where they lived; and, if they claimed the privileges of proselytes of the gate; that is, of settling, or sojourning, for any time, in palestine; or of frequenting the jews synagogue, in any country; they were under obligations to abstain from the few things, mentioned in this decree."

To what hath been said, it may be objected, I. "Were not these four things parts of the ceremonial law? And, if the whole ceremonial law was abolished, by the death of christ, even to the jews christians; how came the abstaining from these four things to be necessary, to the christians, who had been devout gentiles?" Answer. Suppose that these four things had belonged to the ceremonial law; then their obligation to such abstinences, would have arisen, from the state and circumstances of things; that is, it would have been a necessity of sense, or a thing expedient, till the jews christians had got over their prejudices. Besides; none of the apostles, elders, or brethren, who were at jerusalem, when that determination was agreed upon, seem to have been fully satisfied, at that time, of the total abolishing of the ceremonial law; unless we except paul and barnabas. [Of this, see more, in the essay, annexed to Titus, chap. ii. § 2.]

But, in truth, I take these four things to have been part of the political, and not of the ceremonial law. And, therefore, the devout gentiles (who had a mind to keep up their right and title to the privileges, among the jews, which the law of Moses granted to proselytes of the gate) were obliged to these abstinences, after they became christians. For the jews government was a theocracy. And, by their law,
Objections answered.

An. 49. Objection II. "The decree was sent into Syria, Cilicia, and other 
gentile countries. Now, what had the gentile christians, there, to "
do with the j e w i s h polity? " Answer. Suppose they claimed the 
privileges of the j e w i s h synagogue, in those gentile countries; or had a 
mind to have gone, and settled, or sojourned, for any time, in Pa-
lelum: these were the terms. But, I do not suppose, that, if the 
proselytes of the gate, who lived out of j u d a e a, had renounced all 
clame to such privileges, they would have been obliged, by the law of 
M o s e s, to abstain from these things. How far it might have been ex-
pedient to have done so, 'till the prejudices of the j e w i s h christians 
were vanished; — is another, and a very different, consideration.

Objection III. " Was not fornication one of the things prohibited? "
How, then, can this decree be thought peculiar to any one sort of "
cristians? For there is no distinction made, between one particu-
lar, and another. But, where abstaining from one of these things "
was obligatory; the abstaining from them all, was, by this decree, "
made obligatory? " Answer. Some of the species of fornication, 
mentioned L e v. xviii. are evidently contrary to the light and law of 
nature; and all the species of it are forbid to all sorts of cristians, 
by the law of C h r i s t. The cristas, who had been devout genti-
tiles, were under ingagements to abstain from fornication, by virtue 
of the j e w i s h polity; as well as by the law of nature, and the c r i s-
tian law. That is, in other words, though they were not obliged 
to abstain from the other things, contained in this decree, by virtue 
of any thing else, besides the political law of the j e w s; yet they were, 
and all cristas whatsoever are, obliged, by the general cristian law, to abstain from fornication. The onely thing peculiar, in 
their case, was, that the cristas, who had been proselytes of the 
gate, were likewise obliged to that abstinence, for some time, by a 
law, which never bound the cristas, who had been idolatrous gen-
tiles. But then, that peculiar obligation of theirs continued, onely 
as long as the j e w i s h polity continued. So long, this decree, and the 
injunctions in the law of M o s e s, which regarded them, were binding. 
But, when the j e w s ceased from being a nation, and their polity was 
dissolved;
The advantages of this solution, &c.

dissolved; their national law could be no longer binding, either upon the Jews, or proselytes of the gate.

But it ought carefully to be observed, that, though their obligation, from the political law of the Jews, to abstain from fornication, was made void, by the destruction of the Jewish polity; yet they continued under the strongest obligations to abstain from it, by the Christian law; notwithstanding their full liberty to eat blood, things strangled, and things offered to idols. That is, The obligation to abstain from the three last, arose entirely from the particular polity of the Jews. And, therefore, of course, ceased with that polity. But their obligations to abstain from the first arose, also, from other laws and engagements; even after the Jewish polity was destroyed; and which, to this day, continue in force.

CHAP. III. SECT. VI.

The advantages of this solution, in comparison of others, that have been offered.

(1.) "This solution giveth the proper force and meaning to the words made use of; and showeth, that the question of the Judaizers, and the answer of the Apostles, elders, and brethren, refer to the same thing." They call these abstinences necessary. Whereas; according to some, "they were onely expedient." If they had been onely expedient, they ought to have intimated, to the gentile converts, that they were not necessary; but mere condescensions, for the present, to the prejudices of their Jewish brethren; that they might, in due time, have asserted their liberty; and that, in the mean time, the Judaizers might not take any handle, from their determination, to impose these things as necessary. Besides; if any thing was proposed, onely by way of expediency; why were these particular things pitched upon? And why these onely? Why not abstinence from swine's flesh; or from the flesh of such creatures, as died of themselves? And many other things, which were disagreeable to the Jews, as well as these? [See Spencer: de legibus, ed. Can. tab. 1727, p. 597, &c.]
The advantages of this solution,

Again: If such abstinences were expedient, for fear of giving offence to Jews, or to some Christians; why are not these prohibitions looked upon, as still obligatory? For, (besides the offence, which our eating blood gives the Greek and Ethiopian churches) have we not many Jews among us, at this day, as well as many Christians, who scruple the eating of blood; and are offended with such as eat it?

According to others, “All these abstinences were necessary, to all persons, by the law of nature.” But it will be hard (nay, I think impossible) to prove, that eating things strangled, and blood, is forbidden by the law of nature.

And, finally, according to others, “It was necessary to abstain from these things, by the seven precepts of Noah.” Whereas; here is nothing said about the precepts of Noah; but about the law of Moses. Besides; the precepts of Noah, are said to have been seven; but the things, here prohibited, are only four. Nay; it is very much to be questioned, whether there ever were such precepts given to Noah. For Moses saith nothing of them. And how later writers came to know of them, is hard to say. But, supposing there had been such precepts given to Noah, as the Jewish Rabbins have pretended, these are not the things, according to their account of them. But what we have to do with the precepts of Noah, in a dispute about what parts of the law of Moses those gentile Christians were to observe; — I cannot imagine.

(2.) “The solution, now given, clearly sheweth us, why such things were joined together, in this decree.” It was not, because they were all of them unlawful, or all of them indifferent, in their own nature. But, because they were all forbidden together, to the devout gentiles, in the Jewish law; to guard them against the temptations to idolatry, and prevent their being suspected of it, by the Jews. This decree, therefore, contained no precepts of an heterogeneous nature, to those, to whom it was addressed. In the collection of national laws, things, that are eternally and in their own nature unlawful, may be set down along with things that were indifferent, antecedent to their being forbidden; especially if, in some circumstances, such things have, all of them, more or less, the same bad tendency. But their being joined, upon some particular occasion, doth not, in the least, alter what:

b Vid. Iren. adv. Hær. l. i. c. 27.
in comparison of others.

what they were originally, and in their own nature. Upon any other scheme, it is hard to show what connection these things have with one another. But, upon the supposition of their being prohibited, to the proselytes of the gate, by the law of Moses, in order to guard against idolatry; it is easy to observe, that, though fornication be, in its own nature, wicked and unlawful; it might, with great propriety, be joined with things that were in their own nature indifferent. And, though the obligation, to abstain from the last, would cease of course, when the positive law, which enjoined such abstinences, ceased; yet the first would then remain unlawful, in its own nature, as it was before; and might also be prohibited by the christian law; as it actually is.

(3.) "The solution, now given, may teach us, in a clear and easy manner, to reconcile this letter of the apostles, elders, and brethren, with what our savior had said before, concerning the lawfulness of eating all sorts of food; and with what St. Paul declared, afterwards, in writing to such christians, as had been idolatrous gentiles." Our savior declared, without making any exception, of things offered to idols, things strangled, or blood, "that nothing, which entereth into a man defileth a man." And this letter of the apostles, elders, and brethren, ordered the proselytes of the gate to abstain from these things: not as what was a matter of religion; or that the eating them would have defiled their consciences; but as forbidden them, by the civil law of the jews; which, till then, and some time afterwards, continued in full force and obligation. There cannot, therefore, be any inconsistency between our lord's saying, "that religion requires no abstinence from any sorts of meats;" and the apostles, elders, and brethren saying "that the civil law of the jews required some such abstinences, from such persons as were subject to it."

Again: St. Paul, in writing to the christians, who had been idolatrous gentiles, is not only entirely silent, about this decree; but declareth, (long after this letter was written, by the apostles, elders, and brethren) "that he knew, and was persuaded, by the lord jesus christ, that nothing was unclean; unless to such, as scrupled the lawfulness of eating it. And, he alloweth the christians, at corinth, to eat meats offered to idols; provided they did not reverence the idols, harden the idolators, or offend the weak and scrupulous christians." But that is not, in the least, inconsistent with this decree: because that was said to such christians, as had been idolatrous gentiles, who had never been subject to any part of the law.
The advantages of this solution, &c.

An. Christi. 49.

Claud. 9.

Book III.

Ch. III

Sect. VI.

Acts xv.

29.

of Moses, and whom this decree did not at all concern. They, therefore, might be at full liberty, to eat blood, things strangled, and things offered to idols; though the christians, who had been proselytes of the gate, were not allowed such liberty; because they were under different civil obligations.

(A, and lastly.) "This solution is most agreeable to the nature and genius of the christian religion; which altereth nothing in men's civil rights, or duties." We are entirely free from the law of Moses. And the gospel manifesteth itself to be, upon all accounts, a reasonable service, and the perfect law of liberty; granting us all the liberty, which wise and virtuous men could desire. Some, indeed, have taken occasion, from this decree, to attack the christian religion itself; as if it did not give us that liberty from the law of Moses, which it pretends; or which reason itself would indulge. From whence they would infer, "that christianity is not that free, nor reasonable, service; which it's votaries have represented it to be." But their objections arise merely from the misunderstanding of this decree. For, by this solution, we take away the foundation of such exceptions. And, not only so; but the scruples likewise, which some christians; and even considerable divines, have entertained, concerning the lawfulness of eating things strangled, and blood, may hereby be taken away. As this decree concerned onely one sort of christians; and concerned them no longer, than 'till the destruction of Jerusalem, when there was an end of the jewis polity. It never concerned the christians, who had been idolatrous gentiles, at all: nor any christians, in these later ages. And, therefore, we cannot be obliged to observe it. As to fornication; it is frequently declared, in the gospel, to be unlawful, to all christians, of all times and places. And, therefore, we stand obliged to abstain from it. But the other things, forbidden in this decree, are no where else declared be unlawful to all christians. And, therefore, we are not obliged to abstain from them.

"Some, indeed, who suppose themselves to be under no obligation to abstain from eating blood, by virtue of this decree, are yet inclined to look upon themselves as bound to abstain from it; by virtue of it's being prohibited to Noah, soon after the flood. [Gen. ix. 4.] For they look upon him, as the common father of all mankind, since the deluge; and that the precepts, given to him, were general, and are binding upon all his descendents." Answer. I think it very dubious, whether the mere eating of blood, separated from the flesh of any animal, is there prohibited. For the text itself runs thus: "But flesh, with the life thereof, that is, the blood thereof,
The precept, given to Noah.

"shall you not eat." That is, (say some of the Jewish doctors,) "God did there prohibit Noah, and his sons, to cut a limb off from a living animal; and eat it, with the blood and life in it." And that interpretation seems to arise from the very letter of the text, and would fairly account for the connection. q.d. "I will not permit you to use cruelty towards the brute creatures. For that will lead you to cruelty towards one another, and to murder men." And, if that be the sense of the place, I am content that it be universally binding. For cruelty is to be condemned, at all times and places.

But, supposing that prohibition, given to Noah, Gen. ix. 4, were to be understood of mere eating blood; I should look upon it to have been only temporary, as well as this decree. That is, they were to abstain from blood; for this reason, very probably, among others; namely, That, as the blood was to be offered unto God, in the sacrifices, he would not permit them to eat it; but reserved it, as a thing sacred and holy, unto himself. [See Lev. xvii. 11, 12; 14.] I should look upon it, I say, to have been temporary; — supposing that to have been the sense of the law. Because, it is evidently abolished, to Christians, in the new testament, by our Lord; who has put an end to all sacrifices; and has likewise declared, in general, and without exception, "that nothing, which entereth into a man, defileth the man." And his Apostle, St. Paul, assures us, "that he knew, and was persuaded, by the Lord Jesus Christ, that nothing is of itself common, or unclean; unless to him that accounteth it so; or that has not yet got over his prejudices." [Rom. xiv. 14.] But many learned men apprehend the former to be the sense of the prohibition, given to Noah and his sons; namely, that they should not, in a voracious manner, eat flesh, taken from any living animal, raw, and while the blood was warm and springing, and the life not entirely gone out of it. 

My late worthy friend, Mr. Lowman, has another solution.

"It was a well-known doctrine of the antient idolators, that blood was a food for demons. It was, therefore, a customary rite of idolatry, when they killed a beast, to receive the blood into some vessel, or pour it into some hole, or trench, made in the ground; and, setting themselves round about it, to eat the flesh; supposing, that, they eating the flesh, while the demons drank the blood, they were the demons guests; and, by this kind of communion with them, were enabled to prophesie, and to foretel things to come." Maimon. Mor. Nevi. part iii.
The church at Antioch receive the letter with joy.

In one word, there are no unnecessary burdens in the Christian law. But the whole plan is calculated to the noblest views; that is, to promote peace and charity, virtue and happiness, among mankind.

CHAP. III. SECT. VII.

The church at Antioch receive, with joy, the sentiments of the apostles, elders, and brethren. Peter went down to Antioch, and was reproved, there, by Paul. Acts xv. 30—34.

Paul and Barnabas, Titus, Judas, and Silas, being dismissed, by the church, at Jerusalem, they went to Antioch in Syria. And, having called together the church, there, they delivered unto them the epistle, from the apostles, elders, and brethren. Which, when they had read, they greatly rejoiced, at the advice sent them. For it was matter of great consolation to them. In as much as they had required them to observe only those parts of the law of Moses, which they had formerly observed; and had not imposed circumcision, and the whole law, upon them, as absolutely necessary to their salvation. Judas also, and Silas, who were prophets in the Christian church, took a great deal of pains to exhort the Christian brethren, at Antioch; very probably, to submit to the things contained in the epistle, and to no more of the Mosaic law; but to stand fast in their Christian liberty, as well as to conform to the gospel in general. These two missionaries of the Christian church at Jerusalem, having tarried, some time, at Antioch, to deliver the letter; and explain, or enforce it; as well as to observe how it was received, and what effects it had: Having tarried, I say, a sufficient time, there, for these, and like purposes; they were dismissed, in a peaceable and friendly manner, by the church, at Antioch; that they

1. 46. p. 484. [Therefore, there is a law, Ye shall not eat any thing with the blood. * Or, as learned men have observed, the true interpretation, at the blood, or before the blood, [NT 7 of Lev. xix. 26.] as the manner was, when the blood was thus offered to demons; [See Mr. Moses Leunman's rational of the ritual of the Hebrew worship, p. 833. 834.]}

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St. Peter's dissimulation, at Antioch.

they might return to those that sent them: and, particularly, unto such of the apostles, as abode still at Jerusalem; who were (without doubt) concerned to know the issue of the grand affair depending. But Silas, or Silvanus, who was one of them, chose rather to tarry longer at Antioch. Judas, therefore, (surnamed Barzabas) returned to Jerusalem alone.

After some time, it happened that St. Peter came down, from Jerusalem, to Antioch; while Paul and Barnabas still continued in that city. [Gal. ii. 11, &c.] For this is the onely time, that St. Peter found the two apostles of the gentiles there. Perhaps, that leading apostle of the circumcision had a mind to go and see, with his own eyes, how matters went, in that considerable church of devout gentiles. But his behavior, there, was not such as the great apostle of the gentiles could approve. For, though there had lately been a sharp contention between the jews and gentile converts. And the question had been determined, in favor of the gentile christians, who were to be acknowledged as brethren, without any further conformity to jews customs, or to the law of Moses. And St. Peter, himself, had had a great hand in bringing about that determination; yet, for all that, his behavior at Antioch, in some measure, tended to betray that liberty of the gentile christians; and looked as if they were not taken into full communion with the jews converts. For, before that some zealous jews christians came, from James, (the onely apostle then at Jerusalem,) St. Peter did eat, and freely converse, with the gentile christians; as persons taken into full communion with the jews converts. But, when those zealous jews christians came, he acted, as if he had been ashamed of what he had done; or as desirous to conceal it. For he withdrew from the society of the gentile christians, and separated himself from them; as if they had been still unclean, and unfit for the familiar and free conversation of such as had been jews. And, by his means, many other of the lefle bigoted jews christians dissimulated, likewise. Nay; when St. Peter did so, (that apostle of so great renown; who had, himself, first received the gentiles into the christian church,) even Barnabas, also, one of the apostles of the gentiles, was carried away with the dissimulation: very probably, through that easiness of temper, which was natural to him. St. Peter remembered how sharply the jews christians, at Jerusalem, had reproached him, for going and eating with Cornelius, and his friends; when he first preached to uncircumcised gentiles. He might, therefore, take that method, in order to prevent such another censure. Nay; St. Paul assures us, that he did it, because he was afraid of the displeasure of the jews christians. But the
the great Apostle of the gentiles, who was not a whit behind the
calif of the Apostles; when he saw that he walked contrary to
the truth and sincerity of the gospel; and, in effect, betrayed the li-
erty of the gentile converts; he withstood St. Peter to the face;
and publicly rebuked him. For he was really blame-worthy.— St.
Acts xv. St. Paul seemeth to have been afraid, lest the behavior of St. Peter,
and of the other Jewish christians, who were influenced by him,
should renew the dispute, which had been lately determined at Jere-
salem, and so much to his satisfaction. And, therefore, he, before
them all, addressed St. Peter thus. "If you (said he) who are a
Jewish convert, yourself, take the liberty, sometimes, to live after
the manner of the gentiles; and freely eat, and converse, with them,
laying aside those rules and customs, which the Jews generally ob-
serve; why do not you always do so, among them? Why do you
tempt the gentile converts to conform to the Jewish customs; by
sometimes withdrawing from them, as unclean, or unfit for your
familiar conversation? We, who are Jews by birth, as well as reli-
gion; and not of the race of the gentiles, whom our nation hath
hitherto reckoned so wicked and polluted: — We, I say, of the
holy seed of the Jews, have found that a man, subject to the law
of Moses, cannot be justified, but by the method proposed in the
gospel. And, therefore, we have embraced christianity; that we
might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the deeds of the
law of Moses. For, by the deeds of that law, no flesh shall be justi-
fied. But, if, while we seek justification by the gospel-method, we must
have recourse to the law again; we are still but where we were;
that is, condemned sinners. Is the gospel-method, then, insufficient
to justify and save us? And Jesus Christ the minister of sin, to
condemn men, as the law did? God forbid! And yet this is cer-
tainly the case. If I, who have quitted the law of Moses, to put
myself under the gospel, should again put myself under the law, I
make myself a transgressor. I reassert the guilt of all my former
transgressions; from which, by that law, I cannot be justified.
And, when you build again the wall of partition, to keep out the
gentiles, which you yourself first broke down; do not you destroy
your own works; and represent these gentiles, as still polluted, and
unclean; though then God showed you not to account any man
polluted, or unfit for your society, and conversation? By the tenor
of the law of Moses itself, I, by embracing christianity, am dis-
charged from that law; that I might be appropriated to God, and
live acceptably to him, in his kingdom; which he hath now set
up, under his son. I, as a member of Christ's body, am cru-
The Jewish and Roman history continued.

The conciliation of the Jewish and Roman history. Herod Agrippa's dominions turned into a Roman province. The presidents of Syria, and procurators of Judæa. Seditions among the Jews. Agrippa the younger, and Felix, advanced.

I have already related the tragical death of Herod Agrippa; and the great pains, which he, in many instances took, to oblige the Jews. But he doeth not seem to have equally obliged and gratified his other subjects. For, as soon as they of Caesarea and Sebaste knew of his death, they made public rejoicings; casting bitter reflections upon the deceased king, and treating his family with great indignity. His son, Agrippa, who was only seventeen years of age, was then at Rome, where he was educated in the emperor's court. When Claudius, the emperor, heard of the death of Herod Agrippa, whom he looked upon, as his old and faithful friend, he was greatly troubled: and could not forbear resenting it, that the inhabitants of Caesarea and Sebaste should rejoice at his death, and insult his memory and family. As for his own part, he resolved to send away Agrippa, his son, immediately, to take possession of his father's kingdom. But his freedmen and favorites dissuaded him from it, under a pretense that it was too great a trust to be committed to so young a man. Though they, in reality, aspired after

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Joseph, antiqu. l. 19. c. 9.
after the government themselves. And, accordingly, it was granted to such of them, as could make the greatest interest with the emperor for it. And, in the first place, Cuspius Fadus was sent as procurator. For the kingdom of Herod Agrippa was now turned into a roman province. To Fadus, Claudius gave it in charge, that he should chastise the people of Caesarea and Sebaste, for insulting the memory of the deceased king; and for the contumely, which they had done to his daughters. But they made such interest with the emperor, that they did not suffer much, upon that account. Not long after this, Vibius Marits was recalled from being president of Syria; and Cassius Longinus sent thither, in his stead. When Fadus came into Judea, he found the Jews, who inhabited Perea, had killed several of the Philadelphians, in an insurrection; which they had made, about the boundaries of a village, which lay between them. But he soon put a stop to it, by punishing the heads and authors of the sedition. After that, he cleared the country of the robbers, who had greatly molested them. And, upon some disgust, which the emperor had received from the Jews, Cassius Longinus, the president of Syria, and Cuspius Fadus, the procurator of Judea, were sent to Jerusalem, with some forces. Where, having called together the chief-priests, and leading men of that city; they acquaint ed them, that the emperor would have the high-priest’s robes deposited, in the tower of Antonia, as they had been formerly. But Agrippa the younger, who was then in the emperor’s court, prevailed with Claudius, to revoke that order. About the same time, Herod, king of Chalcis, obtained, of Claudius, the power of the temple, and of the sacred treasury; as, likewise, to appoint who should be high-priest. Upon which, he deposed Simon Camheras; and made Joseph, the son of Cams, high-priest, in his stead. Cuspius Fadus, having been procurator of Judea, for about two years, he was removed; and Tiberius Alexander was sent to succede him. He had been a Jew; and was son to Alexander, the alabarch, or chief magistrate of the Jews, at Alexandria, in Egypt. But he had renounced his religion, and gone over to the heathens. During his administration, the famine happened, of which Agabus had prophesied. And to provide for which, the gentile christians, at Antioch, had sent a generous collection, to the Jewish christians, at Jerusalem.

Tacit. hist. 1, 5, c. 9; Bell. 1, 2, c. 11, § 6; Jos. antiq. jud. 1. 19, c. 9. ad fn. & de jud. 1. 20, c. 5, § 2.

Jos. antiq. jud. 1. 19, c. 9. ad fn. & de jud. 1. 20, c. 5.

Jos. antiq. jud. 1. 19, c. 9. ad fn. & de jud. 1. 20, c. 5.

Jos. antiq. jud. 1. 19, c. 9. ad fn. & de jud. 1. 20, c. 5.
Seditions among the Jews. By him, also, Jacob and Simon were apprehended and crucified. They were the sons of Judas of Galilee, who had excited the people to revolt from the Romans, when Quirinus made a census, in Judea. And, very probably, they had attempted something of the like nature. — Joseph, the son of Camys, did not long enjoy the dignity, before Herod, king of Chalcis, depose him; and conferred the high-priesthood upon Ananias, the son of Nebedæus. After which, Tiberius Alexander was recalled, and Ventidius Cumanus made procurator of Judea and Galilee, in his stead. During the great festivals, the Romans used to order a number of soldiers, to keep watch, in the porticoes of the temple; to prevent any disturbance, from the vast multitudes of people, who used to flock to Jerusalem, upon such occasions. It happened, that, at the passover, one of the soldiers, whom Cumanus had ordered upon that service, did, in a wanton and insolent humor, expose what modesty teaches men, universally, to conceal; perhaps to express his contempt of the Jewish custom of circumcision. Such an indecency, within the limits of the temple, did greatly exasperate the Jews; who cried out, that “it was a showing contempt, not to them, but to God himself.” And some of the more warm and forward of them inveighed against Cumanus, as if it had been done by his order. This greatly incensed the procurator; who, nevertheless, kept his temper so far, as to beg of them to make no sedition, during the festival. But intreaties would not do. No! they rather reviled and insulted him the more. He, therefore, ordered all the soldiers, in the city, instantly to repair, with their arms, to the tower of Antonia. Upon which, the people were terrified; and fled with so great precipitation, that about twenty thousand of them were trod, or pressed, to death; by reason of the narrowness of the gates of the temple. This turned the festival into a time of universal lamentation. So that the Jews, in general, neglecting their prayers and sacrifices, gave themselves up to tears and mourning. Nay, farther; that great calamity brought on another. For some of them, who had escaped, were filled with resentment; and happening to meet with one Stephen, a servant of Caesar’s, at Bethoron, about twelve miles from Jerusalem, they fell upon him, in a furious manner; and plundered him of all his baggage. As soon as Cumanus heard of it, he sent out some of the Roman soldiers, to plunder the neighboring villages, and to bring the principal persons therein, to him; as if they had been guilty of that fact. The villages were, accordingly, laid waste. And one of the soldiers, sent upon that expedition, hap-
They are, at length, appeased.

An. Christi
50.
Claud. 10.

Book III.
Ch. IV.

Aeis xv.

34.

pening to find, in a village, the books of Moses, he publicly tore them
in pieces; withall, throwing out scoffs, and bitter reflections, on the
jewish laws and nation. The report of this, suddenly drew together
a vast number of Jews; who went to Cesarea, and petitioned Cuma-
arus "to revenge the injury done, not to them, but to the deity; whose
laws were treated in so unworthy a manner. For they could not
bear to live, to see the laws of their fathers treated with such in-
dignity." He, fearing a general insurrection, advised with his
council; and beheaded the soldier. By which mean, the tumult
was appeased.f

The former of these instances shows what great regard the Jews
had for their temple; and the latter points out their exceeding great re-
verence for the law of Moses. From whence, we may be satisfied,
that the representations of the new testament, concerning both these
particulars, are just, and well-grounded.

Herod, king of Chalcis, died. And Claudius conferred his kingdom,
on his nephew, the younger Agrippa. To whom he, also, com-
mited the power, over the temple, and the sacred treasury, as well
as of conferring the high-priesthood, on whom he pleased.e The
emperor, Claudius, was very much influenced by his wives and freed-
men; as we shall show, more particularly, hereafter. And hence it
was, that Antonius Claudius Felix, one of his freed-men, was made
governor of Samaria. For he was brother to Pallas, another of the
emperor's freed-men, who was highly in favor with his master; and
yet more with Agrippina, whom he had been greatly instrumental, in
promoting to be empress.h By Agrippina's interest, therefore, Pal-

f Joseph. antiqu. I. 20. c. 5. § 3, 4. In the history of the Jewish war, [I. 2;
c. 12. § 1.] Josephus computes those that were pressed to death, about the gates of
the temple, at above ten thousand. But here, at twenty thousand. Either the num-
bers might be changed, by the transcribers; or the slain might be between ten and
twenty thousand.

e There is some mistake, or wrong reading, Joseph. antiqu. I. 20. c. 1. § ult. where
it is said, "that this power continued, in the descendents of Herod, king of Chalcis,
to the end of the war." See Hudson in loc. and Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c.
part. i. p. 30. in the notes. 2d edition, p. 49. 3d edition. See, also, Joseph. antiqu.
I. 20. c. 8. § 8; 11. & c. 9. § 1. edit. Havercamp. From whence it will appear
that none of the sons of Herod, king of Chalcis, did nominate any high-priests. But
all the changes, in the high-priesthood, after the death of the said Herod, [which hap-
pened in the 8th of Claudius,] to the time of the war, were made, by Agrippa the
younger, nephew of this Herod, king of Chalcis. And, when the people of Jeru-
salem had a mind to apply the sacred money, to any particular purpose, they addressed
to Agrippa, and he gave the directions. [Joseph. antiqu. c. 9. § 7.] In which place,
Josephus saith expressly, that "the king [Agrippa] had been intrusted with the care
or government, of the temple, by Claudius Caesar."
A quarrel between the jews and samaritanes.

As obtained, for his brother Felix, the government of Samaria. And, afterwards, got him farther promoted.

Caius Longinus being removed, Ummidius Quadratus was made president of Syria. During his administration, the quarrel happened between the jews and samaritanes; which hath been related above.

And, when Cumanus would not do them justice, the jews appealed to Quadratus; accusing the samaritanes of begining the quarrel, and Cumanus of favoring them. And (according to Tacitus) Felix was also criminal; by applying unseasonable remedies; and even partaking of the plunder, which had been carried off, in that quarrel.

The samaritanes had, indeed, complained first to Quadratus; charging the jews with begining the quarrel, and with contemning the roman authority. But, when Quadratus did, after some time, go into Samaria; he found they had given him a false information, and that they themselves had begun the quarrel. However; understanding that some of the jews were meditating some new tumults and insurrections, he crucified those, whom Cumanus had taken alive; and put others to death; to terrify the rest. And having power, from the emperor, to try Cumanus and Felix; who were, perhaps, more guilty than either the jews or samaritanes; he found some difficulty in proceeding against them. And, after all, was hindered from executing justice, upon Felix; whose brother, Pallas, was so much in favor with the emperor, and with Agrippina, the empress. For, instead of being tried, himself; he was made one of the judges in that affair. Which put an entire stop to all accusations against him.

But Cumanus, who had no such friend, in the emperor's court, was deposed, and sent to Rome, together with Celer, the tribune; to give an account of their conduct, before Caesar. And, farther; Quadratus sent, in chains, Jonathan, and Ananias the high-priest, and his son Ananus, the captain of the temple; and ordered several other leading men, among the jews and samaritanes, to appear before Caesar, concerning that affair. Cumanus, and the samaritanes, had made such interest with the emperor's freed-men and favorites; that, when the affair came to an hearing, they would have got the better of the jews; had it not been for Agrippa the younger, who was still at Rome; and interceded so powerfully with Agrippina, the empress. She had the ascendent over Claudius; and prevailed with him to put:
An. Chrifi.
Claud. 10.

The advancement of Felix.

put to death, such of the samaritane, as were then at Rome: to
banish Cumanus; and to order Celer, the tribune, who had also been
criminal in that affair, to be carried back to Jerusalem; that he
might be publicly draged through the streets of the city, and after-
wards beheaded. Whereas; Felix (who had been as guilty as Cu-
manus, and the others, who suffered, upon that occasion) not onely
continued in the government of Samaria; but was also, by the in-
terest of his brother, made procurator of Judea, Galilee, and Pe-
ra. Where he exercised great injustice and cruelty; and lived in
a voluptuous and debauched manner. Tacitus says, that he married
one Druilla, the grand daughter of Mark Antony and Cleopatra.
By which mean, he became related to the Cæsarean family; and
even to Claudius the emperor. Josephus informs us, that he married
Druilla, daughter of Herod Agrippa; and that she left her former
husband, Axizus, king of the Emisenes, on purpose to marry Felix,
who was mightily inamored with her beauty. Both these accounts
may be true. For Suetonius says, that Felix was the husband of three
queens; though there is no intimation who the third was.

The emperor, Claudius, took the kingdom of Chalcis, from Agrip-
pa the younger, after he had governed it four years; and gave him,
instead of it, a larger kingdom; namely, Batanaea, Trachonitis, and
Gaulanitis; which had been the tetrarchy of Philip; together with
Abila, that had been the tetrarchy of Lyfania. To which he, like-
wife, added the province, which had belonged to Varus.\footnote{Tacit. annal. 1. 5. c. 9.} \footnote{Antiq. l. 20. c. 7. § 2.} \footnote{Joseph,}
\footnote{Antiq. l. 20. c. 5. § 2. & c. 7. § r. De bell. jud. 1. 2. c. 12. § ult.}

CHAP.
The second Apostolic journey.

C H A P. V. 

St. Paul's second apostolic journey, along with Silas and Timothy, to establish such as were already converted to Christianity, in part of Asia minor; and to convert others, in Phrygia, Galatia, Troas, Macedonia, and Greece. Or his Phrygian, Galatian, Graecian, and Macedonian journey. Acts xv. 35, — xviii. 22.

SECT. I.

Paul proposeth to Barnabas to go out again. They differ about John Mark; and go separate journeys. Barnabas goeth to Cyprus; and Paul, through Syria, and Cilicia. They deliver the apostolic decree to the churches. Acts xv. 35, to the end of that chapter.

Paul and Barnabas, having now continued, for some time, at Antioch in Syria, teaching the Christian doctrine, in conjunction with many others. And the church, there, being settled, by the letter, from the apostles, elders, and brethren, at Jerusalem: — Paul proposeth to Barnabas, that they should go out again; and see how things went, with the several churches, which they had gathered, in their former apostolic journey. Barnabas readily consented to the proposal. But, out of his very great natural affection for his nephew, John Mark, he insisted upon it, that he should be permitted to go along with them, a second time; as an evangelist, or their minister, and assistant. Whereas; St. Paul, judging more impartially, and without the bias of consanguinity, did not think it proper to admit him. Because, he had, at Pamphilia, (either in a cowardly, or humoristic, manner,) left them, in their last apostolic journey; and would not accompany them, in their necessity, as he ought to have done. And the contention grew so sharp and violent, between those two excellent men, that they parted company: though, perhaps, in as friendly a manner, as Abraham and Lot did, after their contention. [Gen. xiii. 7, &c.] But, sup
Barnabas and Saul separates.

An. Chriši pose it was with dislike and resentment, there is nothing wonderful in it. For, though they were inspired with the whole scheme of the christian doctrine; and so far under the guidance of an unerring spirit; yet no christian supposes that they were inspired in their ordinary conduct, or de vested of all human infirmities. And it would be ridiculous to make such things any objection to the truth of the christian religion. On the contrary, it ought to be looked upon, as a proof of the great fairness and impartiality of the sacred historians, that they frankly owned; and, without reserve, published; the foibles and imperfections of their fellow-christians; and even of the apostles and first planters of the glorious gospel. But, whatever human infirmity there was, in this contention between Paul and Barnabas; God, in his good providence, made this separation of theirs turn to the greater and more extensive good of mankind. For, by that mean, they spread christianity, in more, and distant, countries. And not only the christian churches, in general; but St. Mark, also, was profited by this severity of St. Paul. And behaved himself so, as again to deserve the esteem and commendation of that great apostle. For they were perfectly reconciled; and acted in concert, in spreading and promoting christianity; as appeareth from both Barnabas and John Mark’s being mentioned, after this, with great honor and respect, once and again, in the epistles of St. Paul.

Barnabas took his nephew, John Mark, along with him; and (after they had been recommended, unto God, for his blessing, by the church, at Antioch,) they sailed unto the island Cyprus, Barnabas his native country, to confirm the christians, and convert others. And Paul, having chose for his minister, or assistant, Silas, or Silvanus; (who had been one of the messengers, from the church, at Jerusalem, to the church, at Antioch; and who preferred going along with that apostle, to the going back to Jerusalem:) And they two, having been, also, recommended, to God, for his blessing, by the prayers of the christian brethren, at Antioch, (accompanied, again, perhaps, with fasting, and the laying on of their hands;) they went, through some parts of Syria, and through Cilicia, Paul’s native


Ver. 40. b St. Luke, designing here to drop the story of Barnabas, and pursue that of Paul alone, hath not mentioned this circumstance. But, it is highly probable, the church at Antioch withdrew them both suc ce ed. And, therefore, recommended both of them, together with their assistants, unto God, for his blessing; before they set out, upon so great an undertaking.
The letter delivered to the churches.

native province, to establish the christians, and to convert others. And, as they passed along through the cities, where-ever it was proper, they delivered the letter, from the apostles, elders, and brethren, at jerusalem; that such of the devout gentiles, as embraced christianny, might not be imposed upon, or made to observe more of the law of Moses, than they had done, antecedent to their becoming christians. For that determination reached to converts, from among the proselytes of the gate, where-ever they lived. And we find some, as far distant from jerusalem, as antioch, in pisidia; and philippi; and thessalonica, in macedonia. Nay; there seemeth, generally, to have been some of them, where-ever there was any jewisb synagoge, or prosuchba. Upon the reception of the letter, the churches were greatly confirmed in christianny. And their numbers increased daily. Whereas, if the devout gentiles had been obliged to circumcision, and the whole law of Moses, upon their embracing christianny; it would have shaken such of them, as had already received the gospel; and would have greatly deterred others from embracing the christian religion, because of submitting to so great and intolerable a burthen. The more moderate jewisb converts, also, would be determined to acquiesce, and not molest their gentile brethren; when they considered that the spirit of god had settled the terms, on which they were to be accepted; and the apostles, elders, and brethren of the circumcision, at jerusalem, had given it, under their hands, as their unanimous opinion of that matter.

Ver. 41. c The author of Miscellana sacra hath, with great judgment, shown, that either the two verses, Acts xvi. 4, 5. are misplaced, and ought to have been added to the conclusion of the xvth chapter; or (which I rather incline to) that Acts xvi. 1, 2, 3. ought to be read in a parenthesis. [See Essay iv. p. 33, &c.] And the different readings of Acts xv. 41, mentioned by Dr. Mill, confirm this observation. I have, therefore, brought ver. 4, 5. of the xvth chapter, in here. Though I am satisfied, that they delivered the letter to the churches, where-ever there were proselytes of the gate; that they might stand up for their liberty, and that the jewisb converts might not attempt to abridge them of it.
St. Paul and Silas go to Derbe and Lystra.

There Timothy is circumcised; and joineth them, as another evangelist, or assistant to St. Paul. Acts xvi. 1, 2, 3.

Paul (having Silas along with him) went to Derbe and Lystra, where he and Barnabas had been, in their former apostolic journey, and had planted the Christian religion. There they found Timothy; who, though he was a mere youth, had distinguished himself, among the Christians. His father was a Greek, or Gentile; but his mother was a Jewess. Very likely his father was a devout Gentile; as he had married so pious a Jewess. His grandmother,

Ver. 1. Dr. Mill has taken notice that the MS. called Coel. 2. instead of [a Jewess] read [χωρία, ἠδιαστήματος, a widow, a Jewess.] He has, likewise, observed that Valesius his MS. and two of the Latin fathers, instead of [a Jewess] read, only, [a widow.] According to that reading, it would here be intimated, “that Timothy’s father was now dead, and that his mother was a widow.” But, as Erasmus has, most ingeniously, conjectured, that reading arose from the negligence of some transcriptioner; who, in his hurry, transposed the letters, in his copy of the Vulgate. And so, for [Judæa, a Jewess] writ [vidua, a widow.]

This may be confirmed, by the following observations, (1.) That the words ἠδιαστήματος and χωρία, in Greek, are not so like one another, as Judæa and Vidua, in Latin. And, therefore, not so likely to be mistaken, the one for the other. (2.) Valesius collected his various readings, not from the Greek, but from 16 Latin copies; which various readings he translated into Greek, for fear of the inquisition, or of being suspected of heresy; and placed them in the margin of his New Testament. But he has often translated them very unhappily. And, thereby, he has some readings, which are not found, in any Greek copy; neither are they Greek, at all. These things appear, not only from Wetstein’s observations; but from examining several of Valesius his various readings. The Valesian readings are, therefore, no other than the testimonies of Latin copies. (3.) The MS. called Coel. 2. seems to have added the word, [χωρία a widow] as a translation from the Latin copies. And, if so, it is not singular, in doing such a thing. For some other of the Greek MSS. seem to have altered, in some places, in conformity to the Vulgar Latin. (4.) Two of the Latin fathers; namely, Jerome and Augustine, instead of [a Jewess] read, [a widow.]

But none of the Greek fathers are alleged, in favor of that reading. Most probably, these two Latin fathers had copies of the New Testament, in the Vulgar Latin, which fo read this text. (5.) None of the most antient and most valuable MSS. nor any other of the antient versions, except the Vulgate, have that different reading. — From all which, Erasmus his conjecture seems highly probable. And the common may appear, evidently to be the true reading; especially when it is added, that Timothy’s mother
Timothy becomes an evangelist.

Timothy, whose name was Lois, and his mother, whose name was Eunice, being Jews, and both of them very pious, they had given Timothy a virtuous and religious education; and had taken particular care to acquaint him with the scriptures of the old testament; in which he was instructed, even from his childhood. As his father was a gentile, and did not approve of it, Timothy was not circumcised, in his infancy. It hath been taken notice of, already, that Timothy (together with his mother and grand-mother) was, most probably, converted to christianity, when Paul and Barnabas were at Lystra, in their first apostolic journey. When Paul now came to Lystra again, among other agreeable circumstances, he found young Timothy to have made a progress in christianity, much beyond what could have been expected, from one of his years. For he had arrived to such a degree of knowledge and piety, that he was very much taken notice of; and greatly admired, and respected; by the christians, in general, at Lystra and Iconium. One of such early zeal, and distinguished piety, was not to be lost in the crowd. Nor would the great apostle of the gentiles suffer such talents to lie buried in a napkin. No! He knew mankind too well; and had such an ardent and indefatigable zeal for propagating christianity; that (as Barnabas had parted company; John Mark forsaken him, when he had very great occasion for him; and he had none but Silas to go along with him, and assist him; in a work, which required so many diligent and faithful laborers;) for these, and like reasons, I say,) he, with great earnestness, desired to take Timothy, along with him, as another evangelist, or assistant. But the apostle's sagacity, and zeal, was not all. In this case, there was something supernatural. For some of the christian prophets (very likely, at Lystra,) prophesied of Timothy's future usefulness; and directed the apostle to the choice of him, for one of his fellow-laborers, or attendants. Thus directed by heaven, St. Paul determined to take Timothy along with him. But first, with his own consent, he took him, and circumcised him. For Timothy was now of age, to have it done, with his own consent. And, if his father was dead, there was nothing to obstruct the doing it. The apostle did not think it necessary; or, in the least, conducive; to Timothy's salvation. But he did it, to take away all occasion of offence, from the Jews.

The mother is here called a Jewess, by way of opposition to what immediately follows; namely, "that his father was a Greek, or gentile."
The spirit imparted unto Timothy.

For they, in general, knew that Timothy's father was a gentile; and that he had not been circumcised, in his infancy. The apostle would not allow Titus to be circumcised, because both his parents were gentiles. And it had been determined, in a full and unanimous assembly of apostles, elders, and brethren, that there was no necessity for such to be circumcised, upon their becoming christians. For, unto them, christianity was the perfect law of liberty, or of freedom from the law of Moses. But Timothy's mother was a jewess. And it has, all along, been a rule with the jews, that (partus sequitur ventrem,) if the father be a jew, and the mother a gentile, the son is no jew, but a gentile. But, though the father be a gentile, if the mother be a jewess, the son ought to be looked upon as a jew; and, as such, ought to be circumcised. In such a situation, therefore, it was lawful, and proper, to do it; to take away all occasion of offence, from the jews, in those parts. For it was well known, that Timothy's father was a gentile; and that he had not been circumcised, in his infancy.

Timothy had, most likely, been baptized, when he first embraced christianity; but it doeth not appear that he then received any spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers: very probably, because of his unripe age. But, as he had, since his baptism, approved himself, in a distinguishing manner, and much beyond his age; and was now pointed out, for an evangelist, by the spirit of prophecy; the apostle layeth his hands upon him, and imparteth unto him the holy spirit; that is, to qualify him, for the great work, whereunto God, by the mouth of his prophets, had appointed, and called, him. And, along with the apostle, or soon after him, the elders of the church, at Lystra, laid their hands, also, upon Timothy (not to impart the holy spirit; for that St. Paul himself did; and none but apostles could do it; — but) to signify their concurrence, in prayer, for the divine blessing upon him, and his future labors.

* Vid. Limborch in loc. Herodotus [edit. Gale, p. 72.] represents the Lycians, as having been once called solymi, & Miliae; and who, in other things, generally followed the customs of the Cretans and Carians; but as having this peculiar, and different from all other men, that they reckon the genealogy on the mother's side, and not from their father's; and that, if a free woman married a slave, the children were free; but if a free-man, or even their prince, married a foreigner, or an harlot, his children were infamous.*

* & 2 Tim. i. 6.

* It ought to be observed, that ver. 4, 5. are taken into section i. of this chapter. See the note, above, on Acts xv. 41.
St. Paul passeth through Phrygia, &c.

CHAP. V.  SECT. III.

St. Paul and his two companions, Silas and Timothy, go through Phrygia, Galatia, and Troas, in their way to Macedonia. Acts xvi. 6, — 10.

St. Paul, having Silas, before, with him, and having now added Timothy to his company, went through Lycaonia. And, when he had farther instructed and established the Christians there, they passed through Phrygia, and the region of Galatia; where they had never been before. And there, also, they planted the gospel. St. Luke hath not, in this place, taken any notice, of their preaching the gospel, there, at this time. But, from 6. Acts xviii. 23. it plainly appears that Christianity was now planted among them. For, when the Apostle of the Gentiles passeth through Phrygia and Galatia, the next time; he is said to have "confirmed, and established, such disciples, as were formerly converted." And the Epistle to the Galatians was written, soon after this, to the churches, which St. Paul had planted, in that country. At Galatia, St. Paul now preached the gospel; through (or with) infirmity of the flesh. That was, very probably, the bodily disorder, which made his presence mean, and his speech contemptible; and which he, elsewhere, calleth his thorn in the flesh. And yet, notwithstanding that disorder affected him so much, the Galatians did not despise him, (as others did,) upon the account of that trial in the flesh; neither did they reject the doctrine, which he preached; but received him, as if it had been an angel from God, or as if Jesus Christ himself had come among them. Nay; he beareth them record; that, if it had been practicable, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and given them to him. However; (though he made a mean appearance, as to his person) he both worked miracles among them, and communicated to them the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Which things were sufficient to procure regard.

Ver. 6. * See Gal. i. 6. & iv. 13. &c. Miscellanea sacra; preface, p. 56, 57, 58. Abstraal, p. 31. and what will be said, in this history, in the year 53. when the Epistle to the Galatians cometh to be considered; namely, book iii. chap. 5. § 11.

* Gal. iv. 13, 14, 15.  
* Gal. iii. 2, 3; 5.
From Galatia, they intended to have gone and planted the gospel in Asia; that is, in Asia propria, or the proconsular Asia; which was but a small part of Asia minor; in which stood the city of Ephesus, Miletus; and other towns, not mentioned in the scripture. But, by an impulse of the Spirit, they were hindered from going thither, at this time. For God designed, that they should first plant Christianity, in Macedonia, and Greece; as knowing, very probably, that things were riper, there, for the harvest. And so Asia propria was reserved for St. Paul's next apostolic journey. Being hindered from going to the proconsular Asia, they went to Mycia. And intended, from thence, to have gone, and preached the gospel, in Bithynia. But the Spirit, again, directed otherwise. Passing, therefore, through Mycia, they came down to the city Troas; (not far from which, the famous and antient city, Troy, had stood, and, out of the ruins of which, this new city is said to have been built,) And there, in the night, St. Paul had a vision from God; in which, there seemed to appear unto him, a man, in the habit of a Macedonian; who approached him; and (speaking in the Macedonian dialect) intreated him, in an humble and ardent manner, to come over to Macedonia, and assist them. When St. Paul awaked, he acquainted his companions with the vision. From which, they unanimously concluded, that God had signified his intention, that they should go, and preach the Christian doctrine, there.

Now St. Luke, who wrote one of the four gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, was one of St. Paul's company. For it is said, "After the vision, we endeavored to go into Macedonia; concluding that the Lord had called us, to preach the gospel, there." I have taken notice of a different reading, Acts xi. 28. which intimates, that St. Luke was, at Antioch, in Syria, together with St. Paul, long before this time. That agreeth very well with the account, which is commonly given of him. For he is thought to have been a native of that city. And, as St. Paul doeth not reckon him, among his companions of the circumcision, but of the uncircumcision; I suppose that he was one of the devout Gentiles, or proselytes of the gate, who had there imbraced the Christian religion. For that church consisted of such. It is highly probable, that he was

Ver. 8. "It is so written, in the Cambridge manuscript. [See Dr. Mill."
Ver. 9. "And dux, according to two antient manuscripts, and the Syriac version. [See Dr. Mill."
Ver. 10. "See the Cambridge manuscript, in Dr. Mill."

Col. iv. 19, 20. compared with ver. 12, 13, 14.
St. Paul saileth to Macedonia:

was converted to Christianity, about the year 42; when Barnabas and Saul preached, for a long time together, in that city. And Saul, having been a Christian, for about eight or nine years; he now followed his father in the gospel, to Troas. From whence, he went with him, to Philippi; and was, afterwards, frequently in his company. St. Paul, in one of his epistles, calleth him a physician; and frequently maketh a very honorable mention of him. He had been trained up, in the Greek learning; and is reckoned, by some, to have wrote that language, with greater purity, than the other evangelists.

CHAP. V.  SECT. IV.

St. Paul, together with Silas, Timothy, and Luke, sail to Macedonia; preach the gospel, in the prosenia, at Philippi; convert Lydia; dispose of the pythonesie. Paul and Silas are scourged; convert the jaylor, whilst in the prison. And, being freemen of Rome, are honorably dismissed. Acts xvi. 11, to the end of that chapter.

This second of St. Paul's apostolic journeys had been thus far by land. But, now, they took ship; and sailed, with a prosperous gale, to Samothracia, an island in the Ægean sea. And, the next day, they sailed again; and arrived at Neapolis, a city of Macedonia; through which they passed, without preaching the gospel, there, at this time. From Neapolis, they sailed, up the river Strymon, to Philippi; which was a city, or town, of the first division of Macedonia, and a Roman colony. It had, more antiently, gone, by the name of Crænides, or Crænidae: probably, from the springs, or fountains, which arose there; it being, according to Appian, built upon an hill.  Ver. 12. * See Mr. Pierce's synopsis of the epistle to the Philippians; and Le Clerc, on Phil. i. 1.
Philippi, a Roman colony.

Datus; because of the gold mines, which were near it. And lastly, it was called Philippi; from Philip, king of Macedonia, the father of Alexander the Great; who very much improved the town, and increased the number of its inhabitants: partly for the sake of the gold mines, there; and partly to make it a good fence against the Thracians. It was a city, upon the borders of Thrace; and, by some of the antient geographers, was reckoned to belong to that country. But St. Luke faith, that it now belonged to Macedonia. As it stood upon the borders of those two countries, no wonder that it was sometimes ascribed to one, and sometimes to the other. But, as St. Luke, who was upon the spot, wrote, not long after his being there; and is so fair an historian; it might reasonably have been supposed, that, (according to his assertion) it now belonged to Macedonia; if there had been no other antient testimony to confirm it. But the speech of Paulus Amilthus, related by Livy, is a sufficient confirmation of St. Luke's assertion. For he ascribeth all, between the rivers Strymon and Nestus, to Macedonia. And Philippi lay between those two rivers. St. Luke calleth this city, Philippi, a colony. And, as he here maketh use of the Latin word colonia, instead of the proper Greek term ἀδονίς; it is most likely, he designeth to intimate, that it was made a colony, by the Romans; and not by the Greeks. Which is farther confirmed, from ver. 21. where he represented the Philippians, as calling themselves Romans. From some antient coins and inscriptions, compared with the Roman historians, it appeareth, that Julius Caesar first planted the colony there; and that Augustus Caesar afterwards augmented it; by sending thither some of the people of those towns, in Italy, who had opposed him, and fallen in with Mark Antony. This was the nature of colonies; [according to Agellius, l. 16. c. 13.] "They neither came, from abroad, into the city of Rome; nor did they grow upon their own roots, where they were settled. But they were, as it were, propagated, from the city; and had all the laws and customs of the people of Rome, and not of their own making."

Livy

b Hence came the proverb, Δατοῖς ἔφασιν Datus, which abounds with good things. [See Hammond on Philip. i. 1.]

e Vid. Appian. de bello civili, l. 4.

d Vide Pompon. Mel. l. 11. c. 2. & Pliny, nat. hist. l. 4. c. 11. laudat. apud Hammond, in Phil. i. 1.

f Lib. 45. c. 29. Dion. l. 51. p. 445. C, D.
The form and design of a proseucha.

Livy informs us, that Paulus Aemilius, who conquered Macedonia, and brought it into subjection to the Romans, ordered it to be divided into four parts; and that one of these, and the first part, should be all that lay between the rivers Strymon and Nessus. In that first part, and between those two rivers, stood Philippi. But, as Livy hath informed us, in the same chapter, Amphipolis was the chief city of the first part, or first division; and not Philippi. Neither was Philippi the first city, which they came to, when they sailed from Troas, to Macedonia. For that was Neapolis; as St. Luke hath here observed [ver. 11]. We ought, therefore, to follow Erasmus his notes on verse 11, and Castelli's translation of verse 12; and call it a city of the first part of Macedonia. In this city, St. Paul, and his companions, tarried, for some time. It should seem that there were but few Jews settled there; and those mostly women, who could not afford to have a synagogue. But the Jews, where they could not have a synagogue; (either, because they were few, or poor; or were prohibited by the magistrate;) there they used to have an oratory, or a proseucha; that is, an open court for prayer; which they commonly built upon the sea-side, or upon the banks of a river. Such of the Jews, as lived in, or nigh, the city Jerusalem, went up frequently to worship, at the temple. Though they, also, had a great number of synagogues. And, where it was inconvenient to go to the courts of the temple, they frequented them. In like manner, the Jews, in more distant places, built synagogues, and worshiped God there. But, where they could have no synagogue; there they built open courts, like the Roman forums; or rather, like one of the courts of the temple. And, there, they used to assemble, for their devotion; especially on the sabbath-day. Some of the Latin poets make mention of the proseuchae. And, into one...
The form and design of a proseucha:

The form and design of a proseucha:

Of them, our Saviour is said to have gone, and spent a whole night, in prayer, and other acts of devotion, before he chose the twelve Apostles, from among the multitude of his disciples. Those proseuchaes differed from the synagogues, in several particulars. For (1.) In the synagogues, the prayers were offered up, in public forms; in common, for the whole congregation. But, in the proseuchaes, they prayed, as in the courts of the temple; every one apart, and by himself. (2.) The synagogues were covered houses. But the proseuchaes were open courts; like the forums; which were inclosures, open at the top; where antiently, at Rome, and in other cities, under democratical governments, the people used to assemble, for transacting the businesse and affairs of the public. Or like the court of the women, before the temple, at Jerusalem. (3.) Synagogues were, generally, built within the cities, to which they did belong. Whereas; the proseuchaes were, commonly, out of the city; either by a river, or by the sea-side; and often upon an hill, or mountain. The proseucha, in which our Saviour is said to have continued all night, was upon a mountain. And the high places, mentioned in the old testament, seem to have been somewhat of the same nature with the proseuchaes. For those high places were not condemned; but only, when they were made use of, for idolatrous, or schismatical worship; as appeareth from their being frequented, by prophets, and good men, without any hint of disapprobation. And what confirms this, is, that the proseuchaes had groves of trees, in or about them; (in the same manner, as the high places had;) under which they could shelter themselves, from the scorching of the sun, or from a sudden shower of rain. The sanctuary of the Lord, in which Joshua set up his pillar, under the oak, or oaken grove, in Sichem, was (very probably) a proseucha. And it is plain, from the text, that it had a grove of oaks, in or nigh it. The proseucha, which Philo maketh mention of, nigh Alexandria, had such groves, in or about them. For he complaineth that the Alexandrians, in a tumult, which they made, against the Jews, there, had cut down the trees of their proseuchaes. And the proseucha, at Rome, in Ægeria's grove, was of the same fort with those at Alexandria. The psalmist, where he maketh mention of green olive-trees, in the house.

= Luke vi. 12. We have translated the words, "He continued all night in prayer to God." But they ought to have been translated, "He continued all night in a proseucha of God;" that is, in an house, or rather a court, for prayer to God.

= 1 Sam. ix. 19. and x. 5; &c. = John xxiv. 26. = In Legatione ad Caium, p. 1013, A. = Juvenal, Sat. 3.
St. Paul converteth Lydia.

House of God, doeth (perhaps) refer to such a proseucha. And such an one was antiently in Misra; as the author of the first book of Maccabees hath informed us. These were, most likely, some of the moade el; [Psal. lxxiv. 8.] which ought not to have been rendered synagogues; but only, the assemblies of God; or the places, where the people used, then, to assemble, for religious worship. For the synagogues do not appear to have been so antient, as the time of writing that psalm. In the days of our Lord, and his apostles, synagogues were more common; and the proseuchæ but few. Though the word, proseucha, is sometimes used for a synagogue, both by Josephus and Philo. And it appeareth, from the latter, that the service of the synagogue was performed, in some of the proseuchæ, at Alexandria. Yet there was commonly a distinction still preserved, between the synagogues and the proseuchæ. And the place, where the Jews assembled, for their religious worship, at Philippi, was of the latter sort. St. Paul, and his assistants, being well acquainted with the custom of the Jews, waited, at Philippi, till the sabbath-day. And, then, they went, out of the city, to the banks of the river Strymon; where it had been thought fit, that the proseucha should be, according to a very usual custom of the Jews, who chose the sea-side, or the banks of a river, for the places of divine worship. And (though the proseuchæ were commonly used, only, for private prayers; and there was no reading of the law, or the prophets, in them; nor any discourses usually made, there; — yet) they sate down, after the manner of the Jews; and discoursed, concerning the gospel doctrine, to the women, who were assembled, in that proseucha, who were partly Jews, and partly proselytes of the gate. For it was the custom of the great apostle of the Gentiles, every where, to begin with such; and first to offer the gospel to them. Among others, there was present, at that time, one Lydia; whose business was to buy and sell purple. She was a native of the city of Thyatira, and a proselyte of the gate; that is, one, who worshiped the true God; though she did not conform to the Jewish law, in all its rites and ceremonies. She heard St. Paul, with uncommon attention. And (through the goodness of God, in setting, before her, the light of the gospel, with sufficient evidence,) her heart was affected, and her mind convinced of the truth and excellence of the Christian religion.

[Note 1: Maccab. iii. 46.]
St. Paul dispossesseth the pythoness.

An. Christ. 14. Which she immediately embraced. And she was baptized, and her whole family along with her. And so pleased was she, at hearing these glad tidings of salvation, and being admitted into full communion with the church and people of God; that she treated the apostle, and his attendants, (if they judged her to be a sincere convert, and worthy of such a favor,) to come, and take up their lodgings, at her house. And she insisted so much upon it, that she would take no denial.

It happened, one day, as St. Paul and his attendants were going, from Lydia's house, to the oratory, or proseucha, by the river's side, that a maid-servant met them; who was, perhaps, a lunatic person; and was reckoned, by the people, to be possessed with the spirit of Pythian Apollo, or a spirit of divination. That damsel, having heard their character, (which, most probably, was become the common talk of the town) turned back, and followed after them; crying aloud, and saying: "These men are the servants of the most high God; who are come hither, to show unto us the way to salvation." And, in that manner, she followed, and disturbed, them, several days. The apostle, who valued not the testimony of evil spirits, or lunatic persons; at first flighted her, and took little or no notice of what she said. But, when he saw, that she continued to disturb them, he was troubled. And, as she was, one day, following them, to the proseucha; and crying out, as usual; he (by an impulse of the spirit of God) turned about, and said, to the spirit, by whose inspiration she was supposed to divine; "In the name, and by the power, of Jesus Christ, I command thee to come out of her." And, that moment, there was an end of her lunacy, and of her pretended divination. The damsel had, before that, brought in a considerable revenue to her masters, by her pretences to soothsaying and divination. But, when they saw, that their gainful trade was at an end, they were exceedingly enraged. And (leaving Luke and Timothy, those two young evangelists, as less considerable;) they seized upon Paul and Silas, the two principal persons; and draged them away, to the forum, the place of public judicature. Presenting them to the duumviri, the magistrates of the roman city, or colony; and, hiding their own private resentments, under the mask of public zele; they accused them, in a severe manner, saying: "These men, though they are Jews and strangers, do exceedingly disturb this our city; by attempting, contrary to the
"the roman laws, to introduce j ewish customs, and a n ew religion. An. Olymp.
For they teach laws, and institutions; which it would not be law-
ful for us, as we are a roman colony, to receive, and observe." Book III.
This speech incensed the populace against them. And the too cred-
Book V.
ulous magistrates (even before they had carefully-examined into the
matter) used them shamefully, and with cruelty; tearing off their claothes: and ordering the lictors to beat them, with rods. Which
V. Sect. IV.
they did, immediately, and with great severity. To this, the Apos-
tle himself alludeth; [1 Thess. ii. 2. and again, 2 Cor. xi. 23.] where he, reciting some of his many sufferings, intimates, that
where he, reciting some of his many sufferings, intimates, that
"he had received stripes above measure." And this is, likewise, one
of the three times, to which he refereth, when he faith, [ver. 25]
"Thrice was I beaten with rods." After the lictors had given them
many stripes, the duumviri threw them into prison; giving the jay-
lor a very strict charge to keep them safe and secure. He under-
stood their meaning. And, therefore, he put them into the inner-
most part of the prison, the place of the greatest strength and secu-
And, to make all as safe as possible, he likewise fastened
their feet in the stocks; which was a very uneasiie, painful posture.
They were as little daunted, at suffering; as elevated, when they
were cared for; and might have been even adored, for their miraculous
This was true courage, and proper fortitude; a composure
and firmness of mind, arising from a sense of having done their
their duty, and being accepted by the supreme ruler of heaven and
earth. From this consciousness of their integrity, and sense of the
divine favor, Paul and Silas, (though they had been lately scourged,
with great severity; and were now in a dungeon, in a most uneasiie
situation, in the stocks;) at mid-night, when such wounds and tor-
ments gave them greatest uneasiiness; instead of uttering sighs and
groans; or shrieking with the anguish; they prayed; and sang hymns
of praise and thanksgiving, unto almighty God; so loudly and so
cheerfully, that all the prisoners heard them. For they rejoiced,
that they were honored with suffering for the sake of Christ.
And, therefore, they sang their hymns of praise. While they were
at this ecstatic devotion, they had a miraculous and extraordinary to-
ken of the divine acceptance; as remarkable, as the sending fire
down from heaven, to consume the sacrifices of old. For, on a
sudden, there was a great earthquake; which made the very foun-
dations of the prison shake under them. Upon which, all the doors
burst open, in a moment; and the chains and fetters fell off, from
the prisoners, at once. The jaylor was awaked, by the noise, in
the
The jaylor and his family baptized.

An. Christ. the utmost consternation. And, when he found all the doors of
Claud. 11. the prison open; though he had shut them, in the evening, with so
much care; he drew his sword, and was going to stab himself;
Book III. as thinking that all the prisoners were fled: and as knowing, that,
Ch. V. by the roman law, if one prisoner escaped, the jaylor was to suffer
Sect. IV. what the prisoner was to have suffered. When, therefore, he ap-
prehended, that all the prisoners were fled; and remembered what
strict orders he had received, the day before, concerning Paul and
Silas; he was afraid of the most cruel treatment, from the magis-
trates, for having executed their orders no better. But St. Paul,
like a true christian, and a benevolent and brave man, was tender
and solicitous about the life of one, who, but a few hours before,
had treated him with such rigor. And, perceiving that he was a-
bout to lay violent hands upon himself, he cried, with a loud voice,
and in an earnest manner, "Do yourself no harm. Your prisoners
are all safe. And we would not go out, 'till we were legally dis-
misse'd; though the doors were open." Upon hearing this, the
jaylor called for lights; and rushed into the prison, with tremble-
ing and astonishment. And, with the greatest veneration, prostrated
himself, at the feet of his two prisoners, Paul and Silas. And
(as knowing somewhat of their character; and being induced by
the miraculous earthquake; and the tenderness, which they had
shown to him, in tarrying, after the doors were opened: — Being
induced, I say, from such considerations, to believe that they were
extraordinary persons, sent of God, as they themselves professed, to
Teach men the way of salvation) he brought them, out of that dun-
geon, which was in the innermost part of the prison; and asked
them, the most important question, that ever was proposed: "Sirs!
what must I do to be saved?" Such a disposition and inquiry was
what they, of all things, sought after. They, therefore, readily
answered: "Embrace the christian religion. And it will bring you,
and yours, into the sure way to eternal salvation." After which;
they proceeded to teach him, and all his family, the christian doc-
trine, more particularly; and laid, before them, the proofs and evidences
of it, as far as the time and circumstances would permit. The re-
sult of all which, was, that the jaylor was convinced, and imbraced
christianity. And, as a proof of his altered sentiments, he took
them, that very hour of the night, and washed the stripes, which
they had received, the day before; and then, he, and his whole fa-
family, were all baptized, immediately: as the converts to christianity
commonly were, in that truly primitive and apostolic age. For that
Paul and silas released.

had been the way, by which the jews used to receive whole families of the heathens, when they became full proselytes to the jewish religion. And our savior had appointed it, as the way of initiating persons into the christian church. The jews would naturally have inquired of John the baptist, "What the meaning of baptism was?" and not, "Why he baptized?" though he professed that he was not the messiah? if it had not been a rite, which they themselves had made use of, before that; when they received proselytes into their church. And our savior, in like manner, would not have commanded his apostles, "Go, and baptize all nations;" without explaining what he meant, by baptizing them: unless it had been a thing well known; and which they had no need to have explained to them. It is very remarkable, that we have two instances, in this one chapter, of whole households being, in this manner, and at once, received into the christian church. And (I think) such expressions, [as Lydia's being baptized, and her house; and the jailor, and all his family,] cannot be understood with their proper emphasis; unless we suppose them to be allusions to such a remarkable and well-known custom.

But to proceed: The jailor, now, no longer feared the resentment of the magistrates. But with the profession, had acquired the fortitude, of a christian. Bringing Paul and silas into his own house, and spreading a table for them, he entertained them, as well as he was able; greatly rejoicing in the happy change: in that he, and all his family, had forsaken idolatry; believed in the one true god, and imbraced the religion of Jesus; which was so excellent, in itself; and so miraculously, and in such an extraordinary manner, attested.

The duumviri, who had ordered Paul and silas to be beat and imprisoned, without a legal trial, or any crime, seem to have had a more disturbed night, than their innocent prisoners. Very probably, they had since reflected, in a more cool manner, upon their miraculously curing the pythonesse. And (according to the reading of two antient manuscripts) they had felt the earthquake.

Ver. 33. * Agreeable to this, was the practice of Abraham, with respect to the initiating rite of circumcision. Gen. xvii. 26, 27. For the sacred historian, having given an account of the circumcision of Ishmael, he adds, "In the self-same day, was Abraham circumcised; and Ishmael, his son. And all the men of his house;" borne in the house; and bought with money, of the stranger; were circumcised with him." That this jailor was not the same with Stephanus of Corinth, (as the greek expositors phancyed,) See on chap. xvii. 4.
Paul and Silas honorably dismissed.

An. Chri.

51.

Claud. 11.

Book III.

Ch. V.

Sec. IV.

Acts xvi.

35, &c.

and were terrified thereby. But, whether that reading be genuine, or no; before the next morning, they appear to have been very sensible, that they had gone beyond their commission; and that they were in danger of being called to an account, by their superiors, for their illegal and rash proceedings. For the Jews were, generally, through the whole Roman empire, allowed the free exercise of their religion; and to make as many proselytes, as they could, by fair and legal methods. And the Christians were thus far looked upon, as a sect of the Jews; and had the same privileges. The conversion, therefore, of the jaylor, and his family, (which happened in the night) was scarce over; when, early the next morning, and before they had heard any thing, from the jaylor, or his family; or known that the men were Romans; the magistrates were sensible that they had done wrong; and sent the beadle, or lieftors, to the prison; with orders to the jaylor, that the two men (Paul and Silas) should be released. Upon this, the jaylor went, with great joy, to Paul, and told him, what message he had received, from the magistrates. Withal, exhorting them to lay hold of the favor offered; and go, while they might do it, with peace and safety. But Paul and Silas, though of the humble and charitable spirit of Christians, were not for a tame and passive obedience to tyrants, in such actions, as were arbitrary and illegal; especially, when they had an opportunity to right themselves. And, therefore, they insisted upon their privileges, as being freemen of Rome. For such, by the Roman laws, could neither be bound, nor beaten with rods. St. Paul, therefore, (considering what a vindication of them, and of their innocence, it would be, in the account of the people, that the duumviri should publicly acknowledge their crime; and what credit it might bring to the Christian doctrine, which had been so lately, and so unjustly, reflected upon, in that city;) answered the lieftors, in the following manner: "What! do your magistrates beat us publicly, without any legal trial, though we are freemen of Rome; and imprison us? And then (after all) think to thrust us out, in a privé..."
Paul and Silas honorably dismissed.

"vate manner, as if we had broke prison, and run away?" No, An. Christi
"indeed! We insist upon our privileges, and the reparation of our
"honor. And will not go out, 'till they themselves come, and ac-
"knowlege their offence; and conduct us out; thus vindicating our
"innocence, in as public and honorable a manner, as they have
"treated us basely and unjustly." When the magistrates knew, that Acts xvi.
they were freemen of Rome, their concern was still the more increased. 37, &c.
Upon which, they came, with all speed, to the prison, and several
of their friends along with them; making an apology for their rash
conduct; desiring them to put up the affront. And, waiting up-
on them, in a respectful manner, they conducted them out of the
prison, and humbly begged of them to depart out of their city.*

Paul and Silas, being thus honorably dismissed, went to Lydia's
house; where Luke, Timothy, and the other christians were (very pro-
ably) waiting to receive them. Which they did, with great joy. And,
when they had seen the converts, which they had made there; and
related to them what had happened, the night before; and how
honorably they were dismissed; and renewed their exhortations
to them, to persevere in the christian faith, (notwithstanding the
treatment, which they had met with,) they took their leave of
them; and peaceably departed, to preach the gospel, in other
places.

CHAP. V. SECT. V.

St. Paul and his companions go, and preach at
Thessalonica, and Beroea, with success, but are
persecuted, by the unbelieving jews. St. Paul
conducted to Athens. Acts xvii. 1—15.

Amphipolis and Apollonia, were two cities of Macedonia. The
first was built, by Cimon, the Athenian; who sent ten thou-
sand Athenians, as a colony thither. It stood, in an island of the

* See Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part i. p. 294. 2d edition; p. 401; 498, &c.
3d edition.
Ver. 39. a The Cambridge manuscript, greek and latin, and one of Stephens' his manu-
scripts, have a large addition to this purpose. [See Dr. Mill on ver. 38.]

Paul and his companions go to Thessalonica.

Paul and his companions go to Thessalonica.

An. Christi

Ch. V.

Claud. I. 11.

Book III.

Sect. V.

Sect. V.

Acts xvii.

The latter is mentioned by Caesar and Strabo; and called, by Ptolemy, Mygdonia. It was a colony of Corinthians and Corcyreans, nigh the sea-side.

St. Luke seemeth to have gone no farther than Philippi, with the Apostle, at this time. But Silas and Timothy still accompanied him. And, passing through those two cities, they came to Thessalonica, another celebrated city, and the metropolis, of that part of Macedonia; very famous for its origin, situation, and amplitude. It was a maritime town; remarkable for its trade and commerce; in which, many Jews had settled. It stood upon the Thermaian bay, and was antiently called Thermae. But, being rebuilt, and enlarged, by Philip, the father of Alexander the great, upon his victory over the Thessallians, it was, in memory of the fact, called Thessalonica, which signifieth the victory of Thessalia. It is now, by a corrupt pronunciation, called Saloniki; and is a maritime, trading town; in the possession of the Turks. — Upon their arrival, they found that the Jews had a synagogue there; though there was none at Philippi, nor (very probably) at Amphipolis, or Apollonia. Into that synagogue, at Thessalonica, St. Paul went; (according to his constant custom; wherever there was a synagogue of the Jews) and, for three sabbath-days successively, he discoursed with the Jews, and proselytes of the gate, who attended the synagogue service: confirming what he said, from the scriptures of the old testament; laying open the meaning of those sacred writings, and showing them evidently, that, according to the antient prophecies, the Messiah was to suffer; and even to undergo a violent death: though the nation of the Jews did, then, so generally despise a suffering Messiah. However; he likewise showed them, that, as he was to reign for-ever, he was, also, to rise again, from the dead; and so to enter upon, and rule over, his kingdom; and that, as all those prophecies centered in Jesus of Nazareth, (in whose name he preached,) and in him alone; therefore, he must be the promised and long-expected Messiah. — Some of the Jews laid aside their prejudices, yielding to the evidence, and embracing the Christian doctrine. And of the devout gentiles, a great multitude. And of the matrons, or women of distinction, not a few.

Either

Thucydides, I. 4.

"Where was the synagogue of the Jews?" The only synagogue, perhaps, which they had, in Macedonia.

Ver. 3. 1 Es. liii. Dan. ix. 26.
Either the idolatrous gentiles had flocke to the synagogue, after the first sabbath-day, induced by the rumor of those new teachers being come to the city; (which was the case at Antioch, in Pisidia;) or else, upon the opposition, which the apostle had, for three sabbath-days, met with, at the synagogue, from the body of the jews, there, he had left them; and taught in some other public place; perhaps, at the house of Jason; as he did at Ephesus, in the school of Tyrrannus; and, as he seems to have done, at Corinth, in the house of Justus. I am apt to believe, indeed, that the latter was the case; because St. Luke hath taken no notice of the idolatrous gentiles frequenting the synagogue, nor of the indignation of the jews; which they were ready to shew, upon all such occasions. However; it is evident that St. Paul and his assistants tarried much longer, than three weeks, at Thessalonica. For they preached the gospel to the idolatrous gentiles; and seem to have made a considerable number of converts among them. And, "whilest the apostle was at Thessalonica, the generous Philippians sent presents, once and again, to him and his companions, to supply their necessities." [Phil. iv. 16.] Moreover; they themselves, also, bore, with great diligence, night and day, that they might preach the gospel to the Thessalonians, gratis; and not burden any of them. [1 Thes. ii. 9.] Surely; it can hardly be thought that, in three weeks time, the Philippians would send presents, once and again; or that the apostle and his assistants could have had any occasion, so diligently to have labored, with their own hands, for a subsistence, for so short a time; if the Philippians had sent, so often, to supply their wants. — But the numerous conversion of the idolatrous gentiles might, alone, have induced us to suppose, that their stay at Thessalonica was considerable. For "the apostle himself addresses that church; as having, in general, turned from lifeless idols, and fictitious gods, to worship the living and true God, and to an expectation of Jesus Christ's coming, from heaven, at last, as savior and judge. And they did it, so readily, and in such great numbers, as that the surrounding countries were filled with astonishment." [1 Thes. i. 7, &c.] And (as there is nothing said, throughout the two epistles, which St. Paul wrote, afterwards, to the Thessalonians, peculiarly, either to, or of, the Jewish converts; and nothing peculiarly to, or of, the converts from among the devout gentiles,) it should seem that the Christian church, at Thessalonica,
Idolatrous gentiles converted, at Thessalonica.

An. Chrifti
Claud. 11.
Book III.
Ch. V.
Sci. V.
Acts xvii.

Salonica, consisted chiefly of converts from among the idolatrous gentiles. However; I acknowledge that there were some Jewish converts, in that city; and a great many from among the devout gentiles. Who seem to have embraced christianity, soon after the Apostle came thither. Though, afterwards; he made a much more numerous conversion, among the idolatrous gentiles. And I suppose that all the christians, at Thessalonica, assembled together, for religious worship, as one church, without difference or distinction. — St Luke, in the history of St. Paul's residence there, at this time, hath not, indeed, given us any particular account of the conversion of the idolatrous gentiles; neither hath he so much as intimated any thing of St. Paul, or his assistants, preaching to them. Perhaps, he thought it needless; as having such frequent occasions to mention the conversion of idolatrous gentiles, throughout the course of St. Paul's apostolic journeys; and so much studying brevity, as not to take notice of a fact, which could afford no new observations. However, St. Luke has given us many instances, of St. Paul's preaching to idolatrous gentiles, elsewhere. And St. Paul, in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, has plainly intimated, that he and his fellow-laborers had converted a number of such; when they planted the gospel, at Thessalonica.

St. Paul worked miracles, at Thessalonica; and exercised spiritual gifts himself, as well as imparted spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, unto the christians there, by the laying on of his hands. [1 Thess. i. 5, 6. and v. 19, 20, 21.] From St. Luke's taking no notice, of these things being done, at Thessalonica, it seemeth as if they were things of course; or nothing but what were commonly done, everywhere, where-ever the Apostle planted achristian church. And that St. Luke's designed brevity would not permit him to mention any miracles, but what were great and uncommon; or such as had remarkable and extraordinary effects. And (that we may not have occasion, frequently, to repeat these reflections) we shall find, as we proceed, in the history, that St. Luke hath not taken any notice, of the miracles worked, and the gifts conferred, by the Apostle of the gentiles, at Corinth: though it is evident, from St. Paul's epistles to the Corinthians, (which he was obliged to write, in his own vindication,) that that church abounded with spiritual gifts and miraculous powers. And it is the plainest indication of the great modesty of the sacred writers; that, instead of inlargeing, or taking all occasions to mention the miracles, which were actually worked; they have contented themselves with
The unbelieving Jews make a sedition.

with giving a particular account of some few; and have, with de-

sign, avoided the mention of much the greatest number.

The miracles, which they worked, at Thessalonica, together with

their holy lives; and open, disinterested behavior; and their plane,

faithful, indefatigable, and affectionate, preaching the gospel; brought

in many converts. And, with so much readiness and alacrity, did

numbers embrace the christian faith; that (though the unbelieving

Jews raged, and exasperated others against them) they became patterns

of zeal and fortitude, unto all the christians, and unto such as were

disposed to turn christians, throughout Macedonia, north-ward; and

Achaia, south-ward.

When the unbelieving Jews, in Thessalonica, saw what progress St.

Paul and his assistants made, and how much they succeeded; they

were full of envy and indignation. And, taking along with them

certain loose, profligate, fellows; such as the lieutors, or beadles, or

some of the vile creatures belonging to the forum: [For the forum was

like many of our market-houses; that is, both a place of trade, and

a court of judicature. Having collected such a mob; they

put the city in a tumult: and broke, violently, into the house of

Jason. He was, perhaps, a Jewish christian; at whose house,

Paul, and his companions, commonly lodged. Their view, was,
to have seized them; and to have brought them out to the populace:

that they might have used them at their mercy. But, not finding

the Apostle, and his two assistants, there, they dragged away Ja-

son himself, and some others of the christians; and hurried them to

the rulers of the city. [For that was all the Jews could safely do,
as it was a gentile city, and they had not the civil power in their

own hands.] There, they loudly clamored against them, saying;

"These men, who, by attempting to introduce a new and strange

religion, have turned the world upside down; and caused great

confusion and disturbance, in many places; are come hither also.

And this Jason hath received them, into his house; and enter-
tained them, there. But we have apprehended him, and some

other of their disciples, and have brought them, before you, as

persons that are dangerous to the state. For they all (in contra-
diction to the decrees of Caesar) affirm that there is another lord,

or king, besides Caesar; namely, one Jesus, the head of their sect,
or faction." [From whence I cannot forbear remarking, how pro-

per it was, that our Lord should ascend, before his disciples de-

clared him to be Lord, or King: when this accusation, at Thessalon-
ica, though relating to a person, in another world, and his king-

dom
dom not a kingdom of this world, but a merely spiritual kingdom; could yet give umbrage to the higher powers; or, at least, afford matter of accusation against his disciples.] Groundless as the pre-
tence was, it at first alarmed, not only the populace, but even the magistrates of that city; who thought it worth their while to ex-
amine into it. For the romans, within the bounds of the empire, would not suffer that any one should be called king, without their permission. And, in the nature of things, they could not be supposed to allow of any potentate, in the roman empire; that should stand in competition with the power of Caesar. But, when they found that the king, of whom they had spoken, was in another world; and that he laid no claim to a temporal kingdom, so as to interfere with the rights of Caesar, or any other temporal potentate: and that the apostle, and his companions, had not attempted any thing of any dangerous consequence to the roman empire, or to the peace of their city: they only took security of Jason; and of such others, as had been brought before them; that they would behave like peaceable and good subjects; and appear again, if called for; and so dismissed them.

What moved the jews to treat the apostle and his assistents, in that manner, was, that (though they were themselves extremely desireous to make proscytes to their religion; yet) they took it very ill, that a new sect should arise, in their nation, to whom a much greater number joined themselves, than ever they could bring over in so short a time. And then, they brought them over to doctrines, which the jews very much disliked; such as that of a suffering messiah, who came to erect a spiritual kingdom; and that such of the gentiles, as in-braced christianity, were not to be circumcised, nor obliged to observe the whole law of Moses, before they were received to full communion with the jewish converts. These, and like things, made them more enraged against the christians, than against the heathens themselves. But, though they were so highly offended; and would, by unjustifiable methods, have drawn in the magistrates, of that city, to persecute the christians, they could not prevail. The romans treated persons of different religions, with more candor and moderate. And, as the christians worshiped the same God with the jews; and were, then, looked upon, by the romans, as a sect of the jews; they were under the protection of the roman laws. For several edicts and decrees had been put forth, from time to time, by the roman senate, and their emperors, to establish, to the jews, many privileges and liberties. But of this, we shall find more confirmation, as we proceed.

The
The Christians, not knowing what new accusations the unbelief- 
ing Jews might devise, or what fresh tumults might happen, 
sent away Paul and Silas, without delay, even by night, to Berea, 
another city of Macedonia; not far from Pella, where that grand 
 oppressor of mankind, Alexander the great, was born. To which 
place, Timothy followed them, soon after. And, notwithstanding 
their base base at Philippi, and the furious opposition of the unbel- 
lieving Jews, at Thessalonica, they entered, as cheerfully as ever, upon 
preaching the gospel, in the synagogue of the Jews, as soon as they 
arrived at Berea. And there they met with a much better reception. 
For they found the Jews of Berea, to be of a more candid and gene-
rous spirit than those at Thessalonica. Which they testified, by a careful 
examination into the nature and evidence of the Christian doc- 
trine; daily searching the scriptures of the old testament, to see, "whether 
" things were as the Apostle represented them; and inquiring 
" particularly, whether the prophecies, relating to the Messiah, were 
" fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth?" And many of the Berean Jews, 
upon such a diligent and careful inquiry, were convinced, and im-
braced Christianity, with all alacrity. So did, likewise, several wo-
men, who were devout gentiles, and persons of some distinction; 
and of the men also, who were devout gentiles, not a few. 

But, when the unbelieving Jews, at Thessalonica, understood, that 
Paul, and his companions, had gone, and preached the gospel, at 
Berea; they were so malicious, as to follow them thither, also. 
And there, again, they indeavored to excite the populace against them. 
Upon which, the Christian brethren (apprehending that the weight of 
the storm would, probably, fall upon him) sent the Apostle away, 
by the road, which led to the sea. And they, who had undertaken 
to convey him to a place of safety, conducted him to Athens. 
Silas and Timothy tarried behind him, at Berea. But, when they, 
who conducted the Apostle to Athens, had received his orders, to 

Ver. 14. To go, as it were, to the sea.] The Cambridge MS. has not [as, as it were.] Dr. Mill mentions some ancient MSS. as well 
as the Vulgate, and Euthalius, which read, [to go unto the sea.] Some learn-
ed commentators understand the passage, as our translators did. To explain which, 
Grotius supposes, "that Paul was brought down to the sea-coast, as one about to 
fail, and that the rumor thereof was spread; but that, in reality, he hastened, by 
land, to Athens." However; as Raphelius has, so clearly and abundantly, proved, 
that the proper translation is, [to go towards, or unto, the sea;] and, as there is no-
thing said, of his going by land; I confess, I doubt of the truth of Grotius his in-
terpretation.
St. Paul preacheth at Athens.

His two assistants, Silas and Timothy, that they should come to him, with all speed; they left him, and returned to Beraea.

Chap. V. Sect. VI.

St. Paul at Athens. He preacheth, among the philosophers, there. And converts some of them; as well as other persons, in that city. Acts xvii. 16, to the end of that chapter.

While St. Paul waited at Athens, for the coming up of Silas and Timothy, he walked about, to take a view of the city; and particularly (as it became his apostolic character) to make observations on their religion. And the more he saw, the more was he filled with grief and indignation, to find a city, which pretended so much to wisdom, to be so full of idols. But, though his spirit burned within him, he was a man of more prudence and temper, than to go and throw down their altars, or stamp upon their images; or even speak against their religion, in a reviling manner. No! he, with great modesty and wisdom, took the most likely method to plant Christianity among them; beginning first (according to custom) at the synagogue, on the sabbath-day, with the Jews and devout gentiles, who frequented the worship of God there. And afterwards, every day, with the idolatrous gentiles; as he accidentally met them, in the forums, or places of most public concourse. This made him soon taken notice of, in that vane and conceited city. Upon which, some of their philosophers, of two of the most famous sects; namely, the Epicureans and Stoics, confered with him, concerning the doctrine, which he preached. For it differed very much from the doctrines, which they held. “The Epicureans are said to have ascribed neither creation nor providence to God; but held, that the world was made, by a casual conflux of atoms. That the gods, if there were any, were of human shape; who lay lolling upon the clouds, in ease and indolence; entirely unconcerned about human affairs. They likewise held, that, in the present state, pleasure is the chief good; and that men are not to expect a resurrection from the dead, nor
St. Paul, among the philosophers, at Athens.

nor any future state of rewards, or punishments. The stoics were intolerably proud and arrogant; comparing their wise man to God himself; and (in some cases) giving him the preference to the deity. They held, that matter was eternal, God corporeal; and that either God was the soul of the world; or the world itself, a god. They, generally, looked upon all things, as subject to an irresistible fatality; that virtue was its own sufficient reward, and vice its own sufficient punishment. And they fluctuated excessively, as to their belief of a future state of rewards and punishments; though they had some expectations of a future state, as well as of the conflagration and renovation of the world." [For a larger account of the epicureans and stoics; see the prolegomena to Le-Clerc's ecclesiastical history, sect. ii. chap. 4, 5.]

When the people found the Apostle engaged with men, so renounced for wildom, they reckoned him over-matched. And some of them said, "What would this vain trifling man pretend to? Doeth he think himself capable of disputing with persons of such profound science and erudition?" Others muttered that he seemed (to be guilty of that, for which Socrates had died; and others had brought themselves into danger; namely,) to introduce strange demons, or deities, and a new religion; because he preached to them concerning Jesus, and the resurrection.

At Athens, they had two courts of judicature. The one was chosen every year, and consisted of five hundred persons. The other was perpetual; and they used to assemble in the forum, called Areopagus, which stood upon a hill, and was the highest forum in Athens. The judges, who sat in this court, (of whom Dionysus, mentioned ver. 34. of this chapter, was one;) were, from the place, where they sat, called Areopagitae. And they were looked upon, with such reverence, that an Areopagite was used proverbially, for an excellent...
St. Paul's speech, at Athens.

They were the Athenian senate, or standing court of judicature; and (besides other things) "matters of religion, blasphemy against the gods, contempt of the holy mysteries, and all sorts of impiety; the confection, also, of new gods; the erecting of temples, or altars, the introduction of new ceremonies into divine worship, were referred to the judgment of this court." And, therefore, Plato, having been instructed in the knowledge of the one god, in Egypt, was forced to dissemble, or conceal his opinion, for fear of being called to an account, by the Areopagites; and dealt with, as his master Socrates had been. And, when St. Paul was thought to be one, who preached strange gods, they had him to this forum; that there he might declare his opinion, in a proper place, and before proper judges. For, though the court of Areopagus might decree the introducing new deities; yet it was unlawful, for a private person, to attempt any such thing. In that variety of sentiments, concerning the apostle, and his doctrine, they brought him, one day, to Areopagus. And, a great number having gathered around him, in so public a place, they said; "May we know what new doctrine it is, which you bring, among us? For you have already alleged several strange things, in our hearing. But we want to have a more full and particular account of your sentiments." [For the Athenians in general; and all the strangers, who went, for the sake of studying, or conversing, in that city; spent their time, chiefly, in publishing, or inquiring after, something new and strange.]

Then Paul, standing in the midst of Areopagus, (among their elders and senators, and before a large assembly of their philosophers, orators, and great men,) wanted neither the courage, nor the address, to speak to the following purpose. "O ye Athenians, I desire you would attend to what I have to say. Whereas, some of you have charged me as an introducer of new gods, or strange demons; I would have you know, that I reckon you are already very full of demons, or deities; and, in all things, more religious, than other cities, for,

* Apol. xix. 2.
* See Dr. Foster's greek antiquities, vol. i. p. 105.
* Ver. 22. * See Madi's works, p. 935.
* The Athenians were famous for collecting the gods of all nations. See Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel history, part 1. p. 253, 254. 2d edition; p. 430. 3d edition.
St. Paul's speech, at Athens.

"For, as I walked about, to view the places, and objects, of your religious worship; I spied, among the rest, one altar, upon which I found an admirable decorum, in all their words and actions. It may, perhaps, be inconceivable by some, how they should be able, thus to behave, everywhere; animated, as they were, with a warm, as well as just, zeal for the truths of the christian doctrine; and a thorough dislike of all the abominations, and absurdities, of the heathen worship. But yet, it is certain, they did so. We have uncontroverted evidence of it. — St. Luke assures us, that, when St. Paul was at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city was wholly given to idolatry. But, when he comes to make his speech, in the Areopagus, his temper, and address, are equal to his argument; which, certainly, can never be exceeded. According to our translation, indeed, there is a harshness in the very introduction; Ye men of Athens, I perceive that, in all things, you are too superstitious. Whereas; the original is peculiarly soft; if any cenure was intended. [Si lenientatem Pauli jettemus confirmatem prius quam traducamus: cui quidem inept multis fuerit vertitatem conferri: St. Luke.]

But, I apprehend, that St. Paul tells them, he perceived they were, in all things, very devout. The word Jeovism is often used in a bad sense; but it has, also, a good, or, at least, an innocent, meaning. Festus tells Agrippa, that Paul's accusers had nothing against him, but certain questions, of their own superstition. Acts xxv. 19. It should be rendered religion. It cannot be supposed that Festus would speak contemptuously, to Agrippa, of the Jews, that is, of Agrippa's own religion; when Agrippa was come to Caesarea, with his sister Bernice, to sue him. It is also apparent, that Festus does shew Agrippa a great deal of respect. Josephus faits, that Manasses, having repented of his idolatry, and other sins against God, he resolved, for the future, to be constant in the worship of him. Joseph. p. 437. 20. Claudius, in his edicts published, in favor of the Jews, exhorts them, not to set at nought, or revile, the religions of other nations. Id. p. 866. 18. Vid. eund. p. 632. 39. p. 1066. 31.

It appears also, from what follows, that St. Paul had not blamed the Athenians. Having mentioned the inscription of the altar, To the unknown God, he goes on, ο ναόν της οδωρον λατρεύσας. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship; him declare I unto you. The verb, here used, for worship, is always expressive of a laudable piety. See examples, in Grotius, upon the place. The harsh sense of the word, θεουργον, is inconsistent with the whole design of St. Paul's argument. If he had told them, at first, that they were superstitious, he encourages them in it, and endeavors to make them more so. If St. Paul's instance had been that of some false god, there had been some reason to put the harsh sense, upon the word, in this place. But, now, there is no reason, at all, for it; since the inscription which he produces, directly intended; or, at least, comprehended, under it; the true God, whom St. Paul preached. I think, therefore, that St. Paul says: I perceive that, in all things, you are very devout. For, as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found, also, an altar, with this inscription, to the unknown God. Whom, therefore, ye worship, without knowing him; him do I declare unto you."
St. Paul’s speech, at Athens.

An. Chrilli « I found this inscription, [To the unknown god.] Whom, therefore, you worship, without knowing him. Him declare I unto

Book III.

Ch. V. « The telling them, that, in all things, they were very devout, would give no offence, at Athens. It was their peculiar character, the encomium which they were fond of, above any other.

23. «Every tribe in this city of Athens, παρέμενεν, εἰς τὴν εἰρήνην καὶ τὴν ἀμέριμνον, τὸ περὶ πάντων παραγόμενον, εἰς τὴν παραδοσίαν τῆς ἀρετῆς ἡπισταμένοι, εἰς τὴν ἀφόρματος καὶ τὴν χρησμόν ἐκποίησε.

Dennys. Hal. de Thucyd. judic. § 40. Vid. & Sophoc. Oed. Col. v. 1000, &c. It was customary, for eminent strangers, who spoke, in public, at Athens, to give them, in their first discourse, some commendation, for the wisdom of their laws and institutions, or some other topic. St Paul had good reason, not to be defective, in this point, upon so nice an occasion. He could truly say, they were a devout people. It was extremely to his purpose. And they would be much pleased to hear it from him. "He who doth do wisely, οὐκ ἔπαιρεν τὸ ἀνώτατον, ἦν τὸ σαφένεια πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπου. Philo, Exit. Alexand. Sophist. § 3. "Athenians

Παρακλητοὶ ὀνομαζόμενοι παρ' ἐμοι διότι τὸν πολιτικόν λόγον, τὰ περὶ πάντων Ἀθηναίων ἐξισχύσει, εἰς ἑκάστην ἐγκαθίσταται. Τὰ τὰ μὲν τὰ ἀνθρωποκρατεῖ τὸ ἀνώτατον ἐν τῷ τῆς Ἀθηναίων ἐνυπηρετέω. Id. exit. Philo. § 4.

It was, therefore, a singularity, in Polemon, a most proud man, that, in his discourse, at Athens, at his first visit, he said nothing in their praise. There is another like example, particularly observed, in Adrian, the sophist. "Μηδὲ ἄγαν παρακλητοὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπον ἐπιστροφῆς, τῶν Ἀθηναίων, αἰτὶ παρακλητοὶ, ἐπὶ τὸ πρὸς αὐτὸν

συνάξας, μὲ τὸ ἐκείνον σοφάμενον, ἐθάνατο τὸ ἐνυπηρετέω. Id. exit. Adrian. § 2. Grattius understood St Paul to speak, here, of the Athenians, in the way of commendation, as I do.

I take the liberty to add a passage, or two, from Mr. Warburton, confirming the interpretation, which I have given of this text. His words are these; "Athens was a city, most devoted to religion, of any, upon the face of the earth. On this account, their poet, Sophocles, calls it the sacred building of the gods; "Ἀθηνῶν τὸ ἱεράπροσπαστα. Warburton’s divine legation of Moses. B. i. § 4. p. 136. 2d edition.

"Again; ‘This was the reason, why St Paul was regarded, as the bringer of foreign gods, was had up, to the court of Areopagus; not as a criminal, but rather as a public benefactor, who had a new worship to propose, to a people, above all others, religious, &c. ibid. aforesaid. Id. ibid. book ii. § 2. p. 265.’

It is true, that, at the conclusion, ver. 30. when the Athenians heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. And others said, We will hear thee again, of this matter. It is possible, some might be surprized at the novelty of St Paul’s principles; and be inclined to make themselves merry with them. But I do not perceive, by St Luke, that there were; I think, there could not be any exceptions made, to the propriety, or decency, of any of his expressions. [See Dr. Lardner’s credibility of the gospel history, part i. p. 427, &c. 3d edition.

Poole’s Synopsis, and Wolfius in loc.

Ver. 23. ‘Dr Welwood, in the introduction to his translation of the banquet of Xenophon, hath the following words. ‘I know that there are different opinions, about this altar, and upon what occasion it came to be erected. But, it is very probable, and I have several of the most antient historians and divines, for vouchers, that it was done by Socrates. It seemeth, instead of raising an altar, as was the custom, to any of the fictitious gods of Greece; he took this way, as the safest, to expresse his devotion to the one true and God. Of whom the Athenians had no notion; and whose incomprehensible being he indizened, by this inscription, was far beyond the reach of theirs, or his own understanding. And it is very reasonable to think that it was owing to the veneration, they had, for the me-

Mory
unto you. My professed design, is to preach unto you that unknown
GOD; and to point out the right and acceptable way of worshipping
him. He it is, who made heaven and earth, and all things that are therin;
and who, by his providence, governeth all things. But it cannot reasonably
be supposed, that the universal creator, and supreme governor, can be confined to
temples, made by the hands of men. For he is not the GOD of one city,
mountain, or river. The whole creation is his. But it is a temple too narrow
to circumscribe and confine his presence. For the
memory of it's founder, that it came to be preserved, so many ages after; though
they understood not the sense of the inscription.

To which I would add, that, though the heathens held Jove to be the one supreme
GOD; yet their Jove was not the true GOD; but a being, whom they suppos'd
were attended with many imperfections; and to whom they ascrib'd several enormi-
ties. And, whether that altar was er'ect'd, by Socrates, or by any other peron, and
upon any other occasion; it is highly probable, that it was designed in honor of the
true GOD, the GOD of the jews. For, as the jews neither er'ect any image to the
true GOD, nor were willing to discover his name to strangers; he had, therefore,
neither image, nor name, at Athens; though there was an altar dedicated to him:
at once, to express the Atheniens reverence for, and ignorance of, him.

Sir George Littleton [in his observations on St. Paul's conversion, p. 71.] has the
following remarks.

St. Paul's holinesse consisted in the simplicity of a good life, and the unwearied
performance of those apostolical duties, to which he was called. The sufferings,
which he met with, on that account, he cheerfully bore, and even rejoiced in them, for the love of JESUS CHRIST; but he brought none on himself. We find, on the contrary, that he pleaded the privilege of a roman citizen, to avoid being whipped. I could mention more instances, of his having used the best me-
ths, that prudence could suggest, to escape danger and shun persecution, when-
ever it could be done, without betraying the duty of his office, or the honor of
GOD.

[ A remarkable instance of this, appears, in his conduct, among the Athenians.] There was, at Athens, a law, which made it capital, to introduce, or teach, any new gods, in their state. [Joseph. contra Apion. L. ii. c. 37.] Therefore, when Paul was preaching JESUS and the resurrection, to the Athenians, some of them carried him before the court of Areopagus, (the ordinary judges of criminal mat-
ters; and, in a particular manner, intrusted with the care of religion) as having broken this law, and being a forser forth of strange gods. Now, in this case, an impostor would have retracted his doctrine to save his life; and an enthuasist would have lost his life, without trying to save it, by innocent means. St. Paul did neither the one nor the other. He availed himself of an altar, which he had found in the city, inscribed TO THE UNKNOWN GOD; and pleaded, that he did not propove to them the worship of any new god; but only explained to them, one, whom their government had already receive'd. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. By this, he avoided the law, and es-
aped being condemned by the Areopagus, without departing, in the least, from the truth of the gospel, or violating the honor of GOD. An admirable proof,
in my opinion, of the good sense, with which he acted; and one, that shews
there was no mixture of fanaticism, in his religion.]
St. Paul's Speech, at Athens.

the heavens, and heaven of heavens, cannot contain him. He
provides for the support of all; and is self-sufficient, as well as all-
sufficient; incapable of any addition to his perfection and happi-
nesse. And therefore he cannot stand in any need of men's affin-
tence, to provide, for him, ornaments and vestures, meats and
drinks, sacrifices and oblations. On the contrary; it was he, who
gave to all men their being, life, and breath; and every thing,
which they enjoy. And, from one man, originally, hath he made
all men, of every nation under heaven; greatly multiplying the
race, to people the earth, that it might not be a desolate wilder-
nesse. The times, in which men are to appear, upon this earth;
and the places, where they are to transact their parts; were always
known unto God. And he, by his infinite wisdom, hath ap-
pointed the dispensations, under which they are to live. But God
hath placed men upon earth, principally with a view to feel af-
ter, and find out, his existence and perfections; that they might
imitate and obey him, and be happy in his favor. Nor is it diffi-
cult to know somewhat of him; though you have intitled him,
The unknown God. For, the works of creation point out the
knowlege of him; though he is invisible to mortal eyes. And
these standing proofs are always exposed to open view; that men
of every age and nation (unlesse they are wilfully blind) might grope
him out, and learn somewhat of him. But, in truth, the dis-
covery of his being, and great perfections, is easie, and at hand.
For he is omnipresent. And, in him we actually live, and move,
and have our beings. And (as some of your own poets have said)
we men are the off-spring of the deity. For as much then, as it
is confessed, that we men are the off-spring of God; we ought
not to suppose, that the deity can be like to any thing, made of
gold or silver, wood, or stone; or to any thing, that can be form-
ed, by the art of man, however curiously painted, carved, or in-

Ver. 26. [blood] is not found in the Alexandrian, and other three
manuscripts: nor in Clemens Alexandrinus; Velesius, the vulgar, and Coptic versions.
[See Dr. Mill.] However; Wolfius has shewn that the antients did, sometimes, use
δακρυος for σπασματος. And, therefore, the sense is the same; whether we retain,
or reject, the common reading.

Ver. 27. [See the antient manuscripts, versions, and fathers, quoted by Dr.
Mill.

Ver. 28. [Hemistich. heroic. exphenomen. Arati. τι γαρ εν θεοις των θεών. Ho-
mer 1160, and Hesiod, and many other of the greek poets, have called Jove —
Νας δοξίων ο Θεόν ο Θεός, The father, both of men, and gods. [See Raphaelius and Wol-
fius in loc.]
St. Paul's Speech. It's different effects.

"graven. A great part of mankind have long imagined so. But An. Chri-
"God, (looking with contempt and indignation upon those ages of igno-
"rance and error) out of his great goodness and compassion, hath reveled his mind and will, in so clear a manner, and so well attested; that now he commandeth all men, every where, to repent; and to forsake their idolatry, as well as their other vices. For he hath appointed a signal day, in which he will judge the whole world in righteousness; by that man, even Jesus Christ, whom he hath appointed to be universal judge. And, of this appointment, he hath afforded, to all, sufficient evidence. For, after he had been dead three days, he actually raised him from the dead." — St. Paul, from the article of the one true God, was slideing gently, into the other grand article of the Christian faith; namely, "That Jesus of Nazareth was the Lord, Savior, and judge, of all." The principal proof of which, was his resurrection from the dead. But the vanes and conceited auditory would hear no more. No! upon the mention of the resurrection from the dead, some mocked, and laughed out. — Very probably, the Epicureans, who believed no resurrection; nor any future state, or judgment to come. But others said, "We shall be glad to hear you, again, upon this subject." Most likely, they were the Stoics; who had some notions of a judgment to come; and of the confagration and renovation of the world; as well as of a future state of rewards and punishments.

Thus the Apostle went out, from among them; and left them divided, in their sentiments, about him and his doctrine; as they were, before, among one another. However; his discourses and labors, at Athens, were not wholly ineffectual. For some were converted. Particularly, Dionysius, who was an Areopagite; that is, one of the honorable Senators, or judges, who belonged to that high court of judicature; and a woman of distinction, called Damaris; and some others of lesser note, whose names are not particularly mentioned.

Ver. 30. * impair. See Pool's Synopsis and Wolfius in loc.
CHAP. V. SECT. VII.

Silas tarried still at Berea. Timothy cometh up to the apostle, at Athens; and is, from thence, sent back to Thessalonica.

Though the enmity of the unbelieving Jews had made St. Paul leave Berea, in so great an hurry, that Silas and Timothy could not go along with him; yet he sent orders that they should follow him, with all speed. Accordingly; Timothy came up, to the apostle, whilest he was at Athens. But Silas tarried still at Berea. How far the affairs of the infant church, at Berea, might want the presence of an evangelist; or the ingenuous and noble spirit of the Bereans might induce Silas to tarry a little longer, among them; — cannot now be determined. But, though Timothy was come up, to him; the apostle chose to be left alone, at Athens; [1 Thess. iii. 1.] amidst the opposition of the Jews, and the insolence and contempt of the beaten philosophers. In which situation, it must have been a very disagreeable thing, to have no body, to stand by, and assist, him. But notwithstanding such inconveniences, so great was the apostle's anxiety, for his young, and persecuted, converts, at Thessalonica; that he chose to be left alone, at Athens; and to send Timothy back, to Thessalonica; to rectifie any thing, which might be amiss, in that church: and, particularly, to comfort them, under their persecutions, from the unbelieving Jews, or others; and to establish them in the Christian faith. He had left the Thessalonians, in such an hurry, and amidst such restless and implacable enemies; that, when the apostle considered it, he was very uneafie; and would gladly have gone back again, himself, to fortifie and comfort them. But his adversaries, especially the unbelieving Jews, always hindered him from returning. [1 Thess. ii. 17, 18.] However; the more he was hindered, the more his anxiety for them increased. And, when he saw no prospect of returning shortly, in person; he thought it eligible to send Timothy. For, though he was but a mere youth, the apostle could trust him with the most important affairs of the Christian church. What he feared, was, left the afflictions, and persecutions, which had befallen him, their apostle, at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea,
An account of the city Corinth.

Berœa, and other neighboring places, should cause the Thessalonians to apostatize, from christianity, to their old religions again; as terrified, by his sufferings, and by the apprehensions of what might befall themselves. Whilest he was among them, he had endeavored to prepare them for the worst; dealing frankly with them; and assuring them, that affliction, from a wicked world, was what he always expected; and what good and upright men most commonly meet with. But, now, he sendeth back Timothy; for fear he had not armed and fortified them sufficiently.

CHAP. V. SECT. VIII.

St. Paul goeth to Corinth: converteth several to christianity; especially among the gentiles. Worketh, with his own hands, for a subsistence. Is opposed by the unbelieving jews; but encouraged by the Lord Jesus Christ; who appeared, to him, in a vision. Acts xviii. 1, — 11.

St. Paul went alone, from Athens, to Corinth. "Achaia propria was a part of Greece; and Corinth the metropolis of Achaia propria. It was a famous mart town. For, by standing in the middle of the Isthmus, it had the trade of both the eastern and western seas; that is, through Asia and Europe. It was at first called Ephyre. But it had the name of Corinth, from one Corintius, who took it, and rebuilt it. And it had now gone, by that name, for several ages. Cenchrea was it's port, or haven, for the east, or Ægean sea; as Jocbeæum, or Lebæum, was for the west, or the Adriatic sea. Corinth and Carthage had been destroyed, by the romans, in one and the same year. An hundred years after which, Julius Caesar ordered the rebuilding of them both, again. And, in a little time, he sent to them roman colonies. From Vol. II.

Ver. 1. * * * In an historical relation of some antient facts, it is called Ephyre. [Horn. Ill. 2. 152] But it was called Corinth, in Homer's time; and as long before, as the wars of Troy. II., B. 570. N. 664.
A passage in Suetonius, considered.


the colony, which he sent to Corinth, were descended the gentiles
of that city; to whom the Apostle now went, and preached
the everlasting gospel. Corinth was almost as famous as Athens;
for philosophers and orators; and made very great pretences to learn-
ing and wisdom. And, being a place of such vast trade and resort,
it was a rich and luxurious city; even to a proverb. It had a
temple dedicated to Venus; to whom, (as Strabo informs us, I. 8.)
a thousand harlots were consecrated." From this short account of
the city of Corinth, it appeareth, what reason the Apostle had,
to condemn their extraordinary pretences to wisdom and eloquence;
as well as their luxury and uncleanness. In this city, St. Paul
found Aquila; who was a Jew by nation; but, by religion, a Chris-
tian; as appeareth from several things that follow. He had lately
come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; because Claudius Cæsar,
who was then the Roman emperor, had commanded all Jews to depart
from Rome. Dio faith, that Claudius did not banish the Jews from
Rome; but onely prohibited their assemblies. But (though that
was, in effect, to banish all the most zealous and conscientious per-
sons among them) Suetonius, who lived nearer the time, faith, that
he expelled the Jews from Rome, who were continually making
"tumults; Chrestus inciting them, or being the occasion of their
"disturbances." It is, indeed, a matter of dispute, among learned
men, whether, by Chrestus, Suetonius meant Jesus Christ, or
no? It is likely enough, he might mean so. For he hath, in other
places, shown himself peculiarly virulent against the Christians. But,
if he meant to say, that Christ incited the Jews to make tumults,
at Rome; he could not, with any propriety, charge our Lord with
doing it, in person. One cannot suppose that Suetonius should so far
mistake, both in point of time and place; as to suppose, that Je-
sus Christ was at Rome, in the reign of Claudius Cæsar; and that,
there, he incited the Jews to tumults and seditions. For our Lord
was crucified at Jerusalem; and gone from our world, many years be-
fore Claudius was advanced to the imperial dignity. He could, there-
fore, onely intend to charge it upon Christ's doctrine, and fol-
lowers.

Ver. 2. See particularly, ver. 26, from whence it planely appears, that he and
his wife were both Christians. And, yet, there is no intimation of St. Paul's
converting them. On the contrary; from his so immediately joining company,
and working, with them; they appear to have been Christians, before he met with
them.

* Sueton. in Nero. c. 16.
Paul worked, along with Aquila and Priscilla.

And that the Jews should make tumults, when Christianity began to spread, in Rome, is not wonderful; if we consider their behavior towards St. Stephen, towards the other Apostles; and towards St. Paul, at Lystra, Thessalonica, and Beroea; as well as, afterwards, at Corinth itself. And, when tumults were made, Claudius, his timorous and suspicious temper would, very naturally, lead him to punish both the guilty and the suspected. However, neither Christ himself, nor Christianity, were, in the least, to be charged, with being the criminal causes of those tumults; suppose they were the innocent occasion of them. If bigots and persecutors will abuse the virtuous and the modest, for speaking the truth, and supporting it with proper evidence; such zealots are criminal; and not the innocent persons, whom they persecute. This banishment of the Jews, from Rome, was not ordered, by a decree of the Senate, but of the emperor only. And, therefore, it died with him, at the farthest. But, as the Christians were then looked upon, by the Romans, to be only a sect of the Jews; it affected them, as well as the Jews, as long as it continued.

Josephus hath, no where, particularly, mentioned this edict. As it was in force, for so short a time only, he might partly (for that reason) omit it. But a more prevailing reason was, (probably) that it reflected disfavor upon the Jews; and was, therefore, disagreeable to a Jewish historian. And, if some dispute between the Jews, and the followers of Jesus, was really the occasion of this order; (as Suetonius seemeth to affirm;) that might be another reason for Josephus his silence. For he was very reserved, if not altogether silent, about the affairs of the Christians.

Aquila and Priscilla seem to have had a house at Corinth. For they had settled, so far, in that city, as to enter upon their usual employment; which was to make tents, and pavilions, of linen, or of skins: such as, in those hot countries, they sometimes lived in, during the summer-season; such as travellers made use of, where they had no houses, nor caravansaries, to lodge in; and such, as soldiers lodged in, when incamped in the field. And, because they were converts to Christianity; and of the business, to which the Apostle had been trained up, in his younger days; he went and lodged with them;
and worked, along with them, at their daily employment. It hath
been observed, above, that such of the Jews, as had the most liber-

tal education, and were the most zealous and diligent students of the
law, were, likewise, very frequently, trained up to some handicraft
businesse. And, therefore, St. Paul's case was not peculiar; nor
his birth and education leffe liberal, upon that account. He might,
indeed, in his apostolic character, and even by the reason of things,
have expected, that such, as partook of his spiritual things, should
have ministered to him, in temporals. For, "what soldier goeth a
"warfare, at any time, at his own charges? Or, what shepheard
"partaketh not of the milk of the flock?" But, though it was
lawful, the Apostle would not do it; because it was not always
expedient. It might have given occasion, for his enemies, to say,
that he compassed sea and land, to make a gain of his converts; and
that he sought what they had, more than their benefit. And it
might, likewise, have afforded a pretence to the false apostles, to
have demanded a maintenance; and to the sloathful persons, who
embraced christianity, to live in idleness: As if diligence and in-
dustry, in some honest calling, was no longer required of them.
Whereas; now, he could, from his own example, show his converts,
that such, as would not work, when they were able, ought not to
eat; and cut off all occasion from the false apostles, for demanding a
maintenance, under the shelter of his example. And, finally, by
despising the pleasures, profits, and honors, of this world, he gave
mankind the most convincing proofs, that he believed christianity to
be true; and that, upon such strong evidences, as could leave no room,
for any reasonable doubt, or hesitation. To this his diligence, and
disinterested behavior, he maketh frequent appeals, in his epistles: and
that, with the greatest justice and propriety. For, what could more
effectually have cleared him, from all suspicion of carrying on a si-
nier and worldly design?

By Aquila and Priscilla, St. Paul had, very probably, an ac-
count of the planting of a christian church, at Rome. And, from his
hearing of the death of Claudius Caesar, or of the abolishing of the
above-mentioned edict; he thought it likely, that the christians would
return to that imperial city. "He, therefore, from that time, long-
ed to go to Rome; and frequently prayed to God, to grant him
a prosperous journey thither: that he might comfort them, under
their discouragements; farther instruct them, in the christian doc-
tine, if they wanted farther instructions; and, above all, that he
might (by the laying on of his hands) impart, unto them, some
Some Jews and devout gentiles converted, &c.

"Spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers, to establish and confirm them in their Christianity." [Rom. i. 9.—13. and xv. 22, 23.]

Philo faught, that the Jews inhabited Corinth, and the chief and best parts of the Peloponnesus. And St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles; and St. Paul, in his two epistles to Corinth, have given plane intimations, that there were several Jews, in that city. For VIII. they had a synagogue, there. Unto which, the Apostle went, as usual, every Sabbath-day. And there he discoursed, concerning the Christian doctrine; and labored to convince both the Jews and devout gentiles, that it was true, and worthy of their regard. Among them was Epaenetus, who was the first convert, in Achaia; [Rom. xvi. 5.] as the household of Stephanas, was, the first family, that was converted there. The whole family of Stephanas was baptized by the Apostle himself. And he also, afterwards, baptized Crispus and Caius. But he himself baptized no other of the Corinthians. He left that to his assistants, or to some of the first converts of the place. For, the business of an Apostle, was, not to baptize, but to preach the gospel. [1 Cor. i. 14,—17.]

St. Paul was at Corinth, some time, before his two assistants came up to him; and so long he frequented the synagogue. But, when Timothy was come up with him, again, from Thessalonica; and Silas from Beroea; and they had told him, what success they had had, in watering the gospel, which he had planted, in Macedonia; he was pressed in his spirit; and grieved that he had hitherto preached to the Jews, in Corinth, with so little success. For which reason, he resolved to push the matter, in the synagogue, there. And, therefore, he left off arguing, by distant hints and insinuations; and asserted, in the plainest terms, "that Jesus was actually the Messiah; and that this was the clear and undeniable conclusion, from all the arguments, which he had formerly alleged; as well as the result of the miracles, which he had worked; and the gifts, which he had imparted, unto such as had embraced the gospel." This freedom and plainness of speech, presently made the unbelieving Jews discover themselves. Which they did, by fiercely opposing the Christian doctrine.

*The Greek expositors phanzyed that this Stephanas was the jaylor, who was converted, at Philippi, and baptized there, with his whole house. Whereas, this Stephanas was a Corinthian; and his family, the first-fruits; or the first family, converted to the Christian faith; in Achaia. [1 Cor. xvi. 15; 17.] And the jaylor was, most probably, a native of Philippi, a city of Macedonia; at a considerable distance from Corinth and Achaia.
Paul, about to leave Corinth; Jesus appears.

Paul, about to leave Corinth; Jesus appears. But all the answer, which the meek Apostle made, was, to shake the dust off, from his loose, upper garment, and say; "Your blood be upon your own heads. I, like a faithful watchman, have warned you of your guilt and danger; and you, alone, must stand to the consequence of your refusal. For the blood of your souls will not be required at my hands. However, I must go where I shall not labor so much in vain. And, therefore, from henceforth, I will apply myself to the Gentiles, in this city; that is, to the idolatrous, as well as devout, Gentiles. And no longer attempt the conversion of you, Jews, in this synagogue." Upon which, he left frequenting the synagogue. And, instead of the house of Aquila, he went to the house of one Justus; who was a devout Gentile, and whose house joined to the synagogue.

But his labors, in the synagogue, had not been without some success. For Crispus, one of the rulers of the synagogue, imbraced Christianity, together with his whole family. And, afterwards, many other of the Corinthians, when they heard the Christian doctrine, and the evidences of it, imbraced the Gospel, and were baptized. His teaching, so nigh the synagogue, in the house of an uncircumcised Gentile; his converting, and receiving the uncircumcised Gentiles, into full communion with the Jews Christians; and his great and remarkable success; exasperated the unbelieving Jews against the Apostle; which seems to have discouraged him. And, as he had already planted a considerable church, in that city, he might,

Ver. 6. 1Ezek. xxxiii. 4; 8. 2 Sam. i. 16. 1 Kings ii. 33. Matt. xxvii. 25.

Ver. 7. k Some of the antient manuscripts and versions read Titus, here; and others read Titus Justus. [See Dr. Mill in loc. & prolegom. 437. & Miscellanea sacra; essay 4. p. 59.] But, whether Titus or Justus, or both the names, be the true reading; we cannot suppose that Titus, the evangelist, is here to be understood. For, as he was a Christian, long before this; St. Luke would not, now, (contrary to his constant custom) have described him, under the lower character of a devout Gentile: but would have called him, one of the brethren, disciples, or believers. Whereas; from the account here given, of this Justus, he was a devout Gentile; whom St. Paul now converted to Christianity, at Corinth.

1 The Jews had, in some places, houses, annexed to their synagogues, for the entertainment of strangers and travelers. But, as this was in the possession of an uncircumcised proselyte; I can hardly think that it was designed for such an house.

It may be inquired, "Whether the Apostle did not prefer the house of Justus, to that of Aquila; because it was so nigh the synagogue; that he might give any of the Jews, or proselytes of the gate, an opportunity, if they pleased, to attend up on him, more conveniently, or more privately?"
St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians.

might, possibly, begin to think of leaving the place, and going elsewhere; as having little expectation of bringing in, any considerable addition, to the number of converts, which he had already made, there. But, to prevent his departure, and to encourage him in his work; the Lord Jesus himself appeared unto him, in a vision, by night, and said: "Be not afraid, Paul; but preach the gospel, with all openness and fortitude; and let nothing silence thee. For I will bear thee up, under all fears and discouragements; and will suffer no man, in this city, to attack thee, so as to do thee any, the least, harm. Tarry, therefore, and continue to preach the gospel, among them. For I know that there are several persons, in this city, so well-disposed, as, by thy preaching, to believe and embrace my doctrine." Upon which, Paul continued, a considerable time longer, at Corinth, teaching the word of God, among them.

CHAP. V. SECT. IX.

During St. Paul's abode, at Corinth; he wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians. An account of the subject, and design, of that epistle.

So great a concern had the apostle, for his converts, at Thessalonica, that (though it was not very long, since he had been there, himself; and, though he had, also, since that, sent Timothy to them; and had, by him, received a very agreeable account, of their faith and charity; of their affectionate remembrance of him; and their desire to see him again; — yet) he is not fully satisfied, in his own mind. He, therefore, wrote this excellent epistle to them. Which I place (as the best chronologers have done) the first of all St. Paul's epistles. And I suppose that he wrote it; after he had been, some time, at Corinth; that is, in the year of Christ, 52; of Claudius, 12.

There are three different opinions, concerning the date of this epistle, which I would mention; together with my reasons for rejecting them.

1. "Grotius"
St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians.

1. "Gratius hath contended, that this, which is commonly called the first, was, in reality, the second, epistle to the Thessalonians;" but he has not supported that conjecture, by any historical evidence. He seems to have started it, merely to serve his hypothesis about the man of sin. However, what we have, farther, to offer, may be deferred, till we come to abridge the second epistle.

2. "Others have thought, that this epistle was written, a year or two sooner; and from the city of Athens. And in our common bibles, the subscription, printed, at the end of this first epistle to the Thessalonians, positively affirms, that it was written from Athens." But the subscriptions, at the ends of the epistles, are of no authority. And it is most probable, that this epistle was not written from Athens. For the apostle's stay, at Athens, was of no very long continuance. And he did not write this epistle, till after Timothy was returned, from Thessalonica; and had brought him an account of the state of that church. [1 Thess. iii. 6.] Now, Timothy did not come up, to the apostle, at Athens; but some time after his arrival at Corinth. [Acts xviii, 1; 5.] And we have no account of the apostle's returning to Athens.

3. Mr. Whiston [in his essay upon the apostolic constitutions, p. 46, &c. and 110.] argues, "that the two epistles to the Thessalonians, commonly placed the first of all St. Paul's writings, were not written, till the year 67. or a little before St. Paul's death." (1.) Because they are so seldom referred to, in the constitutions." Answer. Suppose one should allow the high antiquity, and genuine-ness of the apostolic constitutions, this argument seems not to have any great force. For, if the two epistles to the Thessalonians are there referred to, though but seldom, it is evident, they must have been written before the apostolic constitutions. But, how long, or how short, a time, before; the quoting them seldom, or frequently, does not determine. (2.) Mr. Whiston argues, for the late date of the two epistles to the Thessalonians; "because we find, therein, that the Thessalonians' fame was, then, spread over all Macedonia and Achaia; and in every place. [1 Thess. i. 7, 8.]" Answer. As a pretty large christian church was planted, in a short time, in so celebrated a city; which had a constant correspondence with many other places, by means of its trade and commerce; the news thereof must have spread, very swiftly, into the neighboring towns and countries. And, places, at a greater distance, in a year or two's time, would hear of it. It would, therefore, become a frequent subject of conversation. (3.) It is alleged, "that St. Paul would have
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"I have come to them, once and again; but was hindered, by Satan. [1 Thess. ii. 18.] Answer. It is probable, St. Paul had some thoughts of returning to his Thessalonian converts, from Berea; but the unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica pursued him thither, and drove him, from thence, to Athens. He seems, also, to have had thoughts of returning, to Thessalonica, from Athens. But the virulent temper of the unbelieving Jews, at Thessalonica, was sufficient to make him look upon a speedy return, as improper. He, therefore, chose to be left alone, at Athens; and to send Timothy back to Thessalonica. To this, he seems plainly to refer, 1 Thess. ii. 16, &c. and iii. 1. And, from the Acts of the Apostles, compared with the first epistle to the Thessalonians, it appears, that the unbelieving Jews, and such as they could influence, were intended, by Satan, or the adversary. (4.) It is argued, "that he was, now, under persecution. 1 Thess. iii. 3, &c." Answer. The persecutions, to which the Apostle here refers, were, very likely, no other, than those, which arose, from the fury of the unbelieving Jews, at Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth. So St. Paul, himself, has led us to think. [1 Thess. ii. 15. and iii. 4.] And St. Luke has confirmed this. [Acts xvii. 5, &c. and xviii. 6, &c.] Besides; [1 Thess. iii. 4.] the Apostle seems to intimate, that he was there speaking, not of what he suffered, at present; but of persecutions, which were past. His words are; "For, even when we were with you, we told you, before-hand, that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to passe, and you have known." [Acts. (5.) It is alleged, "that many of the Thessalonians were dead, for their religion; and that they wanted comfort thereupon. [1 Thess. iv. 13, &c.]" Answer. As to any of them dying martyrs, for their religion; that does not appear. But, in the year 52. several of them might be dead: enough, to occasion all, that the Apostle had said, upon that particular. For, supposing St. Paul to have been, three quarters of a year, at Thessalonica; that he had made an hundred converts there; that his stay, at Berea and Athens, took up a quarter of a year more; and that he had been, a year and a quarter, at Corinth, before he wrote this first epistle to the Thessalonians. And, farther; supposing that, since he left the Thessalonians, only four Christians had died; at whose interment, the Christians had made the same doleful, funeral lamentations, which were used by the heathens, who had no hope of a resurrection to a glorious and happy immortality: — then, the Apostle might justly reprove them, for their not duly considering the state of the dead; and for expressing like
St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians.

An.Christi.

like excessive sorrow and lamentation, as those did, who were without such hope. And then, also, it might be proper to assure them, that, as Christ was, himself, raised from the dead, he will come, and raise all the dead, and transform the living; and make the righteous, perfectly, and for-ever, happy. And they might, justly, comfort themselves, and one another; with these words. (6.) It is argued, "that the Apostle expressly mentions those persecutions, which the Thessalonians endured; all, probably, under Nero, after the year "of our Lord, 64." Answer. The Apostle does, indeed, once and again, speak of the christians, at Thessalonica, as afflicted and persecuted. But, instead of pointing to their sufferings, under Nero; in, or after, the year 64; he says, that, "when the gospel came among them, they received it, with much affliction." [I Thess. i. 6.] And that, "they became imitators of the christian churches, in Judea; in that they had suffered, from their own country-men; as those of Judea, had, from their neighbors:" [1 Thess. ii. 14.] planely directing us to what is recorded, Acts xvii. 5, &c.

As to the arguments, which peculiarly concern the second epistle to the Thessalonians, we choose to defer them, till we come to that epistle.

The arguments for placing the first epistle to the Thessalonians, the first of all St. Paul's epistles; or for supposing that it was written, from Corinth, soon after the planting of the christian church, there, are such as these; namely, that Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, planted that church; that they took that very rout, from Thessalonica, through Berea, and Athens, to Corinth; that, as they had joined, in planting that church, at Thessalonica; so they join, in writing this epistle, to their converts, there: that the unbelieving Jews fiercely opposed St. Paul, and drove him away, from Thessalonica; and followed him to Berea: and drove him, from thence, also; that the christians, at Thessalonica, had received the gospel, "with joy; in such a turbulent state of things." With these particulars, the Acts of the Apostles, and the first epistle to the Thessalonians acquaint us.

Now, from this state of things, the propriety of every part of this epistle will appear. It was proper to comfort such young converts, under persecution; to exhort them to steadfastness in the faith; to commend what had been right in their conduct; and to excite them to go on, as they had begun; to fortify them, against the discouragements, which might arise, from considering the persecutions, that, every
every where, befell the **apostle** and his assistents; and to expresse a peculiar affection and tendereness, for such young converts, in the midst of their distresses. — Adultery, fornication, and great impurity, were prevailing vices, in the heathen world. And christian, just emerged out of the state of heathenish darkness, and immorality, would stand more in need of being earnestly admonished to beware Acts of such enormities; and to be told, in the plainest terms, that such things were inconsistent with that purity, which christianity requires.

— Such young converts were more likely to retain the heathen custom, of funeral lamentations, than christians of several years standing; as not being so clear in their notions, and so confirmed in their belief, of a resurrection to a glorious and happy immortality.

In one word, every thing seems to fall in, with this date, of the **first epistle to the thessalonians** being written, at Corinth, in the year 52. And, more particularly, the **history of the acts of the apostles**, the grand key to all the epistles. And all these things cannot be said of any other time, or place.

I can find no satisfactorie account, by whom this letter was sent. Silvanus and Timothy (who have, by some, been supposed to have carried it) joined in the writing of it; and were, also, with the apostle, when he wrote his **second epistle to the thessalonians**. Nor can I discern any hint, in the second epistle, that either of them had then been, a third time, at thessalonica, or in macedonia.

Imagine the great **apostle of the gentiles** to be full of a just resentment, and generous indignation, against his country-men, the unbelieving jews; who had lately treated him and his assistents, as well as the christians, at thessalonica, in such a fierce and cruel manner: and having, at the same time, the most tender and parental care and affection, for his young converts, in that city. And you will have the very posture of his mind, during the writing of this epistle. For these two things appear, every where, throughout the epistle.
The first epistle to the Thessalonians.

Written from Corinth.

AFTER he had been, some months, at Corinth, St. Paul sent this first epistle to the Thessalonians; in his own name, and in the name of (Silas, or) Silvanus, and of his beloved Timothy. He being the apostle of the gentiles; and they two having been his assistants, in planting and watering that church. He wrote, not to their bishops and deacons. For it doeth not appear, that there were, as yet, any such officers, ordained, among them. But he wrote to the christian church, there; and addresseth himself, more especially, to that part of the church, which consisted of converts, from among the idolatrous gentiles. However; I suppose that all the christians of Thessalonica assembled together, for religious worship; that this (as well as the second) epistle was read, publicly, to them; and that such parts of it, as contained the general doctrine, precepts, or evidences, of christianity, might be of advantage to them all. And that they were, so far, by the apostle, intended for general benefit.

As an instance of that remarkable propriety, wherewith St. Paul expressed himself; we may observe, that neither this, nor the second, epistle to the Thessalonians, is introduced with, Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, &c. as in many other of his epistles. For, though the unbelieving jews had fiercely opposed him; yet, as they acknowledg not the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor of any of his apostles: And the judaizing christians (who professed a great regard to Jesus) had not yet begun to make any opposition to St. Paul; nor called in question his apostolic power and mission, at Thessalonica; (as they did afterwards in Galatia, Corinth, and other places;) He, therefore, doeth not, here, assume the dignity, which belonged to him; because he had no proper occasion for affording his authority. — After the introduction, (in which he wisheth them all manner of blessing from God, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they believed) he thanks God, for their faith and love, and patient expectation of Christ's second coming. He puts them in mind of the evidences, which attended his mission; namely, miracles, and the gifts of the holy spirit. He commendeth them, as the elect of God, for their ready reception of the gospel, upon it's first appearance among them; amidst a fierce opposition, and some degree of persecution: and that, in such discouraging circumstances, they had embraced the gospel, with so much alacrity, as to become examples to their neighbors, on all sides. For, in the surrounding countries, it was commonly talked of, what reception, the apostle and his assistants had met with, at Thessalonica; and how readily several of the inhabitants of that city had turned, from lifeless idols and fictitious deities, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for the second appearance of Jesus Christ,
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The apostle and his two assistents could appeal to the Thessalonians, from themselves, for the successes which they had met with; as well as the zeal and cheerfulnesse, with which they had begun to preach the gospel, among them; even after the injurious and base treatment, which they had met with, at Philippi. And, in the midst of harsh censures, and fierce opposition, at Thessalonica, they had acted, in the most upright and disinterested manner; foregoing that respect, and support, which they might have claimed, and expected; and laboring, night and day, with their own hands; that, while they preached the gospel, to them, they might not be burthenome to any of them. The Thessalonians could not have forgot, how holily and inoffensively they behaved; and with what tenderneffe and affection they had treated them; exhorting them, earnestly, to live becoming their high privileges, and glorious prospects, as christians. And the apostle thanks god, that the Thessalonians had received the gospel, not as the contrivance of men, but as the word of god: and that they had imitated the antient prophets, christ, and his apostles, in suffering, for righteousness sake, at the hands of the jews; who did all, they could, to prevent the gospel's being preached unto the gentiles. He often professes his ardent affection, and vast concern, for the Thessalonians; takes notice, with what reluctance he was parted from them, and what a strong desire he had to see them again. Which he had attempted more than once. But the adversary had prevented.

When he could no longer forbear, the apostle chose to be left alone, at Athens; and sent Timothy, to establish and comfort them. He lets them know, that Timothy had brought him, back, a very pleasing account of the steadfastnesse of their faith; of their love to him, their apostle; and of their great desire to see him again; as he most ardently desired to see them. This afforded him great conflation and joy, under all his persecutions and difficulties. He earnestly prayed, that god would order matters so, as that he might visit them again, and farther instruct them; that they might abound, in love to each other, and to all men; and that they might live such holy lives, as to find acceptance with their judge, at his coming.

His practical directions were peculiarly futed to the state of that church. The first direction of that kind, was, that they should live chastely; and carefully abstain from that impurity, to which the gentiles were much addicted. For christianity requires the greatest purity. The christians of Thessalonica loved each other, and all the christians in the neighborhood, so affectionately; that the apostle recommended it to them, only to abound therein, more and more. He exhorted them to behave in a quiet and peaceable manner; and particularly, to mind the duties of their own proper callings and stations; that they might live in credit, and be esteemed by the world around them.
The first epistle to the Thessalonians.

Written from Corinth.

An. Christi 52.

Claud. 12.

Book III.

Ch. V.

Sec. IX.

Acts xvi. 11.

Chap. V.

CHAP.
St. Paul writes, again, to the Thessalonians.

CHAPTER V. SECT. X.

During St. Paul's abode, at Corinth, at this time, he wrote, also, the second epistle to the Thessalonians. An account of the subject, and design, of that epistle.

That St. Paul planted a christian church, at Thessalonica; that Silvanus and Timothy were his assistants, in that work; and what sort of treatment they met with, from the unbelieving Jews and heathens, and from the christians; has been related, at large, in the history of the former epistle.

In the former epistle, St. Paul had expressed a great desire to return, and make the Thessalonians another visit; in order to comfort them, under their persecutions; and farther to instruct them, in the christian doctrine. But, hitherto, he was prevented. Having, therefore, received an account of the effects of his former letter; and a farther account of the state of that church; [see 2 Thess. i. 3. and ii. 2. and iii. 11.] he wrote a second epistle, to them, within a few months after the first; while he himself continued at Corinth; and Silas and Timothy remained, there, with him. I reckon that this second epistle to the Thessalonians was written, not long after the first; partly, because St. Paul hath taken no notice of the unbelieving Jews having hurried him before Gallio: [of which, we find St. Luke hath given a particular account, Acts xviii. 12, &c.] though, perhaps, the Apostle saw the storm approaching; and hints at it: 2 Thess. iii. 2.

That the greatest part of the christian church, at Thessalonica, had been converted, from among the idolatrous gentiles; and that the former epistle was addressed to the christians, who had been such; has been shown already, in the history of the first epistle. I apprehend that the second epistle was written to the same persons, and near the same time, with the former. But these things have been denied. Let us, therefore, attend to what is alleged for the contrary opinion. The best chronologers, and the generality of learned men, seem now to be agreed, that this epistle was written, from Corinth, about the year of Christ 52. of Claudius, 12. But Grotius was for placing it, about the year of our Lord, 38. and in the second year of the reign An.Christ 52. Claud. 12. Book III. Ch. V. Sect. x. Acts xviii. 11.
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An. Christi reign of Caligula. And Mr. Whiston was for placing it, in the year of Christ, 67. of Nero, 13. It may not be improper to examine the grounds of their opinions.

Book III. **Grotius held, that this was not the second epistle to the Thessalonians.** And he has alleged a variety of arguments, to prove, "that the order of these two epistles is inverted, by those, who have collected, and put in order, the epistles: and that the same thing has happened here, as in the books of the Maccabees; where the first book is put in the third place; and for that reason, that the Greek christians came later to the knowledge of that book. For, as to the Latin, they have not yet received it, &c." — In support of this hypothesis, Grotius alleges, 1. "That this epistle was written to Jason, a Jewish christian, the kinsman of Silas and Timothy; and to other christianizing Jews; who, upon the persecution, which arose, upon the death of St. Stephen, fled, from Jerusalem, into Syria; and, afterwards, to Thessalonica." Answer. That, upon the persecution, which followed the martyrdom of St. Stephen, several of the Jewish christians fled, from Jerusalem, into the neighboring countries, is very true. [See Acts viii. 1, &c. and ix. 1, &c. and xi. 19, 20.] But, that any of them went so far as Thessalonica, does not appear. Neither can I find any kind of proof, that this Jason was one of them, who fled, from Jerusalem, on that occasion; or that he was the kinsman of Silas and Timothy; or that he was so much as a Jewish christian. — It plainly appeareth, from the introduction, that this epistle was written, to the Christian church, at Thessalonica. And it seems, evidently, to have been written, to a church, among whom, St. Paul had been, in person. Now, when he came first to Thessalonica; (which was about the year of Christ, 51. of Claudius, 11.) there is no intimation of his finding any Christians there, already. But the contrary seems evident, from Acts xvii. 1, &c.

II. Grotius alleges, "that, as this epistle contained the wicked deeds of Caius, the emperor, in very express words, but sharp, as the matter required; it could not be published, without harm to the Christian church, whilest the Claudian family reigned, at Rome; that is, before the reign of Galba, or Vespasian. And, therefore, when it was first published; then it began to be added to the epistles of Paul, written to the churches. For the epistles, written to single persons, are placed last. And, because the Christians then placed it, as the second epistle to the Thessalonians; so it has obtained that place and title, generally, ever since." Answer. This
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of it's being written, many years, before it was published, is all fiction. Grotius had no history, to lead him, to such a conclusion.

III. Grotius reckons, "that, in the end of this epistle, there is a great argument for his opinion; where the Apostle says, [The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand. Which is the token, in every epistle. So I write.] Now, Paul would not have said so, if he had wrote an epistle, to Thessalonica, before this. An.Christi

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IV. Grotius argues, "that the persons, to whom St. Paul wrote this epistle, must have been Jewish Christians, converted, long before that Apostle came to Thessalonica; because it is said, [chap. ii. 13.] that God had chosen them, from the beginning, unto salvation, &c. For that expression, [from the beginning,] shows, that he was treating of the Jews; who are said, Eph. i. 12, to have first trusted in Christ. Compare Rom. xi. 16." Answer. Suppose it had been said, "that they had been converted, to the gospel, from the beginning;" even that expression might have denoted no more, than that they were converted, among some of the first of the idolatrous Gentiles; or soon after the Apostle came into Macedonia. So, [in the beginning of the gospel, Phil. iv. 15.] signifies, when the Apostle first preached the gospel, in those parts. Nay; Mr. Locke was of opinion, that Eph. i. 12, was not to be understood, of Jewish, but of Gentile, converts. However; the Apostle, 2 Thess. ii. 13, is not speaking of the time, when the persons, to whom he was writing, were converted to Christianity; but of the time, when..."
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St. Paul writes, again, to the Thessalonians.


St. Paul writes, again, to the Thessalonians.

Book III. Ch. V. Sec. X. Acts xviii.

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VI. Grotius goes on, and says, "that the prophecies, in the second chapter of this epistle, ought to be referred to those things, which might happen in that age: because Paul, in three places, supposed, that the last and universal judgment might happen, whilst he was living." Answer. There is no occasion to confine the events, prophesied of, in the second chapter of this epistle, to what
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What was to happen, in that age. For St. Paul did not expect the general judgment, in his time. [See on 1 Thess. iv. 15.]

The arguments for this being the second epistle to the Thessalonians, are, such as follow; (1.) St. Paul has directed it, To the church of the Thessalonians, &c. And, according to the constant tradition of the Christian church, this has always been called the second epistle to the Thessalonians. Nor do I know of any author, popish, or protestant, ancient or modern, of Grotius, his opinion, in this matter. He, evidently, was led into it, by his hypothesis, about the man of sin. xviii.

(2.) Chap. ii. 15. The Apostle says, "Stand fast, therefore, brethren, and hold the traditions, which you have been taught, whether by [our] word, or by our epistle." From whence, it has been generally gathered, that this Apostle had wrote one epistle, to the same persons, before this. Indeed, if, by our epistle, we were to understand this second epistle; then the force of this argument, would be taken away. But, as neither return, nor why, is expressed, there is no reason for that interpretation. And to say, "that St. Paul had wrote a former epistle to the Thessalonians, which is now lost;" would be, to assert what there is no history, nor evidence, to support. The most natural interpretation, is, that St. Paul here refers to (that which is commonly called) the first epistle to the Thessalonians. (3.) It is an argument of great force, against Grotius, his conjecture, "that Silvanus and Timothy joined with St. Paul, in the introduction of the second epistle to the Thessalonians; as they had done, in the introduction to the first epistle:" — It does not appear, that either Silvanus, or Timothy, was converted to the Christian faith, till long after the death of Caligula. For Timothy was but a youth, when St. Paul wrote his first epistle to him: which was in the year of Christ, 58. of Nero, 4. [See 1 Tim. iv. 12.]

According to what has been observed above, Timothy seems to have been converted to Christianity, at Lystra, by Paul and Barnabas; in the year of Christ, 46. of Claudius, 6. And not to have become the companion of St. Paul, till the year of Christ, 50. of Claudius, 10. About which time, Silvanus, also, became the companion, and fellow-laborer, of that Apostle. [Acts xv. 40. and xvi. 1, &c.] Now, as these two evangelists assisted this Apostle, in planting the church, at Thessalonica, it was very natural for them to join, with him, in the introduction of the first epistle to that church. And, as they were still with him, when he wrote this second epistle; they, with as great propriety, joined with the Apostle again, in the introduction; as being well known to the Thessalonians, and solic-
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It is an argument of great weight, for this being the second epistle to the Thessalonians, "that there is a plain reference, in this epistle, to many things, contained, in the former epistle." There, St. Paul mentions their conversion to the christian faith; here, their increase therein. In the former epistle, he had intimated, that Christ's coming to judgment, would be sudden and surprising; here, he takes pains, to guard them against thinking, that it would be presently, or soon. In the first epistle, he had, briefly and gently, admonished some disorderly persons, not to be idle, nor burthensome to others: here, he enlarges upon that particular, and reproves them more sharply; as they had not reformed, upon his former and gentle admonition. — But the correspondence, between the two epistles, will be considered, more particularly, hereafter.

Mr. Whiston [in his essay upon the apostolic constitutions, p. 47.] has contended, for placing the writing of the two epistles to the Thessalonians, in the year of our Lord, 67. that is, about 15 years later than we suppose them to have been written. — In the history of the first epistle, all his arguments have been answered, except two; which are taken from two passages in this second epistle.

(1.) Mr. Whiston has observed, "that [2 Thess. ii. 7, &c.] the apostle speaks of the mystery of iniquity, which did already work, in the world; and was the prelude to the man of sin, himself." Answer. There were many corruptions, in the christian church, as early as the year of Christ, 52. And every corruption, was, in some measure, a mystery of iniquity, and a prelude to the coming of the man of sin. And, therefore, that passage will not determine the date of this epistle; much less that it was written in the year 67.

(2.) Mr. Whiston has alleged, "that [2 Thess. iii. 17.] the apostle mentions his own hand-writing, as the token, in every epistle; as if he had written, not a few, before that time." Answer. How strangely men do argue! And what very different conclusions do they draw, from the same premises? From this passage, Grotius argues, that the apostle had not written any epistle, to a christian church, before this; at least, not to the Thessalonians. From this same passage, Mr. Whiston infers, "that the apostle had written epistles, before this; and those not a few." Neither of their arguments are clear, or indubitable. For, suppose St. Paul had written but one epistle, before this; and the Thessalonians had miswritten his meaning; or had, since that, received a letter, forged in his name; or had scruples raised, in their minds, about the genuineesses of his former
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mer epistle; he might, very reasonably, write the salutation, again, Written with his own hand; and inform them, that that was the token of the genuineness of every epistle of his; that is, of those, which he had written; or of those, which he should, afterwards, write.

Had we the account, which the Apostle received, from Thessalonica; or had we any other authentic history, of the circumstances of that church, since his writing the first epistle, we might, unquestionably, interpret this second epistle, with more justness and propriety, than any of the commentators have done; and, much more exactly, point out the beauty and emphasis of several expressions. But, as we have no such history, all, that we can do, is, to compare the two epistles themselves; and carefully observe, wherein they correspond, and wherein they vary. — We may reasonably presume, that what the former epistle had done effectually, the Apostle would not attempt to do it over again. Though it is highly probable that he would do those things, by letter; as he was still absent; which, he would have done, in person; if he had been present: For instance; that he would commend those who had behaved right, in order to confirm, and encourage, them. That if, in any thing, they had mistaken his meaning, he would (with all meekness and readiness) set them right: that if, in any point, he thought, they were not fully instructed, he would endeavor to perfect that which was lacking in their faith: and that if, in any respect, any of them were grown worse, he would, more particularly, and more severely, reprehend them. — With this light, in our hand, we may, possibly, find out our way, through the history of the state of this church, at the time of writing this second epistle.

Whether the Apostle (after all his most earnest desire to see them again,) despaired of visiting his converts, at Thessalonica, for some time; or thought them sufficiently established, by what he had already done; or reckoned, that he had said enough, concerning that desire, and intention, of his; and that, to have said more, would have been improper; unless he had had a fair prospect of returning shortly: — Whatever was the reason, I say, he takes no notice, in this second epistle, of his purpose, or desire, to visit them, again, in a little time. He did, indeed, visit them, once or twice, after this. [Acts xx. 1, — 4.] But that was at the interval of four or five years. And, therefore, he had no prospect of that, when he wrote this epistle. — He had, in the former epistle, given them such affectionate and pressing dissuasive from all manner of impurity: and had so fully shown, that imitating their heathen neighbors, in their funeral lamentations,
The second epistle to the Thessalonians.

Written from Corinth, An. Christi 52.

Claud. 15.

Book III.

Ch. V. Sect. X.

Acts xviii, II.

They had now, for some time, professed the christian religion. And, therefore, the apostle doeth not (as in the first epistle) enlarge, upon the reception, which the gospel had met with, upon its first appearance among them; nor upon his own planting it, with the most disinterested views, and amidst so many difficulties and discouragements.

Chap. I. But he wrote, again; in his own name, and in the name of Silvanus and Timothy. And then, (after an introduction, like to that, in the former epistle) he commendeth the Thessalonians, for their increase in faith and love; and tells them, that he gloried, in other churches, because of their steadfastness in the faith, and their patience under persecution.

He then, with great propriety, takes notice, that their persecution was a clear proof of a righteous judgment to come; when their persecutors should meet with their proper recompence; and the righteous be delivered out of all their afflictions. And all this (he assured them) would take place, when Jesus Christ returns, with pomp and majesty, as universal judge. And, to that end, he prayed, that God would carry on their faith and holiness, unto perfection; that Christ might be glorified in them, and they in him.

Chap. II. Having heard, that his discourse, concerning the sudden coming of Christ, had been misunderstood, or perverted; he takes particular care to rectifie the mistake, into which, the Thessalonians had fallen: assuring them, that a remarkable apostasy would first happen; and that there would appear, in the christian church, one, who would deserve the name of

This was written the second of all St. Paul's epistles. By whose hands it was sent, does not now appear. But the great APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES did not want messengers, attendants, or persons ready to minister unto him.
The second epistle to the Thessalonians.

"of the man of sin, and son of perdition, and who would, with intolerable pride and arrogance, exalt himself above all the princes of this earth. Of this, the apostle had informed them, when he was at Thessalonica, and told them, what it was, that hindered the appearance of that tyrannical power. The mystery of iniquity had then begun to operate; though it's progress was but small. But, when the obstructing power should be removed, the grand enemy of truth and righteousness should be openly revealed, and would make use of such power and craft, as that the apostles would spread far and wide; and none, but the sincere lovers of the truth and goodness, would escape the delusion. But, though those adversaries of pure Christianity should triumph for a while, yet their end would be destruction. However, the apostle thanked God, that his Thessalonian converts were chosen unto salvation. Unto which, they had been called, by the gospel: and which they would certainly obtain, if they held fast the doctrines, and observed the precepts, which he had delivered unto them. And he heartily prayed that they might do so.

In the next place, the apostle desires the prayers of the Christians, for him and his two assistants, that they might preach the gospel with like success, in other places, as they had done, at Thessalonica; and, particularly, that they might be delivered from enemies and persecutors, whom they met with, almost everywhere. And he intimates, that, though the Thessalonians could not escape persecution here, they might confide in Christ, to preserve them from evil; provided they continued in the love of God, and in the patient expectation of Christ's second coming.

In the first epistle, he had concluded, with [The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, Amen.] He now concludes, in like manner, and informs them, that writing the salutation, with his own hand, was the token of the genuineness of all the epistles, which he wrote.

Thus,
Thus, as it seemeth, we have taken the onely method, now left, of comeing at the state of the church, at Thessalonica, when the Apostle wrote this second epistle to them. And the sum, of what has been said, comes to this; namely, "that this epistle may be looked upon, as a supplement to the former; that the main point, about which, he wrote this second epistle, was, to rectifie a mistake, into which, the christians, at Thessalonica, had fallen, concerning the speedy coming of Christ. A mistake! which, if not rectified, might have proved of dangerous consequence. — But he has, also, added other things of considerable importance; comforting the Thessalonians, under their persecutions; and reprehending the idle and disorderly among them. — These three things, the Apostle hath more especially labored; in order to prevent the ruine, or great decay, of the christian religion, at Thessalonica. — And it is to be hoped that he succeded in his design. For we learn, from the fathers, that there was a christian church, at Thessalonica, many ages, after this.

CHAP. V. SECT. XI.

The history of St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians.

It hath been observed, above, that St. Paul had, before this, planted several christian churches, in Galatia. For we shall find, [Acts xviii. 23.] that, the next time, he passed through that country, "he confirmed such disciples, as were formerly converted to the christian faith." It hath been commonly thought, that the epistle, to the churches of Galatia, was writen, but a little before the first epistle to the Corinthians. That opinion was grounded upon what the Apostle hath said; [1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.] "Now, concerning the collection for the faints; as I have given orders in the churches of Galatia, so also do you. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay up part of his treasure, according as God hath prospered him: that there may be no collections to be made, when I come." But, though there are some general exhortations to beneficence and liberality; [Gal. vi. 10.] yet there are no such
such orders, throughout the epistle to the Galatians, concerning collections for the poor christians, in judaea. And, therefore, nothing can be inferred, from thence, towards settling the date of this epistle. St. Paul had, perhaps, sent that order, by some of his assistents; who were numerous; and very much employed, in visiting the churches of his planting; and in carrying orders and messages from him; as well as in bringing him an account of the state of the churches. Or, (which seemeth more probable) he had ordered them to do so, when he came, again, to Galatia; and visited the churches, which he had planted there. For that was, before the writing his first letter to Corinth. As that passage, in the first epistle to the Corinthians, will not help us, in fixing the time of the writing the epistle to the Galatians; we are at liberty to fix the date of it, as other circumstances will best accord. And, it appeareth to me, that he wrote that epistle, now; during his long stay at Corinth. For, he had not onely sufficient leisure to write; by continueing, so long, in one city: but he hath given a plane intimation, in the epistle itself, that he wrote it, about this time. For he faith, [Gal. i. 6.] "I wonder, that you are, so soon, turned aside, from him, who called ed you, by the grace, which is manifested in the gospel of Christ, unto another sort of gospel," &c. From whence, it is evident, that he wrote, soon after he had been at Galatia. And there is no hint, through the whole epistle, of his haveing, at that time, been more than once, among them. So that, it is very likely, the epistle was written, before his second journey to Galatia.

The epistle to the Galatians.

The occasion of the epistle, was, the apostle's haveing heard, that a certain judaizing christian, a false apostle, had either crept in, or risen up, among them; who called in question his [that is, St. Paul's] apostolic authority; intimating, that St Peter, and the apostles of the circumcision, were much more to be regarded, and superior to him. That they never preached against the circumcision of the converts, from among the gentiles. But, that it was a doctrine peculiar to Paul; who was onely an apostle of men; and had not such extraordinary powers and illumination, as the other apostles had. Nay; he seemeth to have intimated, that Paul himself did, secretly, and at some times, preach up the necessity of circumcision, to the gentle converts; though, generally, and at other times, he insisted upon the contrary. The sum of the mat
The epistle to the Galatians.

Written from Corinth, An. Christi 53.

Claud. 13.
Book III. Ch. V. Sect. XI. Aés xviii. 11.

"That it was but one judaizing christian, who made all that disturbance, appeareth probable to me, from what the Apostle hath said; [Gal. v. 9, 10.] A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. I trust in the Lord, concerning you, that you will not be of a different mind from me; but that he, who troubleth you, will fall under the condemnation, which be deserves; whosoever he be. And he seemeth to have been a man of an immoral character, from what is said, chap. vi. 12, &c. as not acting from religious views and motives; but out of vane-glory and fear, to curry favor with the Jews, by increaing the number of proselytes of righteousness; and so escape the persecution, which the unbelieving Jews, frequently, raised, against St. Paul, and such as adhered to the doctrine, which he preached. If it be remembered, that these things occasioned the writing of this epistle; it will not be difficult to observe the propriety of the several parts, and expressions, of it.

Chap. I. "In opposition to the insinuations of the false apostle, St. Paul begins, with asserting his apostolic character and authority; that he was not made an apostle, by any man; but by Jesus Christ; and God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead. And, after directing the letter to the chrisitian churches in Galatia, (which was not a town, but a country; and had several churches in it,) he addressed himself, more particularly, to the gentile christians; and wished them all manner of blessing, from the true God; and from his son, Jesus Christ; in whom they now believed. And, having observed, that the design of the death of Christ, was, to deliver men from this present, evil world; he then falleth into the grand design of his writing: letting the christians in Galatia know, that he was astonished, at the sudden change, which had happened among them; and at their so quickly throwing off their great regard to him and his doctrine; though he kept steady to it, at all times, and in every place. But he immediately softened that rebuke, by laying the blame on the judaizing christian, the false apostle; whom he, in the name of Christ, pronounces accursed, for preaching so directly contrary to the revelations, which he himself had received from heaven, and published among them. And he, in an oblique manner, representeth that false apostle, as acting with a view to curry favor with the Jews; which he himself scorned to do, when it interfered with truth and right.

"He then giveth them a brief history of his past life; as a farther vindication of himself: and of the doctrine, which he had preached among them. He was, at first, a zealous Pharisee, and a violent persecutor of the christians. But, when the gospel was reveled to him, (from God, who had, from his birth, designed him for the apostleship of the gentiles,) he did not consult with any man; nor go up to Jerusalem, to learn the doctrine of christianity, from any of the apostles. But he went, and preached the gospel,
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"gospel, in Arabia; and went not up to Jerusalem, till after three years. Written
"At which time, he saw none of the apostles, except Peter and James. From
"And, with them, he continued only fifteen days. Which had been too
"short a time, to have learned the scheme of the christian doctrine; if he
"had then been ignorant of it. But he preached it before, in a distant
"country; where there was no man to teach it him. And was so much
"a stranger, among the christian churches of Judea, that they had most
"of them never seen him. Only they had heard, with joy, that their
"great enemy, and persecutor, was become a christian; and that he preach-
"ed that doctrine, which once he destroyed. From all this, it plainly ap-
"peared that he had received the revelation of the gospel; not from men,
"but from our Lord Jesus Christ, himself. And, that he never,
"secretly, or openly, favored the sentiments of the judaizing christians; he
"farther proveth, from his taking Titus, an uncircumcised gentile christian,
"up with him, to Jerusalem; and there opposing the judaizing christians;
"who would have had Titus to have been circumcised, and brought into
"subjection to the whole law of Moses. And, that he learned no part of
"the gospel, from the other apostles, when he was, then, at Jerusalem,
"with them; (namely, fourteen years after his own conversion;) he show-
"eth, in that he went thither, according to a divine revelation; and com-
"municated the gospel, which he had preached to the idolatrous gentiles, unto
"James, Peter, and John. Whereby, he added to their knowledge,
"though they could add nothing to his. Onely he desired, that they
"would, for some time, keep it a secret, from the christians, at Jerusalem;
"for fear the zealots, among them, should make a bad use of it.
"Nay; those pillars in the church, those most eminent apostles, in whom
"the judaizers so much gloried;— even they, upon a careful observation
"of their illumination and miraculous powers, acknowledged both Paul,
"and Barnabas, for brother apostles; and of equal dignity and au-
"thority with themselves; giving unto them the right-hand of fellowship;
"and agreeing that they should go to the heathens, as they did to the jews.
"They did, indeed, propose their making a collection, in the gentile
"churches, for the use of the poor jewish christians; especially in Judea.
"But that, also, St. Paul had designed to do, before they mentioned it.
"Nay; (which might set him, not onely upon a level with, but even ex-
"alt him above, that renowned apostle of the circumcision.) he letteth
"them know, that, when Peter came, down, from Jerusalem, to Ant-
"ioch; and, out of fear of the judaizers, acted so, as tended to betray
"the liberty of the gentile converts; and their freedom from circumcision,
"and the burden of the law; he publicly reproved him; and that very
"justly: putting him in mind, that the jewish converts could not expect
"justification, by the law of Moses; and, therefore, there could be no just
"reason to bring the gentile christians under that law. For the gospel, alone,
"was able to justify, and save, all, that embraced it; and, by the tenor
"of the law itself, and especially according to the prophecies contained in
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Written from Corinth. Written " it, the obligation to it was dissolved, upon the erecting the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah. After the apostle had, thus, destroyed the force of all, that his adversaries had alleged; he appealeth to the Galatians, themselves, whether it was not reasonable to regard him and his doctrine? —

" Especially, as they had, from him, received the gift of the holy spirit; and that, in consequence of their imbracing (not the law of Moses, but) the gospel of Christ? Nay; that they had also suffered for their christianity; (very probably, from the unbelieving Jews; who were incensed that they would not submit to the law of Moses.) And, if they would not render their past sufferings in vane, they ought to persevere, as they had begun.

" As a farther confutation of the doctrine of the judaizers, he goeth back, as far as the Abrahamic covenant; and showeth them, that, by such a faith, as produced obedience to God, Abraham himself was justified; and that the spiritual seed of Abraham, were all, that had like faith and obedience, whether Jews or Gentiles. For, in him, all nations were to be blessed. Whereas; the law condemned every one, without mercy, who transgressed any part of it. And (without having recourse to the gospel, or the Abrahamic covenant, which was of the same kind with the gospel,) such, as were under the law, and transgressed, could not hope for mercy.

" But that Christ, by dying, had delivered the Jews from Christians, from the bondage and curse of the law; and had obtained, of his Father, that, through him, even the Gentile converts, also, should inherit the blessings, promised to Abraham, and his seed. As an earnest of which, these Gentile christians, at Galatia, had received the spirit. — Mere human compacts are not altered, without the consent of both the parties; much less the divine covenant and engagement. Now; it was impossible, that the law, or the Sinai-covenant, should alter the covenant, made, between God and Abraham, in behalf of all mankind; even that covenant, by which God promised the everlasting inheritance. A blessing, which there was no possibility of obtaining, by the observation of the law of Moses! It was impossible (I say) that the law, or the Sinai covenant, should alter that covenant, made, with Abraham, between God and all mankind. For a mediator is not a mediator, where there is only one person, or party, concerned. Whereas; God alone, of the two parties, concerned in the Abrahamic covenant, was then present, at mount Sinai. Instead of the other party, which was all mankind, there was only the one nation of Israel. The law, therefore, of which Moses was the mediator, and which was made between God and that one nation of Israel, only, could not possibly disannul the Abrahamic covenant, which extended to all mankind: because both parties must be present, or consent, to the disannulling of a covenant, as well as to the makeing of it. The law, though delivered in so pompous a manner, was given, only, to prevent the nation of Israel, till Christ came, from falling into the transgressions; that is, the idolatry and wickedness, of the surrounding nations. In this view, there is no clashing between the law and the Abrahamic covenant, or the gospel. On
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"On the contrary; the law tended to prepare the Jews for the gospel. For, as all are sinners, all have need of mercy; which the law manifested nothing of. It, therefore, like a severe tutor to children, made the Jews very justly, long to get out of that state of minority; and to wish for the mercy and liberty of the gospel. Under which, the Gentile, as well as the Jews, converts, are looked upon, as the sons of God; come to years of maturity; and emerged, into the state of freedom and liberty. For there is, now, no distinction; but all believers are the seed of Abraham, and heirs of the promised blessing. Antecedent to the gospel-state, the Jews, though heirs of the promise, were in bondage to the law; as the heir to an earthly inheritance, who is treated like a servant; that is, with rigor and subjection, during his minority. And the Gentile-converts had been, likewise, in bondage; not indeed to the law of Moses, but to idolatry, and other vices. But now, God had sent his Son, in an human body, to adopt the Gentiles, as well as to deliver the Jews from their state of minority. And, as a clear proof of this, he had given them the Spirit of his Son, Jesus Christ; which might fully satisfy them of their adoption. And it would have been a preposterous thing, for those Gentile-converts, when they had escaped from the bondage of idolatry, to submit to the bondage of the Mosaic law; which was only the rudiments of Christianity; or of that more perfect religion, which they had embraced.

The next argument, which the apostle makes use of, is, to put them in mind of the great respect and affection, which they had shewn him, when he planted the gospel among them. Though he had labored under great weakness of body, which he calleth a remarkable trial in the flesh; alluding (very probably) to what he, elsewhere, termed his thorn in the flesh. But, notwithstanding that trial, they did not then despise him; and he could not think of any thing, that should, since, have alienated their affections from him; unleffe his freedom and openness in telling them the truth. They were now, indeed, fond of another. But it was reasonable to continue that affection to the Apostle, in his absence; which they had manifested, when he was present. For, he had a most tender affection for them; and was in pangs, till they were brought into the right way again. And, finally, he concludeith his discourse, concerning the point in difference, between him and the Judaizing Christians, in a beautiful allegory, taken from the prophet Isaiah; thereby referring the Judaizing Christians to those writings, which they so highly valued.

For, whereas it is said, in Genesis, that Abraham had two sons; the one, that is, Ishmael, by Hagar, the bond-woman; and the other, that is Isaac, by Sarah, his wife; or the free-woman: These things are allegorized, * by which things are allegorized." This is the true translation, for which I am indebted to the dissertation, that Mr. Peirce has published, on this place. Where it is shown, that these things were allegorized, not in the history of Moses, but by the prophet Isaiah. Which remove the grand difficulty of this period of holy scripture; as the same dissertation hath, likewise, removed many of the lesser difficulties, with respect to the reading and interpretation of this place. [See dissertation I, annexed to Mr. Peirce's paraphrase and notes on St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians.]

* Gal. iv. 24. Καὶ οὗτος ἐστὶν ἀληθεία. Which things are allegorized." This is the true translation.
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Written by the prophet. [Isa. liv. 1, &c.] And, in the prophet's allegory, these two women represent the two covenants. The one, which came from mount Sinai, and bringeth such, as are under it, into a state of bondage. Which, in the allegory, answered to Hagar; and, in a lively manner, represented the state of the earthly Jerusalem, or of the Jews; who were, in the apostle's days, voluntarily in bondage to the law; notwithstanding the freedom, which was offered them, by the gospel. Whereas, the spiritual, or heavenly Jerusalem; the church of the Messiah, collected from among both Jews and Gentiles; was, in the prophet's allegory, represented, by Sarah, the free-woman, who was the mother of the pious, as Abraham was their father. This is the true meaning of the prophet's words, when he saith, Rejoice thou barren, who didst not bear any children before. Break forth into singing, and cry aloud; thou that wast wafted at the usual age didst not travail with child. For more numerous are the children of [Sarah] who was desolate, and past hopes; than of [Hagar] who became Abraham's wife, and bare him a son; when, according to the course of nature, he might expect to have children. According to this allegory, we, true christians, are, like Isaac, the children of the promise. And I may carry the resemblance farther. For, as Ishmael, who was born after the flesh, persecuted Isaac, who was given to his parents, miraculously, and according to an extraordinary promise; even so it is now. For, in like manner, the Jews persecute us, the spiritual seed of Abraham. But, as the bond woman and her son were cast out, without sharing in the inheritance of Isaac. So shall the unbelieving Jews be debarred from partaking of like liberty and privileges with us. Only remember, that as you are free, you ought not to intangle yourselves, any more, with a yoke of bondage. Nay; I, Paul, (who am charged with secretly favoring the sentiments of the Judaizers; even I Paul) declare unto you, that, if you be circumcised, and become subject to the burdens of the law of Moses, you make void your christianity. For the gospel must either save you wholly, or not at all. But it is sufficiently able to save Jews, or Gentiles; and that without distinction; if they conform to what it requireth.

One man hath done all this mischief among you. But, I hope, you will pause, upon him, the censure, which he deserves. Nay; I could wish (if there be no hopes of his reformation) that God would even cut him off; rather than you should be subverted from true christianity. As for my own part, I am still persecuted, by the unbelieving Jews; because I preach up the freedom of the Gentiles, from circumcision, and the Mosaic law. And I would have you assert your liberty. Onely, do not think yourselves at liberty to sin. No! you are still under bonds and engagements, to live in purity; and to love one another. For this is, in the noblest sense, to fulfill the whole law; as well as to comply with the design of the gospel. The works of the flesh, are, evidently, all manner of vice and impurity. And (as christians) you are carefully to avoid them;
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"them; or else you cannot hope to inherit the kingdom of glory. But the fruit of the spirit, which Christianity recommendeth, is all manner of goodness and purity. Such things, you are most carefully to practise. And such things, all true christians will practise.

"Having, thus, finished the grand design of the epistle, the apostle recommends to them, the dealing tenderly with such as offended; and not to treat them with pride and insolence, as the false apostle seemeth to have done. In the next place, he exhorteth them to be generous to their instructors, and to the presidents of their churches; letting them know, that, according as they then sowed, so should they afterwards reap. And, that they ought to do good to all men; but more especially to their fellow-christians. Upon taking notice, that he had written all this long letter, with his own hand; (which was what he did not usually do. For commonly he either dictated, and another wrote; or he wrote the original epistles; and, when others had transcribed them, he sent the copies to the churches. But, upon saying that he had written all this letter, with his own hand;) his anxiety for the Galatians broke out, again. And he let them know, that the judaizers would make them proselytes of righteousness; onely, that they might glory among the jews, and escape persecution. But, as for himself, he glorieth, onely, in pure, unmixed christianity; which raised him above all temporal considerations; and which regarded no such distinction as that of jews and gentiles. Upon them, who held this pure christian revelation, and conformed to it, he pronounceth peace; and also legeth his own sufferings, as strong proofs of his sincerity. By all which, he labored to establish them, in what he had taught them. And then, he concludes, with his usual benediction; wishing all the brethren, the favor of our lord jesus christ. Amen."
Gallio, proconsul of Achaia.

CHAP. V. SECT. XII.

St. Paul brought, by the jews, before Gallio: But acquitted; because he was not accused of any offence, against the civil, or roman, law. Acts xviii, 12, — 18.

The provinces of the roman empire were of two sorts: Cæsarean; or such as were subject to the emperor: and proconsular; or such as were subject to the people and the senate. Achaia was a proconsular province, under Augustus Cæsar. Tiberius, at the request of the Achaia, made it a Cæsarean province. About eight years before this, Claudius restored it to the senate; and, from that time, a proconsul was sent into this country. Gallio was the present proconsul. And, though the country, subject to him, was all Greece; yet he was, by the romans, called the proconsul of Achaia. St. Luke, therefore, appeareth to have been master of all the circumstances, which he had occasion to mention; and to have spoken, of this affair, with the greatest propriety. This Gallio was Marcus Annœus Novatus, elder brother to the famous Lucius Annœus Seneca, the Stoic philosopher, and Nero’s tutor. But, having been adopted by Lucius Junius Gallio, he was, from him, called Gallio. It was, most probably, by the interest of his brother, Seneca, that Gallio was made proconsul of Achaia. For Agrippina, who was wife to the emperor, Claudius, and mother to Nero, had such influence over Claudius, that almost all things were managed, according to her direction. And her son’s præceptor would (as it is probable) be readily gratified, in making such a request, for his brother. Seneca hath described Gallio, as a man of the most mild and excellent disposition; composed in him—


Senea, præfat. ad natural. quaest. 1. 4. Solebam tibi dicere, Gallionem fratrem meum (quem nemo non parum amat; etiam qui amare plus non potest) alia vitia non noffe, hoc etiam odisse. —Hoc quoque loco blanditiis tuis reftitit, ut exclamares invenisse te inexpugnabilem virum adversus infidiias, quas nemo non in finum recepit.

Crepiti mirari comitatem, & incompositam suavitatem, quæ illos quoque, quos transit, abducit, gratuitum etiam in obios meritum. Nemo enim mortalium uni tam dulcis eff, quam hic omnibus; cum interim tanti naturalis boni vis eff, uti artem simulationemque non redoleat.
himself, and benign to mankind in general. And his behavior, upon the following occasion, agreeeth very well with the character, which
his brother hath given him. For, when he was proconsul of Achaia,
and resided at Corinth, the unbelieving Jews arose, unanimously, a-
gainst St. Paul. And, seizing upon that apostle, they brought him before Gallio's tribunal; alleging, against him, "That he,
" though a Jew, persuaded men to worship God, in a different way,
" from that, which was prescribed in the law of Moses." Allude-
ing, partly to his teaching them to worship God, through Jesus
Christ, as mediator; but, principally, to his admitting uncircum-
cised Gentiles to full communion with such as had been Jews, with-
out requiring of them to conform to the ceremonies of the Jewish
law. — The truth is; that religious and civil affairs are of an intire-
ly distinct nature: that the latter onely come under the cognizeance
of the magistrate; and, that it is not his business to interpose, in
an affair relating to the former; any farther, than to keep the peace;
and to allow all good subjects, openly to profess their own religion;
and to worship in their own way. Accordingly; when the
apostle was going to speak; Gallio would not give him the trou-
bule of making an apologie; because he did not look upon him as a
criminal. But he said to the Jews, his accusers, "If you had brought
" any accusation, against this man, of the breach of the civil law,
" such as rebellion, fraud, or murder; or any such notorious crimes;
" there would have been reason, why I should have borne with you,
" in your eager prosecution of this man. But, if you have nothing to
" bring, before me, but questions concerning religious disputes and
" opinions; (As whether the Gentiles shall be admitted into the church,
" or upon what terms? Or what name shall be given to this, or
" that, person; as whether Jesus shall be called the Christ, or
" Messiah? Or concerning your law; namely, whether it obligeth
" all men to be circumcised, who go over to the worship of your God?)
" — as it is not my proper province, I will not concern myself with
" such things; look you to them. For I will not be judge, in any
" such matters." Then he ordered them, not without threatenings,
to depart from the tribunal. " [Would to God that all princes,
Lib. 1. episc. 104. Ifud mihi in ore Domini mei Gallionis, qui cum in Achaia febrem
habere coepisset; protinus navem ascendit, clamitans, non corporis esse, sed loci morbum.
Dion Cassius, also, [l. 60. p. 688, 689, alias 685, 686.] intimates that he was a
man of great wit, and good sense.
Gallio would not condemn St. Paul.

An. Chr. li. "judges, and magistrates, had always been of Gallio's mind! and Claud. 13. "discouraged such tumults, by protecting the innocent, and punish-
Book. III. ing the persecutors! And so left every one to judge, for himself,
Ch. V. "in matters of religion; which concern, only God, and a man's
Seà. XII. own conscience!]

However; the Jews did not pay a proper regard to Gallio's orders. They had, indeed, the power of scourging,
Acts xvi. in their synagogues, whom they thought proper, of their own nation
v. 16. and religion. But they were, at present, so enraged and insolent,
as to seize upon Sothemen: (who had been one of the chief rulers of
the synagogue; but was now, I suppose, become a convert to
Christianity;) and to beat him, even before the tribunal. However;

Gallio minded none of these things. All their insolence could not
prove him to intermeddle, as long as they beat only one of their
own people. And, though it was not in the synagogue, but before
the tribunal; he chose rather to let it pass; as considering, very
probably, the mutinous, seditious, temper of the Jews; which rather
increased, by opposition. The Apostle, thus screened by Gallio,
tarried, at Corinth, a good while longer. So that his stay, in that
city, was, in all, about two years. And, considering his unwearied
diligence: and that he did not use to stay long, in any place, un-
less he had a prospect of success; we may reasonably suppose, that
he had gathered a large church, there. And, from St. Luke's ac-
count, in the Acts of the Apostles; and especially from St. Paul's
two epistles to Corinth; it appeareth, that most of that church con-
sisted of converts, from among the idolatrous Gentiles.

Ver. 17. * Many have thought, that the Greeks beat Sothemen, in complaisance to
Gallio; and to check the insolence of the Jews. It will therefore be proper to men-
tion the reasons, why I understand it otherwise. The Alexandrian ms. Baro. 1.
the Valesian various lections; as well as the Coptic and Vulgar versions, have not
[si εἰκόνα, the Greeks.] And one ms. readeth [ΟΙ Ιουδαιοι, the Jews.] [See Dr. Mill
en this place, and Prolegom. 1351.] But, supposing εικόνα only left out; the con-
nection would incline one to understand, what followed of the Jews. For, it is
highly probable, that Sothemen was now a favorer of the Christians; or, rather him-
sell a Christian; and that he is mentioned as such, 1 Cor. i. 1. For, though he was
then, with St. Paul, at Ephesus; it is evident that he must have been well known,
at Corinth, from his joining with the Apostle, in that Epistle to the Corinthians.
Besides; the sense of the place doeth much better agree to that expression; [But Gal-
lio cared for none of these things:] that is, All the insolence of the Jews did not move
him, so far as to interpose, or give an hearing to the dispute between St. Paul and
them.

C H A P.
St. Paul endeth his second apostolic journey.

Chap. V. Sect. XIII.

St. Paul, and his companions, go to Cenchrea; there he shaveth himself, as being under the vow of a nazarene: Goeth to Ephesus; and, from thence, to Jerusalem. Acts xviii. 18, — 22.

Silas and Timothy seem still to have continued at Corinth. But the Aposttle, having taken leave of the christian brethren, there, set out for Syria. And, along with him, Aquila and Priscilla.

When they arrived at Cenchrea, the eastern port of the Isthmus, St. Paul shaved his head, because he was under the nazarene's vow. For to the Jews he became as a Jew, and made all lawful condescensions, in compliance with their prejudices; as we shall see, in other instances, in the progress of this history. He seems to have made this vow, upon some remarkable deliverance from his enemies; perhaps, upon the account of Gallio's screening him from the fury of the unbelieving Jews. And, possibly, some of the Jews, at Corinth, might also be in danger of throwing off Christianity itself, if St. Paul had not condescended so far; in that, or some other instance. It is evident, the Judaizers did, afterwards, make a very great disturbance, in that church. But, whatever was the particular reason; it appears that St. Paul submitted so, that Jewish custom. From Cenchrea, they went to Ephesus. And there he left Aquila and Priscilla.

For the short time, that the Apostle now tarried, at Ephesus, which seemeth to have been but one sabbath-day; he went into the synagogue, and discoursed with the Jews; and with such Gentiles, as usually attended the synagogue-service; concerning the Christian doctrine. But, when they desired him to stay longer, with them; he refused; and took his leave of them, telling them, that "he must, by all means, go up to Jerusalem, upon the account of his being under the nazarene's vow." And, that he chose to

The j ew i s h  a nd rom an  h istory, c ontinued.

An.Chrif t
Claud. 14.

148 The j ewi s h and roman h istory, continued.

The character and death of Claudius Cæsar, the rom an e m p ir e.

T he emperor Claudius had been, from his c h ildhood, a fflict-}ed with some g reat and o bstinate diseases; which not on e only affected his b ody, but impaired his u nderstanding. So that, when he grew up to y ears of m aturity, he was not reckoned f it for any i m-}p l ement, public or p rivate. b But, b e s i des his b ody disor ders, he was v ery much a ddicted to g lut tony, d runkennesse, and d e b auchery; and was o f s uch a t i morous t emper, that, when he came to the e m-}p ire, he g en erally a cted a c c o rding to the i nfluence of his f av o rites, or o f such as a dvised him. c And, being u nder a g ood i nfluence, in the f ormer p art of his r eign; he, in m any p articulars, behaved like a w ife and g ood p rince. d He abolish ed the wicked a e ts of C aligula, and h e ar ken ed to the a dv ice of the s enate; was a fraid of oppressing the

CHAP. VI.

The c ontinu ation of the j ewi s h and roman h istory.

SECT. I.

The c haracter and d eath of Claudius Cæsar, the rom an e m p ir e.

The emperor Claudius had been, from his c h ildhood, a fflict-}ed with some g reat and o bstinate diseases; which not on e only affected his b ody, but impaired his u nderstanding. So that, when he grew up to y ears of m aturity, he was not reckoned f it for any i m-}p l ement, public or p rivate. b But, b e s i des his b ody disor ders, he was v ery much a ddicted to g lut tony, d runkennesse, and d e b auchery; and was o f s uch a t i morous t emper, that, when he came to the e m-}p ire, he g en erally a cted a c c o rding to the i nfluence of his f av o rites, or o f such as a dvised him. c And, being under a g ood i nfluence, in the f ormer p art of his r eign; he, in m any p articulars, behaved like a w ife and g ood p rince. d He abolish ed the wicked a e ts of C aligula, and h e ar ken ed to the a dv ice of the s enate; was a fraid of oppressing the

Ver. 22. b See the reading of the s yriac v ersion, in T remmellius; and G ro ius, up-}on the p lace.

a S ueton. in v it. C laud. c. 2. b D io, l. 60. p. 665, E. c S ueton. ubi s upra, c. 25. fin. T acit. A nnal. l. 11. ini t. D io, ubi s upra. d D io, p. 667. S ueton. in C laud. c. 11, 12.
The character of Claudius Caesar.

The people with taxes; and published edicts against luxury; which his own bad example must needs have rendered feeble and ineffec-
tual. He did honor, even to the inferior magistrates; and would often administer justice, himself; so as to soften the rigor of the law, where it was too severe; or to give it more weight and terror, where it was too mild. For such is the imperfection of all human laws, that they cannot, without oppressing mankind, be equally extended to every case. It had been customary for masters to expose their slaves, when any tedious illnesses seized them. To prevent which cru-
elty, Claudius published an edict; whereby he gave to such slaves their freedom, and made it death to kill any of them. When there was a scarcity, at Rome, he not only provided as much plenty, as he could, at that time; but, with incredible labor and expence, he made a convenient port, at Ostia, and encouraged navigation; that corn might be imported, in winter; as well as at other times of the year. Which, 'till then, had rarely been done. By these, and other like actions, he exceedingly endeared himself to the people. How-
ever; amidst all his beneficence, he could not forbear discovering the cruelty of his disposition. For he took delight in the combates of the gladiators; and contracted an habit of cruelty, by seeing them daily cut one another to pieces. The longer he reigned, the more he came under the power of his wives, and freedmen. They could, by artful insinuations, raise in him an aversion to any person, or number of persons; and thereby prevail upon him, to try, banish, or put them to death. And, sometimes, when he had done so, in a drunken fit, or through fear and perplexity of mind, he would afterwards call for the very persons; and, being informed that they were put to death, by his order, he would lament, and be troubled for what he had done. In the fourth year of his reign, he made an ex-
pedition into Britain. His general, Aulus Plautius, had been here, for some time. And, Claudius longing for such a triumph, as might be obtained, without any great danger; and concluding, from what he had heard of Plautius his repeated success, that the country might be easily subdued; he came accordingly; and brought part of this island (about Malden, in Essex,) into subjection. But Suetonius in-
forms us, that he did it, without a battle; or so much as the loss of one drop of blood. After he had been in England, sixteen days,
he returned; and left his general Plautius, to reduce the rest of
the island, as far as he was able. When the Senate heard of his ex-
plorits, they decreed him a magnificent triumph; and instituted an-
niversary games, in memory of the mighty transaction. So low and
abject were the minds of the Senators now become; in comparison
to what they had been, before the pride and luxury of Rome made
way for the tyranny, and usurpation, of the Caesars. The first wife
of Claudius Caesar, was Valeria Messalina; who was a lady of very
bad fame, and so excessively lewd, that she inveigled some; and, by
her great power, forced others, to her imbraces. But those adulter-
ous intrigues were not thought sufficient. For she began to phan-
y that one husband was not enough, for a lady of her high station and
quality. And, therefore, when Claudius was gone to Ostita, the mar-
rried Caius Silius, in a public and magnificent manner. She had
forced him to divorce his own wife; and had admitted him to an
infamous familiarity before. But, after she had married him, she
gave him a palace to live in; declared him consul, and seems to have
had a design to make him emperor. Nay; it is said, that she had
so far imposed upon Claudius, as to get him, before-hand, to sign
the marriage-contract between her and Caius Silius. The emperor's
freedmen, who were next in power, by virtue of their influence o-
ver their master, resented that flagrant conduct of hers. And, though
they were almost afraid to acquaint Claudius with it, lest he should dis-
believe it, and Messalina prevail to their destruction; yet Narcissus
found means to acquaint the emperor with what had happened; and
prevailed upon him, though not without some difficulty, to have Caius
Silius and Messalina, with some others, apprehended; and put to
death. After that, Claudius was desirous to marry Agrippina, the
daughter of his brother Germanicus. And, because the Roman law
had prohibited such marriages, as incestuous; he suborned some of the
Senators to procure a decree of the Senate, " by which, he should be
" obliged, as a thing highly conducive to the good of the empire, to
" take his niece, Agrippina, to wife; and that others might be
" permitted to contract marriages, in the same degree of consanguini-
" ty." But there were none two, who followed his example. And
they did it, out of a slavish complaisance to the emperor. Domitius
Aenobarbus was Agrippina's former husband, who left her

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Note: In the original text, the citations are incorrectly formatted. For the correct references:

The great power of Agrippina.

with a son, called Domitius Nero. Though she was not so infamous a lead, as Messalina, she had as much the ascendent over Claudius. And, by that mean, arrived to great power. Of which, the two following, are remarkable instances. The first is, that, by means of Vitellius, she prevailed upon the emperor, to take away his daughter Octavia, from Silanus, to whom she had been contracted; and who was a man of noble descent and great merit; and to give her to her own son Domitius Nero. About a year after which, she succeeded in a much greater attempt; and prevailed upon Claudius, to adopt Nero, for his son and successor in the empire. Though he had a son of his own, by Messalina, called Britannicus; who was not many years younger than Nero. As Agrippina increased in power, she grew very covetous and cruel. And, in many instances, behaved herself, altogether unbecoming her dignity and character. So that it was not difficult to observe, that the emperor repented of his marrying her, and adopting her son. And, in one of his drunken fits, he had not scrupled to declare as much. The discovery of Claudius his uneasiness alarmed Agrippina; and put her upon the desperate attempt, of plotting his death. She was grown so impetuous, as to refuse him a sight of his son Britannicus, when he expressed his desire to see him. And (in one word) seems to have taken the whole power into her own hands. Such treatment roused the emperor; though he was so exceedingly indolent. And Narcissus, one of his most faithful freedmen, stirred him up, to lessen her power, and restore to Britannicus what was properly his right. But the more he attempted such a revolution, the more he hastened his own ruin. For, from that time, Agrippina determined upon taking him off, by poison. Onely she remained in doubt, for some time, about the manner of giving it him; for fear it should prove ineffectual, and the perith in the attempt. She apprehended, that so great a drinker could not be taken off, without a large quantity of poison; unless she could procure some of an uncommon strength. At last, one Locusta, a woman, who was famous in the art of poisoning, furnished her with a strong and quick poison; which Agrippina wrapt up, in the fairest and largest mushroom, that she could find. And, putting it, upon a plate, with other mushrooms, she sate down by him, in expectation of the grand event.
rooms were a favorite dish with *Claudius*. He, therefore, rejoiced at the sight of those, which *Agrippina* had provided for him. And soon fixed upon that, in which the poison was concealed, and greedily eat it up. *Agrippina* had made him drink very plentifully, before. And, upon his eating the poisoned mushroom, she had him taken away, from the table, immediately; under the plausible pretence, that he had drank too much. But, in reality, because she was afraid, that the effects of the poison would be discovered, by the attendants, if he continued to sit at table. In a little time, *Claudius* felt the dire effects of that rank poison; which, that night, deprived him of his speech and hearing; and, the next day, put an end to his life, in his 64th year; after he had reigned thirteen years, eight months, and twenty days.

*Agrippina*, being sensible that she could not have accomplished so detestable a murder, upon the emperor, if *Narcissus* had been present; she had persuaded him to go into the country, out of a pretended concern for his health. And there she got him, also, murdered, not long after his master. He was one of the most powerful and richest subjects, at that time, in the *Roman Empire*. Foreign kings and states had courted his friendship and alliance. And, though he had not always used his interest, with his master, as he ought to have done; yet, at his death, he gave a noble proof of virtue, and greatness of mind. For, as *Claudius* had intrusted him with all his secrets; and wrote to him several letters, about the most important persons, and difficult affairs; he, just before he was put to death, burnt all his papers; lest they should be made use of, to the detriment of any person, after his decease.

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a Joseph. de Bell. Jud. 1. 2. c. 12. § ult. & Antiq. 1. 20. c. 8. § 1, 2. Sueton. in Claud. c. 45. Dio, p. 688.
The accession of Nero.

Chap. VI. Sect. II.

An account of the accession, and part of the reign, of Nero.

AGrippina concealed the death of Claudius, 'till she had secured the empire for her own son. Nero, who was then only seventeen years of age, went to the camp; conducted by Burrus, captain of the guards. There he made an oration to the soldiers, composed by his tutor, Seneca; wherein he promised the same largesses, which Claudius had given them, upon his accession to the empire. Some of them did, indeed, before that, call for Britannicus, the son of Claudius; to whom the right of succession did properly belong. But the prospect of Nero's generosity silenced them. And he was presently saluted emperor. After that, he went to the senate; and read, to them, another discourse; composed, likewise, by Seneca. Upon which, they confirmed his title to the empire; and were so much pleased with his speech, that they decreed, it should be ingraven upon a column of silver; and be annually rehearsed, on the day, that the consuls entered upon their office. For they looked upon it, as the perfect model of a wife and equitable administration; and were willing that their superior magistrates should never forget it.

Nero was onely three months old, when his own father died; and he left him no more than the third part of his estate. But Nero did not possess even that. For Caligula, his co-heir, seized upon the whole. And his mother, Agrippina, being afterwards banished, his aunt Lepida took him, and educated him, as well as her low circumstances would admit; a barber and a dancing-master being his onely tutors, 'till the death of Caligula. Which gave such a wrong biasse to his mind, as he could never shake off. When Claudius came to the empire, he was restored to his father's inheritance; and had another estate given him. And then Agrippina, also, was recalled from her banishment. When he was about eleven years of age, he was adopted by Claudius; and the famous Seneca was appointed to be his tutor.

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a Tacit. Annal. i. 12. c. 68, 69. Sueton. in Claud. c. 45.


c Sueton. in Nero. c. 6.
The reign of Nero.

But yet he either could not, or would not, thoroughly reform his taste and manners.

Agrippina would not suffer Nero to learn philosophy, as thinking it below the dignity of an emperor. And Seneca is said to have refrained from teaching him eloquence; that he might keep him the longer in admiration of himself. But both he, and the empire in general, found reason to lament, that he had taken no more pains, to cultivate the mind, and soften the manners, of his pupil. Soon after his accession, Nero gave to Claudius a most magnificent funeral; he himself speaking the funeral oration. After which, he had him deified, or enrolled among the gods. At first, Agrippina chiefly ruled; though Nero had the title. For she gave audience to ambassadors, wrote letters to foreign princes and states, and managed the affairs of the distant kingdoms and provinces; as well as of the city Rome, and the adjacent countries. The young emperor very much procured the good will of the people, by declaring that he would form himself, upon the model of Augustus. And he actually behaved, in many instances, in a generous, benevolent, and wise, manner; abolishing, or moderating, such taxes, as were grievous to the people; bestowing considerable donations upon them; and liberally maintaining such of the senators, as were nobly descended, but fallen into decay. One day, when he was to sign a dead warrant for the execution of a malefactor, he passionately wished, "that he had never learnt to read, or write, rather than set his hand to so ungrateful an order." When the senate came, in a body, to thank him, for his excellent administration; he bid them "stay till he had deserved thanks." He knew all the persons in Rome, who were of any distinction; and could salute them readily and familiarly, by their own proper names. His two ministers of great power, were Seneca, and Afranius Burrus. The former was the famous court philosopher; whose eloquence and politeness are too well known, to need a particular description. And Burrus was distinguished, by the severity of his manners, and his skill in military affairs. But Pallas, the freedman of Claudius, was Agrippina's favorite. He had advised Claudius to marry Agrippina, and to adopt Nero. And he had a very great and unhappy influence over Agrippina; who generally consulted him, and was directed by him. And Seneca and Burrus had enough to do, to check the sallies of Nero; and to restrain the irregular motions of that lady; and of her favorite, Pallas.
The affairs of the Jews, under Nero.

It will now be proper to say something of the Jewish affairs, during the former part of the reign of Nero. He gave Armenia Minor to Architobulus, son to Herod, king of Chalcis. And he added, to the dominions of the younger Agrippa, four Cities, with their to-parcies; namely, Taricheas, and Tiberias, in Galilee; and Abila and Julias, in Perea; together with fourteen villages in the neighborh0od of Perea. And he, likewise, added somewhat to the dominions of Felix. At that time, Judæa abounded with robbers. Felix did all, he could, to root them out; daily apprehending some of them, and putting them to death. Among the rest, there was one Eleazer, the son of Dineus; who was at the head of a great band of robbers; and who had, for twenty years, ravaged the country. Felix promised him a safe conduct, if he would come out of his lurking place, and speak with him. Upon which, Eleazer relying, came to him. But Felix, thinking himself under no obligation to keep faith with so great a villain, clapt him up in chains, and sent him to Rome. And, having apprehended many of his followers; he sent them also away, to the emperor, along with him. Great were the numbers of the robbers, whom he crucified; and cut off, by other ways; 'till, at last, he cleared the country of them. But, when the country was cleared of them, there soon sprang up another sort of ruf-sians; who were called sicarii, from the daggers, or small crooked swords, which they hid under their coats. For the latin word, fica, signifies a short sword, or small dagger. It was about as big as the Persian cymitar. The romans called it fica. And the men, that made use of that weapon, they called sicarii. Those sicarii came up, to Jerusalem, under a pretence of worshipping God, at the temple. But they were so audacious, as to kill men, in the day-time, in the midst of the city. And, at the festivals, more especially, when multitude came thither, from all parts, they would mix with the crowd; and, with their private daggers, stab their enemies. And then, to conceal their wickedness, they would seem as full of indignation, against the authors of such crimes, as any of the people. By which means, they continued, for some time, unsuspected. These were the persons, who stabbed Jonathan, the high-priest. Jonathan had been a friend to Felix. And had petitioned Claudius Caesar to make him procurator of Judæa. But, when Felix, by his male-administration, had, in many things, disgusted the Jews; Jonathan was afraid, left the crimes of

* Joseph. de Bell. Jud. i. 2. c. 13. § 2, &c. &c. & Antiq. i. 20. c. 8. § 4, &c.
The Egyptian impostor.

Felix might be, in some measure, imputed to him. Wherefore, he would often and freely admonish him to behave better. Felix would not bear with such freedom of reproof. And, therefore, resolved to take off the high-priest. Which he effected, by means of Dora, a native of Jerusalem. Dora had been Jonathan's friend. But, upon the prospect of being rewarded, with a great sum of money, he hired a company of the sicarii, to destroy Jonathan. Which they did, by mingling with his servants and attendants. And so stabbed him, privately and unexpectedly. When the sicarii had escaped, without being punished, for so notorious a murder, they became more bold and insolent. And slew great numbers, every festival; some, out of private revenge; but others, as hired to it, by money. And those slaughters they committed, not only in the city, but in the temple itself; making no scruple of violating that holy place; which the Jews did unjustly accuse St. Paul of polluting. And, by such means, they provoked God, to bring, upon the temple, city, and nation, the destruction, which he had threatened, because of their sin and impenitence. But, besides the robbers, and the sicarii, there was, also, another sort of persons appeared; who no less threatened the destruction of the city Jerusalem. Those were impostors and deceivers; who, under a pretence of having divine revelations, and the power of working miracles, attempted to make changes, and revolutions, in the state. By which, they deceived great numbers; drawing them out, into the wilderness, as if God would there, show them, the manifest tokens of their approaching liberty. By them, were fulfilled our Savior's prophecies, concerning the false Christs and false prophets, who would appear, before the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the Jewish nation. Felix was afraid, lest they should occasion an insurrection. And, therefore, he sent out several soldiers, against them, both horse and foot; who slew a great number of them.

About that time, there came a person, out of Egypt, to Jerusalem, who pretended to be a prophet; and he brought a yet heavier disaster upon the Jews. For he went out, from Jerusalem, attended by four thousand men, who were many of them of the number of the sicarii. And, going into the country; and having raised his reputation,

See some curious observations, upon this piece of history, which Dr. Ward, of Gresham College, communicated to Dr. Lardner; and which he has inserted, in his Credibility, &c. Part i. p. 551, 552. Second edition; p. 947, &c. Third edition.

Acts xxii. 38. His followers are laid to have been τίς τεταρτάκηλος καὶ ἄνδρας τῶν σκα-

reputation, among the people; he gathered together a great multitude; which amounted, at last, to thirty thousand men. It is probable, that, before he left the city, he had so concerted matters with some friends, whom he left behind him, as to entertain hopes, that, upon his return, his design would be favored, by great numbers of the Jews, in Jerusalem; and, that he should have no opposition from any, but the Romans. Having gathered a sufficient number, he brought them round, out of the wilderness, up to the mount of Olives. From whence, he intended to force his way, into Jerusalem. For, when he came thither, he promised his deluded followers, "they should see the walls of the city fall down, at his command." However; he hoped, by surprize, to have attacked, and beat, the Roman guards. And then, he designed to bring the people into subjection, and govern them, by the help of his armed associates. Upon his arrival, at the mount of Olives, Felix came suddenly out, upon him, with a large body of the Roman soldiers, both horse and foot. And the citizens, in general, prepared also, to defend themselves against him. So speedy and general an opposition surprized him. So that he dared not to venture an engagement; but presently fled, with a body of his most trusty friends; as is usual in such cases. With those, in particular, the Roman soldiers were ordered to engage; neglecting the rest, who were only a confused multitude, and immediately made off, as they could, by different ways. When, therefore, Josephus faith, the Egyptian fled, accompanied by a few only; he is to be understood, of that body; which at first fled away, with the impostor; and were but a few, with respect to the whole thirty thousand. When he faith, that most of them, who were with him, were either slain, or taken prisoners; (which, in his Jewish antiquities, are said to be four hundred killed, and two hundred taken alive;) he means the greater part of those few, who fled with him. Nor need it be thought strange, that the number of the slain, and the prisoners, is no greater; since it is likely, that Josephus speaks only of that body of men, which fled with the impostor. This, therefore, is the sum of the case. Four thousand joined him, at first, at Jerusalem. But he went out, into the country. And, at length, his followers increased to thirty thousand. So St. Luke's account,

[that is, four thousand of the sicarii.] Which seems to be confirmed, from the connection, in Josephus; who mentions the sicarii, as numerous, immediately, before.

St. Paul’s third apostolic journey.


S E C T. I.

St. Paul visiteth the churches, in Galatia and Phrygia. Apollos, at Ephesus; who, being instructed in the christian doctrine, goeth to Corinth. Acts xviii. 23, to the end of that chapter.

When St. Paul was at liberty, he took the church of Antioch, in Syria, in his way; before he set out, upon any of his apostolic journeys. And after he had, now, made some stay, in that city, he set out upon his third apostolic journey; and went, through Galatia and Phrygia, xabéis from church to church, in that order, in which he had founded them. [Vid. Mill. prolegom. 538.] confirming such, as had been converted, in those places, in his former journey. For he seemeth to have been alone; and not to have had time to attempt new conversions. Since the apostle left Ephesus, there was come thither, one Apollos, a jew, a native of Alexandria in Egypt; where the jews were numerous. He was a learned, eloquent
eloquent man; and had made a very great progress in studying the An.christi
scriptures of the old testament. But he knew no more of the christian
religion, than John the baptist had taught; who preached repentence,
and baptized, only as preparatory to the coming of the messiah's
kingdom. Though he, with all, intimated, that "the kingdom of the
messiah was at hand; and that (though he himself baptized only
"with water) the messiah would baptize with the holy spirit, at-
"tended with a glory, like a flame of fire." Apollos neither knew
of the messiah's being come, nor who the person was; nor what pro-
gress the christian religion had since made. However: being in-
flamed with a zeal to do good, he went to the synagogue; and
taught, accurately, and with fortitude, what he knew, concerning
the messiah, and his kingdom. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him,
and observed his fervency and eloquence; they were convinced of
his good disposition of mind; and very wisely judged that he might
be of great service. They, therefore, took him, and instructed him,
more fully, in the christian religion; that is, concerning the nature of
doctrine, and the great facts, which had happened, since the
imprisonment and death of John the baptist. But Apollos, soon af-
ter, left Ephesus. For, it doeth not appear that he ever preached, in
the synagogue there, after he had been more fully instructed in the
knowledge of christianity. When he expressed his inclination to go
into Achaia, in which province stood the city of Corinth; the chris-
rians of Ephesus forwarded his good intention. And, particularly,
Aquila and Priscilla; giving him letters of recommendation, to the
christians, of their acquaintance, in Achaia; that he might meet
with a ready and kind reception. When he came thither, he was
of great service; confirming such as had already embraced christianity.
For he, with great earnestness, confuted the unbelieving jews; and
that publicly: showing, from the prophecies of the old testament,
that jesus was evidently the messiah; as all the prophecies, con-
cerning the messiah, centered in him, and in him alone.— It is to
his laboring to promote christianity, at Corinth, that St. Paul al-
ludes, when he faith: [1 Cor. iii. 6.] "I have planted, and Apollos
"watered; but the increase is from god." And he it was, whom
the Corinthians did, after this, make the head of one of their par-
ties, or factions; when they were divided, by the delusions of a
judaizing, false apostle. [1 Cor. i. 12.]
CHAP. VII. SECT. II.

The apostle returneth to Ephesus; imparteth the holy spirit to twelve of John the baptist's disciples. Acts xix. 1, — 7.

A Pollos still remained at Corinth. And, when the apostle had finished his journey through the upper parts of Asia minor, he, according to his promise, returned to Ephesus. There, he found twelve disciples; who had been converted, or at least came to Ephesus, since he had left that city.

And, as it was his usual custom to impart the holy spirit, to all the adult converts, where ever he came, if they had not already received that divine gift; — he asked those twelve, "Whether they had received the holy spirit, since they believed?" To which, they answered; "We have not so much as heard that the holy spirit is poured out; or that any person hath been favored with that extraordinary gift; which the prophets foretold, and John the baptist frequently intimated, would be granted unto numbers." "No! (faith the apostle not without wonder and surprize,) What, have you

Ver. 1. * In opposition to which, Herodotus speaks of τὰ Ἀσία τὰ κάτω the lower parts of Asia. And τὰ ἄνω τῶν Asia the upper Asia. See p. 29. & 41. & 225. of Gale's edition of Herodotus τὰ τὰ κάτω Ἀσία — all Asia above the river Halys. p. 56. the lower and upper Asia, p. 73. ad finem.

b Acts xixii. 23. Ver. 2. c Ainsworth [on Exod. xxvii. 30.] hath rightly observed, "that, by the holy ghost, is here meant the gifts of the spirit, in prophesie, tongues, &c. as it followeth, ver. 6. The holy ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. Which gifts, being before ceased, were restored by the gospel. An evident proof that Christ was come. Joel ii. 28. &c. Acts ii. 4. 17. 18."

According to our english translation, these twelve disciples of John the baptist are represented, as saying, We have not so much as heard whether there be any holy ghost. If, by this, he meant, that they had never heard of the holy spirit, it appears to be incredible. If hereby we are to understand, that they had not yet heard of the effusion of the holy spirit; of which John the baptist had given intimations; that, indeed seems to be the true sense; but very ill expressed. The cambridge MS. reads λαμβάνειν τος, that is, "We have not so much as heard, that any persons do receive the holy spirit." That is a just interpretation. But the authority for that reading is not sufficient. In our english version, John vii. 39. the same sort of phrase is more justly translated, [The holy ghost was not yet given.] If our translators had kept to that manner of rendering, they would have made this passage as intelligible and clear, [We have not so much as heard whether the holy ghost be yet given.]
He imparteth the Holy Spirit to twelve persons.

you not so much as heard of the effusion of the holy spirit? Pray, you not so much as heard of the effusion of the holy spirit? Pray, An.christi you not so much as heard of the effusion of the holy spirit? Pray, An.christi you not so much as heard of the effusion of the holy spirit? Pray, you not so much as heard of the effusion of the holy spirit? Pray, An.christi into what then were ye baptized? They replied: "We have been baptized onely into John's baptism; in hopes that the messiah would shortly appear." Then Paul said: "John did, indeed prepare the way for the coming of the messiah, by baptizing with the baptism of repentence, for the remission of sins. But he warned the people of the Jews not to take him for the messiah, nor to rest in what he had done, but to look farther; and to believe on him, who was then just ready to appear; that is, on Jesus of Nazareth, who was actually the promised and long-expected messiah." Then they, having heard him, were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And, when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the holy spirit came upon them, as plainly appeared by the effects. For, presently, they spoke languages, which they had never understood before; and prophesied; that is, predicted some future, contingent events; or rather uttered some truths, by a divine impulse, that were for edification, or exhortation, or comfort.

"It is a wonder that any of John the baptist's disciples could have lived so long, without hearing of Jesus his having imparted the holy spirit unto his disciples; when Christianity had spread so far and wide, and made such a noise in the world." Possibly, these twelve might have left Judea, before the imprisonment of John the baptist;
The twelve had been disciples of John the baptist.

And have lived, ever since, in some obscure village, in Asia Minor; (as Apollos had done at Alexandria.) For, had they continued in Judea; or lived, in any considerable town, in the neighboring countries; they must have heard of the effusion of the Holy Spirit, and of the miraculous gifts, which were then so common among the Christians. But it seemeth much more probable to me, that these twelve had not been the immediate disciples of John; but had been converted, by the eloquent Apollos, before he was more fully instructed by Aquila and Priscilla. For, it doeth not appear that Apollos ever preached, in the synagogue, at Ephesus; after he had received those farther instructions. But he went away presently, to Corinth; where he readily communicated the knowledge, which he had received.—It may farther be inquired, "Whether these twelve had been Jews, or devout gentiles?" On the one hand, it would make one suspect that they were uncircumcised gentiles, to consider, that St. Paul was the Apostle of the gentiles; and gloried in his being so: [Rom. xi. 13.] that he was not only acknowledged as such, by James, Peter, and John, the three most renowned Apostles of the circumcision; but that (when they gave him the right hand of fellowship) they agreed that he and Barnabas should go to the gentiles, as they did among the Jews. [Gal. ii. 9.] And St. Paul kept so closely to this agreement, that we have hardly an instance of his conferring the Holy Spirit on any Jewish converts; unless we reckon this such an instance. Which one would not readily do; as it is a dubious case. On the other hand; it may be alleged, that John the baptist's ministry was among the Jews: that, notwithstanding all, which he and Jesus had said, or done, the Apostles scrupled the reception of uncircumcised gentiles, about eight years after our Lord's ascension: and that it is, therefore, very unlikely that the disciples of John the baptist, who had heard nothing of the effusion of the Spirit, should have heard of the conversion of uncircumcised gentiles; much less would they have attempted to convert such. These are the difficulties, which attend both suppositions. But, upon comparing them, I confess I am rather inclined to the latter. For Timothy was a Jew; and yet St. Paul imparted unto him the Holy Spirit. And I cannot see why St. Paul might not impart the Holy Spirit unto other Jewish converts; as well as preach among the Jews, and convert numbers of them to Christianity. And I think it much more probable, that the disciples of John the baptist should be Jews, than that they should be uncircumcised gentiles. For it doeth not appear, with certainty, that any uncircumcised gentiles became the disciples
St. Paul opposed, in the synagogue, at Ephesus.

C H A P. VII.  S E C T. III.

St. Paul taught, in the synagogue, at Ephesus, till the unbelieving Jews opposed him. He then taught in the school of Tyrannus. He fought with wild beasts; worked great and extraordinary miracles; and was highly magnified, by what happened to some of the exorcist Jews. Acts xix. 8, 20.

It hath been observed, above, that, when the Apostle of the Gentiles was, the first time, at Ephesus, he made no long stay; because he hastened to be at Jerusalem, at the approaching feast. But now, he is willing to tarry, as long as they could, in reason, desire. And, accordingly, for three months, he frequented the synagogue of the Jews; speaking boldly, and with fortitude, concerning the Christian doctrine; explaining the nature of it; and in-deavoring to convince both the Jews, and devout Gentiles, of the truth and evidence of it. And, when several of the leading men among the Jews were hardened, beyond all conviction; and not only refused to believe, themselves; but even cast wicked and injurious reflections upon the Christian religion, before the multitude; and did all they could, to deter others from believing; the Apostle left the synagogue. And, taking along with him the converts, whom he had made, he went, and taught daily, in the school of one Tyrannus, or Turnus; whose school was, perhaps, what the Jews called Beth-midrash, or a divinity-school; in which they used to handle intricate questions, and difficult doctrines. There St. Paul kept his assembly, for two years together. And, according to a different reading,
St Paul fights with wild beasts, at Ephesus.

An. Christi 56.
Nero. 2.

Reading, in two antient mss. * he taught five hours a-day; that is, from eleven o'clock in the morning, to four in the afternoon. By his indefatigable diligence, for so long a time, christianity spread very much. For all the inhabitants of the proconsular Asia, whether jews or gentiles, had thereby an opportunity to learn the true christian doctrine; and to see it confirmed by mighty and convincing attestations. Now, most probably, Philemon and Epaphras were convert to christianity; by coming to Ephesus; or rather, by receiving the gospel, from some, who had heard the apostle, at Ephesus. And, perhaps, they were greatly instrumental in making converts, at Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. For St. Paul, in the epistle, which he wrote to the Colossians, long after this, declareth, that the body of the christian churches, in two of those cities, had not then seen his face in the flesh: and, that he had only heard of their faith in Christ Jesus; and of their love to the christians. And, very probably, the christians at Hierapolis had not then seen him neither.

St Paul faith, of himself, [1 Cor. xv. 32.] that, "after the manner of men, he had fought with wild beasts, at Ephesus." That hath, indeed, been frequently interpreted of the riot, made there, by Demetrius; in which Caius and Aristarchus, two of the apostle's companions, were hurried into the theatre; and St. Paul himself would have ventured in, after them; had it not been for the masters of the theatre, who were so much his friends, as to advise him to the contrary. But, that the first epistle to the Corinthians was written, before that riot happened, appears plainly, from 1 Cor. xvi. 8. For there the apostle intimateth his design "to tarry at Ephesus, for some time longer." Whereas; after the tumult, raised by Demetrius, he had no thoughts of staying longer; but hastened away, with all speed. What, therefore, he faith, of his fighting with wild beasts, [1 Cor. xv. 32.] must refer to something else. Another, and a much more probable, interpretation of that text, is, "that the apostle thereby refered to the opposition, which he had already met with, from the jews, at Ephesus; before he left the synagogue; and that he calls them wild beasts, in the same sense, that he himself calleth Nero, or his praefect, a lion: and that our Lord called Herod Antipas, a fox." But the following

Ver. 9. * See Beza and Dr. Mill.
Ver. 10. * See the history prefixed to the paraphrase and notes on the epistle to Philemon, 2d. edition, p. 338.
* Col. i. 7, 8, and iv. 12, 13. Philem. ver. 5, 6.
* Col. ii. 1.
* Col. i. 4.
The manner of combat with them.

following reasons induce me to think, that St. Paul actually fought with wild beasts, in the theatre, at Ephesus. The Asiarchs, who were not only the magistrates of Asia propria, but also the masters of the theatre, seem to have been well-acquainted with St. Paul. in the riot, which Demetrius afterwards excited; and (like true friends) persuaded him not to venture himself into the theatre; as Acts xix. remembering, very likely, to what dangers he had already been exposed, in that place. Again, "he faith, 2 Cor. i. 8, 9, 10. "For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of the calamity, which befell us, in Asia propria: that we were pressed, most exceedingly, above our strength; so that we despaired even of life. But we had the sentence of death, in our-selves; and had been taught, not to trust in our-selves, but in God, who is able to raise the dead. Who delivered us from such a remarkable [or, so great] a death; and doeth still deliver." In which expressions, he might, possibly, allude to his fighting with the wild beasts. For, from a more remarkable death, he could not easily be delivered. But the argument of the greatest weight, is, his using that phrase, [after the manner of men;] that is, according to the barbarous custom of the men of that age; which some of the greatest and best critics have shown to be the proper meaning of that phrase. To this conflict, he himself doeth, perhaps, allude, [2 Cor. xi. 23.] in saying, "that he had been in deaths, (or in danger of death,) frequently." The silence of St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, seems, at the first view, to be an objection against this interpretation. But, it is evident, that his intended brevity led him to passe over, in silence, many of the remarkable actions and sufferings, which the Apostle himself hath either mentioned; or glanced at, in his epistles.

Being thrown to the wild beasts, and fighting with them, were different things. The manner of fighting with wild beasts was thus: "The person, condemned to that dangerous combate, was allowed armour to defend himself against the lion, bear, leopard, wolf, or tyger, that was let loose upon him. And the combate was, in the theatre, as a public spectacle to the people, after they had been entertained with several other diversions. [And, to their coming last upon the stage, there is a fine allusion, 1 Cor. iv. 9.]" If they were killed in the fight, there was an end of them. But, "if they vanquished the wild beast, and came off victorious; the

judge
St. Paul worketh uncommon miracles;

An. Chr. 57. Nero. 3. If the Apostle thus fought; that God, who delivered Daniel, from the hungry lions; and who had employed the Apostle, in so vast and beneficent an undertaking, took care to deliver him from so great and dreadful a death.

Acts xix. St. Paul, during his abode at Ephesus, did not only preach the Christian doctrine, most faithfully and diligently; but roused the people to attention; and confirmed his mission and doctrine, by many great and uncommon miracles. For, besides instantaneously and perfectly curing many diseased persons, and such as were possessed, or lunatic; the very manner of his working some of the miracles, was extraordinary and remarkable. For he never saw several of the persons, whom he miraculously cured; but only sent handkerchiefs and aprons, which he himself had touched. And, upon applying them to the bodies of the sick persons, their disorders were removed entirely, and immediately.

Yet, the more to augment the Apostle's fame, and exalt the credit of Christianity, there happened the following remarkable occurrence. Certain striving Jews, who pretended to exorcising, and expelling daemons, observing that St. Paul, by invoking the name of Jesus, did, successfully, what they only pretended to; they resolved to do so too. And, accordingly, they adjured the evil spirit, [or the disorder, which was ascribed to an evil spirit.] to depart from a lunatic person, in the name of that Jesus, whom Paul preached. Particularly, seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, who was a priest of the first of the twenty-four courses, tried this project. To whom, the lunatic person replied, in the name of that spirit, that was thought to possess him; "Jesus and Paul I know very well, and greatly revere them. But pray, who are you? Or whence have you your authority; that I should, in the least, regard you, or your important attempts?" And, having said thus, he leaped upon them; and, in the struggle, overcame and wounded them. Nay; he tore off their cloathes; and handled them in so rough and terrible a manner, that they were glad to get out of the house, and escape with their lives. The fame of so remarkable an occurrence, spread swiftly,

Ver. 12. Σακτάρια και σημικωδία; that is, sudaria and semicintlia. This is another instance of St. Luke's latinizing. For these words were, originally, Latin words; though Drujus faith, that the former of them was used, both by the Hebrews and Syrians; who thereby understood a veil, whereewith the women covered their heads. Very probably, they took the word from the Romans, who resided among them. And their women might cover their heads with a large handkerchief. The word is used, also, for a napkin, John xi. 44. and xx. 7.
and remarkably baffles the exorcists Jews.

ly, through all that large city of Ephesus; both among Jews and gentiles. And it struck a great and unusual awe upon all that heard of it. And not onely put a stop to such impostors abusing the sacred and venerable name of Jesus, but made it to be highly magnified and revered.

Ephesus was a city, where exorcisms and incantations had been very much practised. And the gentiles, there, imagined that Diana presided over their incantations. For, by Diana, was meant the moon. But, upon the disaster, which befel these exorcists, many of them, who had lately imbraced the christian religion, came to the apostle; acknowledging that they also had formerly been guilty of preternions to forcery and exorcisms, and such like foolish and wicked practices, and confessed, that they now looked upon such things as highly criminal. Nay; several of them, even brought along with them their books, which contained the mysteries and institutions of that pretended art: such as, the methods of incantation, the words to be made use of, and the proper seasons and places for making use of them. And they threw those books into the fire, and burned them, publicly, and in the face of the whole city. And the value of them was computed, and found to be fifty-thousand pieces of silver. By a piece of filver, is meant a shekel. Dr. Arbuthnot fais, that a shekel was equal to two shillings, three pence, and three eighths of a penny, of our money. According to that valuation, fifty thousand shekels would amount to five thousand, seven hundred, and three pounds, two shillings, and six pence, of our English money. And yet, though their books were valued at that large sum, they now cheerfully burned them. So mighty was the evidence of the christian religion; and so great and amazing it's effects! As appeared, particularly, in their great virtue, and disinterested piety. For, they would not sell those books to others; because the art was in itself unlawful, and ought not to have been practised by any one. And they, being in lightened with the knowlege of the gospel, and animated with the prospect of a better and more indureing substance, made no account of that great sum of money; in comparison of an honorable, and faithful, discharge of their duty.

CHAP 2

Ver. 19. k By a piece of filver, Dr. Doddridge would here understand an attic drachm; because it seems to have been more frequently used among the greeks, than any coin equal to the jewilh shekel. But, by δρυγιον, is meant the jewilh shekel, Matt. xxvi. 15. and xxvii. 3; 5, 6, 9. And why not here? For St. Luke has, in other places, used the jewilh computation and phraefology. [See Grotius in loc.]
St. Paul’s design to leave Ephesus.


c

CHAP. VII.  

St. Paul thought to have gone to Jerusalem, and afterwards to Rome; but found it improper, as yet, to leave Ephesus. In the mean time, messengers came from the church of Corinth: which occasioned his writing the first epistle to the Corinthians. The subject of that epistle. Acts xix. 21, 22.

Having stayed so long at Ephesus, and labored with so much success; the apostle now purposed, in his own mind, to leave Asia; and to take Macedonia and Achaia, in his way to Jerusalem. For, (said he) after I have been at Jerusalem, I must also see Rome; that seat of empire, and mistress of the world! b

[“From hence, it appears, that he knew of the death of Claudius Caesar; (the news of which would soon run through the Roman empire:)—that the edict, for banishing the Jews, from Rome, died with him; and that the Christians were either returned, or might return, to that imperial city.” Nor can we have a more proper place to observe, that “he always went to those cities, where he hoped to make the most converts, and to do the greatest good: and that he did not lurk about, in villages and obscure places; or among a stupid people, who could not examine into his pretensions; but, like one, who knew the goodness of the doctrine, which he delivered; and the evidence, which attended it; and that it would bear the severest examination; he appeared in the most populous cities, and among the most acute people: (And such, all will acknowledge, were Greece and Rome.) For, he knew that he had truth and evidence on his side; which always recommend themselves to the impartial inquirers.”] But, notwithstanding his design; he found it improper, as yet, to leave Ephesus, and to go to the places, which he had intended to visit. For there were hopes of doing much more good, in that city; though there

Ver. 21. a See 2 Cor. i. 15, 16.  

b Rom. xv. 23, 24, 25.
Messengers came from the church at Corinth.

there were many adversaries. He, therefore, sent away two of those, who attended upon him, to go to Macedonia, and to Achaia; to rectify any disorders, which might have happened in those churches; and to forward the collection, for the use of the poor christians in Judea: according to what Peter, James and John, had requested of him; and which St. Paul himself had purposed to do, before Acts xix, they mentioned it. One of the messengers, sent by the Apostle, upon this occasion, was his beloved Timothy. And the other was Erasus, who had been chamberlain of the city of Corinth; whether he afterwards returned, and seems to have continued there for his life.

Whether the Apostle sent for them, or they came of themselves, doth not now appear. But many of his assistants came up to him, during his long stay at Ephesus. For instance: Timothy and Erasus, from Corinth; who were now sent back thither, through Macedonia. Silas, indeed, doth not appear to have come to Ephesus. But, along with Timothy, or soon after him, there came, to the Apostle, from Corinth, Sophon, and some of the family of Chloe; as well as Caius and Aristarchus, from Macedonia; and Titus, from Antioch in Syria. And those he sent among the churches, as he thought might be of the greatest service, [2 Cor. xii.18.]

While St. Paul was still at Ephesus, and (as I suppose) Timothy and Erasus gone to Macedonia; there came, from the church of Corinth, three messengers, to the Apostle; namely, Stephanos, Fortunatus, and Acabicus. [And, along with them, Apollo, the eloquent Alexandrian.] For, by their hands, that church had sent a letter to St. Paul; wherein they desired to know his opinion, concerning several doctrines and practices. That, which put the Apostle upon designing them another visit, at that time, was, very probably, the account, which he had received, from some of the family of Chloe, of their divisions, and unhappy contentions. And, possibly, what he saith, 1 Cor. v. 9. of “his having wrote somewhat to them before,” doeth only refer to a letter, which he had begun to write, upon that information. But now, these three messengers coming, and giving him a more full and particular account; and, likewise, bringing a letter, from the church, at Corinth, with so many queries...
The occasion of the writing

and difficulties in it; he began, and wrote another epistle; without sending what he had written before. Or he might intend the epistle, which he was then writing. For there is no proof that St. Paul wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, prior to the two, which are still extant.

He, that carefully considereth the great disorders, into which that church had fallen, will easily conclude, that St. Paul had taught them only the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; and that they had made but a small proficiency therein. They, therefore, would be the more easily seduced, by an artful impostor; as we find they actually were. For, since the Apostle had left Corinth; and that considerable church, which he himself had planted there; a false Apostle, by nation a Jew; and (very probably) a scribe, of the sect of the Sadducees; had crept in among them, and made a great disturbance in that church. For he was a violent and most zealous judaizer; and was so intent upon introducing Jewish customs, and ritual observations, that he opposed St. Paul, the true Apostle of the gentiles; vilified his person; and charged him with preaching false doctrines. And he had made such a progress, by his wicked arts, as to raise a considerable faction against St. Paul. What unhappily promoted his faction, was, a great irregularity, in one of the Christians; who seemeth to have been a man of some weight and distinction, and who had married his father's wife. For he was patronized by the false Apostle; and, consequently, strengthened and increased his party. Which is a too common case with all parties; but, especially, with bigots, who are more zealous against the doctrines, which they dislike, than against the open vices and immoralities of such as belong to their own party. To break the faction, and to draw them off from the false Apostle, their new leader, is the subject of the former part of the epistle; that is, from chap. i. to chap. vi. And, from chap. vii. to the end of the epistle, he answereth the queries, and solveth the difficulties, proposed, in their letter to him; as well as others, which, he knew, nearly concerned them. But he, all along, interspeth reflections upon his opposer, and reproves of such as fell in with him.—It is finely conjectured, [from 1 Cor. v. 7, 8. compared with xvi. 8.] that this first epistle to the Corinthians was written, about the time of the Jewish passover.—The Apostle sent it, by the hands of Stephanas, Fortunatus,

2 Cor. xiii. 1, 2. is a strong confirmation of this. See Mr. Locke's note there. And Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel-history, part ii. vol. ii. p. 51, 52; 182.
The first epistle to the Corinthians.

As his apostolic authority had been called in question, he begineth

with asserting it: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, &c. from Ephes.,

And he wrote, in his own name, and in the name of Sabinus; to show, Acts, Chri.

perhaps, that he, who had been a ruler of the synagogue, was not of

the mind of the false apostle. After his usual introduction, of wishing Nero.

them all manner of blessing, from God and the Lord Jesus Christ;

he proceedeth to put them in mind, what plenty of spiritual gifts he had

imparted to them, in order to confirm them in the true gospel, which he

had preached; and reprehends them, that they had not complied with

the grand design of christianity, which is to promote love and unity.

Whereas; they had fallen into factions and contentions; ranking themselves under different leaders, as if Christ had not been the only head

of all christians. As for his own part, St. Paul lets them know, that

he had never set himself up, for the head of their church, though he

planted it; nor did he value himself, for his learning, or eloquence, like

their false apostle: intimating, that all his boasted Jewish learning and

rhetoric, joined with all the wisdom of the philosophers, could not (without an extraordinary revelation) have discovered the whole scheme of the

christian doctrine. Whereas: wonderful discoveries had been made, to

the world, by St. Paul's great illumination: which he had expressed, in Chap. II.

the most simple, unadorned style; that it might appear that his success was not owing to human eloquence, but to the force of truth

and evidence. Not but that he had made the most glorious discoveries;

such as neither Jews nor Gentiles had ever heard of, before; nor could

they be supposed to receive them, (now they were revealed,) unless they

attended with a teachable and well-disposed mind. Another reason for

his not preaching, to them, more sublime doctrines, and in a more exalted

style, was, the ignorance and incapacity of the Corinthians, when he went

first among them. And, by their late divisions, it appeared that their

christianity was still in its weak, and infant, state; though the false apostle,

who had attacked them in that imperfect state, should not escape without

a proper reward. St. Paul had laid a good foundation; but that

impostor came, and built a wretched superstructure upon it; which

would not endure the strict trial of the last day. He, therefore, charged

him to humble himself; in order to prevent so dreadful a punishment,

as he might otherwise expect. And the Corinthians are exhorted not to

glorify in him, or in any other man. As to himself, St. Paul faith, he

could appeal to God, that he was a faithful steward; however he had

been cenfured by the false apostle: and that the last day would discover

his
The first epistle to the Corinthians.

Written from Ephesus
An. Chri. 57.
Nero. 3.
Book III.
Ch. VII.
Sect. IV.
Acts xix.

Chap. V.
& VI.

his faithfulness. He was so tender of the character, even of his enemies, that he forbore naming him; and, in a figurative way, represented it, as if he himself and Apollos had been unduly extolled; and had set themselves up, as the heads of their factions. But (though St. Paul shewed such tenderness, in that he would not mention his name) the false apostle had reason to be humble, and penitent. And, notwithstanding his boasted knowledge, and wonderful eloquence, his party had also reason to be ashamed of him. The apostle, in a fine manner, represented the many sufferings, which he had undergone; and that partly upon the account of the Corinthians; though they now gloried, so much, in another, who had not given such proofs of his sincerity. But he lets them know, that, whatever new instructior they had got, he himself was their father in the gospel, and the founder of their church; whose directions they ought to have regarded: that, since his leaving them, he had sent Timothy to see how things went among them; and that (though some were elevated, as though he would never return in person) he would come shortly, and make trial of the grounds of their pretensions; whereby it would appear that they had no reason to glory, as they did.

Among the professed christians at Corinth, (and, as it should seem, among the followers of the false apostle,) there was a man, who had been guilty of what the heathens would have abhorred; that is, he had married his father's wife, even while his father was alive. And he was defended, by his own party; who rather gloried in, than condemned, him, for it. Such a shocking crime, patronized by professed christians, justly raised St. Paul's indignation. Upon which, he threatened to come, with his apostolic rod; and punish him, and all his abettors, as they deserved. But, what he rather preferred, was, that they should meet, and pass a church-censure upon him. And he threatened, along with their censure, that he would, by the power of our Lord, deliver the incestuous person, himself, over to Satan; to bring him to repentance, and to prevent his perishing. And the apostle, though absent in body, yet present in spirit, intimated that he had sufficient power to do so. This was the proper way of treating so great an offender: and not their glorying in him; which was the ready way to lead them to an imitation of his example, and to universal corruption. Wicked men, out of the church, were not to be conversed with, too familiarly; when they could avoid their company: but wicked men, who pretended to belong to the church, were to be avoided, and not kept company with at all, nor treated with any familiarity; that such guilty persons might be ashamed, and the world see that the christians abhorred such practices. The synagogue had power, by the roman laws, to judge, in many civil affairs, relating to the jews: and the christians had, then, the same power, in their churches. For they were so far looked upon, by the roman, as a sect of the jews. But the false apostle, and the faction which opposed St. Paul, would have had this affair, of the incestuous person, [or some other contest among themselves,] carried before the beatben tribunal; because (I suppose) they knew,
The first epistle to the Corinthians.

"I knew, they would be condemned, by the majority of the members of their own church. This was very unbecoming, and unreasonable; as it would have exposted the christian. Nor could the christian church be thought incapable, or unworthy, of deciding this affair. For christians are to join in judging the world, of men, and even angels too. And, surely, such temporal things could not be of equal weight and dignity. The meanest of the christians could have determined, in such an affair: and, surely, much more their wise men; of whom (according to their boating,) they must have had a considerable number. Instead of patiently bearing with injuries, like true christians, they had done great injuries to others. But such, or any other, vices, persisted in, will exclude men from the kingdom of God. They had; some of them, formerly, been great offenders. But that was, while they were idolatrous gentiles. Christianity had laid them under strong obligations to the greatest purity; and to abstain from what was not expedient, as well as what was unlawful.

"With the seventh chapter, begineth the second part of the epistle. In Ch. VII. which, St. Paul answereth the questions, that they had proposed to him, in their letter; as well as solveth other difficulties. The false apostle being a zealous judaizer, there is a frequent reference to jewish customs; which he would have imposed upon the gentile christians. In the first place, the jewish canons bound marriage upon men, as a duty; and said, that he, who liveth to such an age, and marrieth not, breaketh a preceptive law. This the false apostle seemeth to have urged, as a necessary rule to christians. St. Paul, in his answer, faith, that marriage, or a single life, have, neither of them, any thing culpable in them: and that, according to times and circumstances, it is preferable, either to marry, or to live single. Particularly, that, in times of persecution, and from a due consideration of the transient, uncertain, enjoyments of this present state, a single life seemeth more eligible; as attended with fewer troubles and temptations: but, that marriage is much to be preferred, at all times, to incontinence. And, that christian husbands and wives continue under obligations to the same mutual affection and regard, as they were, before they became christians: though extraordinary devotion might, sometimes, require extraordinary abstinence. But they were not to do any thing that might break in upon their chastity. Christian husbands and wives were still to live with their unconverted mates; unlepole they refused to continue with them. For christianity altereth nothing in men's civil rights, or duties. And there might be some hopes of their bringing their unconverted mates, over to christianity, by time and prudence. However, as the jews accounted the children of their profetees clean, or members of the covenant, if one of their parents were come over to the jewish religion; so were christians, to look upon their children, as an holy seed; even though one of the parents had not yet imbraced christianity. As to single persons; he again intimateth, that,
in a time of persecution, a single life was preferable. However; he did not expressly command a man to keep his virgin daughter single, though she had passed the flower of life. He only proposed it, as, in most instances, advisable; especially in times of distress.

Another thing, about which they seem to have consulted the Apostle, was, concerning the use of things indifferent; and, particularly, concerning meats and drinks offered to idols. In his answer, he begins with reflecting upon their boastful pretensions to knowledge; and intimates, that they, some of them, thought they had no need to be instructed. However, he let them know, that idols were only fictitious, imaginary gods; and that Christians had but one God, the Father; and one Lord Jesus Christ, who was the only mediator between God and man: and that (knowing soever they pretended to be) some of their Christian brethren were apt still to reverence the idols, which they had formerly worshipped; whenever they eat meats offered to them. And, therefore, though such, as understood their Christian liberty, might lawfully eat of such meats, even in the idol's temple, provided they retained no reverence for the idol; yet, if there was any danger of offending their weak brother Christian, and leading him to eat, in reverence of the idol; it was their duty to abstain. For that abstinence (as they might remember) was according to St. Paul's own practice; who, though he was an Apostle, and free to use his liberty, if he had pleased; that is, he could have demanded a maintenance of them, to whom he preached; yet, as it was not expedient, as well as lawful, he would not do it. The false Apostle had, indeed, done it. But he had not so sincere a regard for their good, and for the promoting of true Christianity, as St. Paul had. He, though free from all men, yet voluntarily became a servant to all; that he might win as many as he could, both of the Jews and Gentiles. He gave up his own right, and ease, and liberty, in this world; as expecting his reward, in a better. And, the Christians, at Corinth, notwithstanding their baptism, and partaking of the Lord's supper, were not at liberty to do any thing, which might countenance idolatry or impurity: lest, in the end, it should happen, to them, as it did to the Israelites of old; who (though they were the peculiar people of God, and initiated into the Mosaic covenant) perished, for their idolatry, and other vices. Nor was the persecution, which had yet fallen, upon the Christians, at Corinth, so great, as to lead them into such guilty compliances: nor ought any persecution to have done it. For there was an utter inconsistency between their countenancing idolatry, and eating the Lord's supper. And though, in such cases, as where there was no danger of offending scrupulous consciences, or of hardening idolaters, it might be lawful to eat meats offered to idols, and even in the idol's temple; yet, all things, that were lawful, were not expedient. And these were cases, which could hardly ever happen; namely, that they should eat such things, without all danger of doing harm. They, therefore, were not to go to the uttermost bounds of their own liberty; but to consult the good of others. They had no occasion, when they bought
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bought meat, in the market; or were at the table of a neighbor, that
was an idolatrous gentile; to ask, whether it had, or had not, been de-
voted to an idol? But, in such cases, they might buy, or eat, it, with-
out scruple. But, if any body should voluntarily inform them, that it
had been devoted to an idol; they had better not meddle with it; lest
they hardened idolaters, or offended jews, or christians. This was the
apostle's own temper and practice; which he proposed to their imita-
tion. For, in so doing, he imitated the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was the custom of that age, for the women to wear veils; as a to-
ken of their modesty, and of their subjection to the men. And they
were not onely to appear, in the church, with their veils on, but (when
any of them prayed, or prophesied, in the public assembly; as they might
do, when they were under an Immediate impulse of the spirit) they were
not then to throw off their veils, any more than at any other time. The
false apostle seemeth to have attempted to introduce the contrary custom.
But St. Paul commendeth them, that they had not complied with him;
but kept to the orders, which he himself had given them. However;
they had deviated so far from his order, concerning the celebration of
the Lord's supper; that he commendeth them not, in that particular. For,
contrary to the uniting nature of that ordinance, they fell into schisms
and divisions. And, when they came together to eat the Lord's supper,
they brought their common suppers into the church; which they eat,
every one apart, and by himself. Nay, farther; the rich eat and drank
to excess; and denied the poor a share with them. This eating their
own suppers, in the church, in separate companies; drinking to excess;
and denying the poor a share in their provisions, was, not discerning the
Lord's body; or not sufficiently distinguishing the Lord's supper, from a
common meal. Possibly, the false apostle, who was so fond of jewish cus-
toms, had introduced this enormity; under a pretence of imitating
our Lord, who, in his institution of this ordinance, first eat the passo-
ver-supper; and then concluded with the Lord's supper. But, whatever
was the occasion of this irregularity, the apostle orders them to eat
their own common supper, at home. And then he repeteth the method of
observing the Lord's supper, in that right manner, which he had received,
immediately from the Lord Jesus himself; and had taught them, for-
merly, when he was at Corinth. The sum of which, was; that they
should all meet, in a body, and take bread and wine, in a reverent man-
cer; in remembrance of the death of Christ, and to preserve a sense of
his love, in the church. According to this account, they were to exa-
mine themselves; and, in this manner, attend at the table of the Lord.
But, if they were guilty of irreverence, in that sacred place, they would
eat and drink unworthily; and might justly expect some divine judg-
ments would befall them; such as sickness, or temporal death. Nay; he
intimateth, that such judgments had already befallen some of them; as
chastishments from God, to prevent their being condemned, at last, with a
wicked world. And there was danger of such judgments befalling others
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Nero. 3. "Among the christians, at Corinth, about the exercising of their spiritual gifts. And, perhaps, the Corinthians had, in their letter, inquired, in what order they should exercise them? It must be remembered, that the body of this church had been collected, from among the idolatrous gentiles. But there were also some jews christians, among them. And the false apostle, in particular, was a jew by nation. St. Paul, therefore, addresses both; putting the gentile converts, or the body of the church, in mind, that they had been formerly idolaters; and led away, by such dumb idols, as could not speak, and prophesy, themselves; much less their votaries with the gift of tongues and prophecy. Notwithstanding which, God had, out of his free grace, given them his spirit, since they had imbraced the gospel. The jews, who gloried in being the ancient people of God; pretending to have the spirit of God, and looking upon it, as peculiar to their nation; [see Acts x. 45.] had, now, no preference, upon that account, under the gospel. For, upon the believing gentiles, the holy spirit was conferred: while the unbelieving jews, who called Jesus accursed, did not partake of the gifts of the spirit; whatever pretensions they made thereto. As both jews and gentiles, therefore, had received the holy spirit, from mere, undeserved favor; there was reason for all of them to be modest and humble; and not to assume any undue superiority over the other christians; who had the spirit as well as they. Whatever gifts they, any of them, had, they were all communicated, by one and the same spirit; through one and the same Lord, and from one and the same God. And (though they were various) they were all fitted, and designed, either for founding, or building up, the church. Apostles, for instance, had the word of wisdom. Superior prophets had the word of knowledge. Doctors, or inspired teachers, had the gift of faith. Other christians had the power of working extraordinary miracles. And others, again, could miraculously heal diseases. Some had the inferior gift of prophecy; whereby they could help the christians, in carrying on their religious worship, by praying, singing, or making discourses, by immediate revelation. Others, again, had the gift of discerning the spirits, or secret thoughts, of men: by which, they could direct the church; how to steer their course, or act with the greatest discretion. Some could speak various languages. And others could, readily and intelligibly, interpret such languages.—But all these extraordinary gifts proceeded, from one and the same spirit; who distributed them, as he saw most proper. And, like the several members of the human body, they were all useful, in their place. The most excellent could not do, without the least and meanest. And, therefore, none of them were to be despised, or neglected. Though the highest (or best) gifts were most zealously to be exercised; because they were fitted for the greatest usefulness.
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written from Ephesus, An. Chr. 57.

Rinthians, under the influence of the false apostle, appears to have magnified the gift of tongues, especially; and to have set it above all the gifts. For it struck mankind exceedingly, and made the greatest show. And, at the same time, he did not manifest so much charity or love to St. Paul; and to the christians, who had other spiritual gifts; as he ought to have done. With a view to these things, St. Paul hath intimated, that having the tongues of men and angels, was not equal to charity, or love. Nay; that having the superior gifts, of the word of wisdom, and of knowledge; or the power of working the greatest miracles; or martyrdom, or the largest and most ostentatious charities, would not, any of them, be of any moment, to the person himself, who had them, without charity, or love. That excellent christian virtue destroyeth impatience, envy, pride, covetousness, malice, and jealousy; and inspires men, with patience, and benignity. It will, likewise, endure for ever. Whereas; the gifts of the spirit were soon to vanish. And, finally, he assured them, that charity, or love, was more excellent than faith and hope. Above all things, therefore, they were to pursue charity, or love, though they were not to neglect their spiritual gifts. The order, in which their gifts were to be exercised, was, that prophecy, as being the most useful gift, was to be preferred; especially, to speaking unknown languages; that is, such languages, as the body of the church did not understand. If any of them spake with tongues; he was either to interpret what he had said, or another was to interpret it. But, if he could not interpret it, himself; and there was none present, that could interpret; then he, that had the gift of tongues, was to be silent. For the end of their having spiritual gifts, was, to convey knowledge; either to strangers, or to the church. If a stranger had happened to go into one of their assemblies; and they had all spoken languages, which he understood not; he would have been tempted to think they raved. But, if they prophesied; and, particularly, told him the secret thoughts of his own heart; he would easily be convinced, that their gifts were divine. When they assembled, for religious worship; each was earnest to speak first, or longest. Whereas; they were to suffer one another, patiently, to speak, in their turns. And, when some had spoken, others (who had the gift of discerning spirits) were to judge; and inform the church, whether they had spoken, by inspiration; or by private suggestion. Such, as were speaking, were to make an end, as soon as they decently and properly could; if another declared, that he had received a farther revelation, concerning what had been said, or concerning any thing of greater importance. Thus, all were to take their turns, in exercising their spiritual gifts. For the motions of the spirit might be regulated; and it was their duty to submit to all wise and possible regulations. The women might speak, when inspired. But they were not to say any thing, in the church, at other times. Though the false apostle seemeth to have encouraged their speaking, when under no divine inspiration.—These are the rules, which St. Paul delivered, concerning
The first epistle to the Corinthians:

Written from Ephesus, An. Chr. 57.

Nero. 3.

The great quarrel, which the false apostle had, with St. Paul, seems to have been, that he was, at the bottom, a Sadducee; and disbelieved a resurrection from the dead, and a future state of rewards and punishments.

Which was a doctrine, on which St. Paul laid the greatest stress. As the false apostle had propagated that false doctrine, among the christians, at Corinth; St. Paul here sheweth, that a resurrection from the dead, is not impossible to the power of God: that Jesus Christ was actually risen; and had been seen, after his resurrection, by many persons, who were then alive: that, seeing the possibility of a resurreetion: from hence, evident, and undeniable; he infereth, that the promise, to raise all mankind, may be depended upon: that the resurrection of Christ is a pledge of the general resurrection: that Christianity was an insignificant institution, if this doctrine was false. Whereas, he affirrth them, that he knew, upon sufficient evidence, that Christ was risen, as the first-fruits; and that all the dead would, in their order, arise also. That this was the grand motive, which animated him to preach the gospel, amidst so many dangers and sufferings. And, that the cutting off the expectations of the future recompence of the righteous, was the way to corrupt the morals of professed christians. And, by this, he obliquely reproved the false apostle; who (as he foresaw) would be ready to object, How can this be effected? and with what sort of bodies shall they rise? To which he answereth: That he, who can raise corn, from a small grain, can raise the human body out of the grave, and alter it into what form he pleaseth: that different creatures have, at present, different sorts of bodies: and, in like manner, that the bodies of good men will differ much from the present body. For they will then rise incorruptible, glorious, and in perfect vigor; and will be fated, as much, to a spiritual, as our present bodies are to an animal state. This is the change, which will happen, to all the pious dead, in the last day. And then, also, the generation, which are living upon this earth, shall be suddenly changed, into the same meetness for the spiritual state, which is to succeed. And he concludes, from this glorious discovery, that the prospect of such a complete victory over death and the grave, ought to animate us, steadfastly, and all our days, to adhere to truth, and abound in every good work.

Ch. XVI. "In the next place, he preseth them, every one of them, to lay by, something, on the first day of the week, for the use of the poor christians, in Judea; (as he had ordered other churches to do;) that the collection might be ready, when he came; which he intended to do, before next winter: that then he would send their collection, by such messengers, as they should approve of; and that he would either write along with them, or go himself. But, in the mean time, he thought to continue at E-
An account of the temple of Diana, at Ephesus.

"Ephesus, till Pentecost; as having a prospect of great usefulness, though there were several who opposed him. He begeth of them to take care of his beloved Timothy; whom he had lately sent into Macedonia and Achaia. An. Chr. 57. For he honestly preached the same true gospel with St. Paul himself. He expected Timothy from Corinth, with other of the christians. But he could not persuade Apollos to return thither; though he had intreated him to return. After some exhortations to love and unity, and sending salutations, as usual; he concludes, If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed, when the Lord cometh to judgment. By which unusual anathema, he is thought to have pointed out the danger, to which, the false apostle, by his wickedness, exposed himself. Whereas; he wished the favor of our Lord Jesus Christ to the other christians, who conformed to the true gospel-doctrine. Amen!"

CHAP. VII. SECT. V.

The riot raised by Demetrius, and his company of silversmiths, drove St. Paul, from Ephesus, sooner than he designed. Acts xix. 23, to the end of that chapter.

The messengers, from the church of Corinth, being sent back again, with the apostle's letter to that church, he proceeded, in his great work, at Ephesus. But, whilest he was employing his diligence there, and had his head and hands full of the care of all the churches; there was no small stir and tumult about that way; that is, about the christian religion. And the apostle is molested, and driven from thence, in a violent manner.—Ephesus was a very considerable city; the metropolis, and noble mart, not only of Ionia, but even of all the proconsular Asia. It was situated upon the river Layster, and was famous for the magnificent temple of Diana; which was two hundred and twenty years in building, and was reared at the common charge of all Asia propria. It was four hundred and twenty five feet long, and two hundred and twenty broad; supported by an hundred and twenty seven stately pillars, each of them sixty feet.

Ver. 23.† The occasion of the Ephesians dedicating their city to Diana, may be seen, in Herodotus, Ch. c. 26. edit. Gale, p. 10.
Demetrius, incensed against St. Paul,

Demetrius, incensed against St. Paul,

An. Chri6

Nero. 4.

Book III.

Seft. V.

Acts xix.

23.

feet high; the work of a king, who erected them, as a token of his piety and magnificence. And, indeed, so admirable and grand was the structure, that it was commonly esteemed one of the seven wonders of the world. It had been twice burnt down, before this. The first time, was, on that very day, in which Socrates was poisoned. The second, was, on the night, in which Alexander the Great was born. The last of which times, it was set on fire, on purpose, by Erasistratus; who, being condemned to die for it, confessed, that “he had destroyed so exquisite a structure, purely that he might be remembered in future ages.” Upon which, they not only put him to death; but the common-council of Asia made a decree, “that his name should never be mentioned more.” It would have been a pity to have robbed him of that fame, for which he had so strong and ardent a desire; if he had fought it, by a more virtuous, and laudable, action. And, indeed, it was out of their power to do it. For most of the bisflorians, who have wrote of that time, have (among other things) recorded this his extravagant love of fame.

It was again rebuilt; the famous Denocrates (whom Alexander the Great did afterwards employ, in planning and building the magnificent city of Alexandria) being architect; and it was wonderfully adorned; especially by the Ephesians. After this, Nero plundered it of its riches. And, in the days of Gallienus, the emperor, the Goths entirely ruined it. Though, according to some travellers, there are still some venerable heaps of rubbish, and some few stately ruins, supposed to be the remains of that once magnificent temple. [See Chishull’s travels, folio, p. 27.] However; when St. Paul was there, the temple was in its glory. And, in that idolatrous city, was the great Apostle persecuted, by some of the retainers to that temple of Diana. For one Demetrius, a silversmith, made silver shrines for Diana; that is, little models of the temple, with folding-doors; which, being opened, the image of the godess was seen placed therein. Those shrines he sold, unto such as used to come and worship her, at Ephesus. And it is not unlikely, but they might carry them home, and set them up, and consecrate them, in their private, or domestic, chapels.—Demetrius, being a leading man, if not the only master, in that business, employed a great many artificers under him; to whom he gave considerable wages. Those craftsmen did he

b Plutarchus in Alexandro. Cicero de natura deorum, lib. 2. & de divinatione, lib. 1.

c Valerius maximus, lib. 8. c. 14. Aulus Gellius, lib. 2. c. 6. Solinus, c. 40:
occasions the riot at Ephesus.

he call together; and thus addressed himself to them: "Brethren, An.christi
you know very well, that, by this trade, we get our bread, and
all our riches. And, therefore, it greatly concerneth us, how we
let the making of images be represented, as a foolish, or wicked;
thing. Whereas, here is one Paul; who hath been in this city; Sect. V.
for some time; and who is become famous, by his works and doc-
trine. And he (as you hear from others, and may see with your
own eyes) hath persuaded a great many people, not only of Eph-
hus, but almost of all Asia, that they are no gods, which are made
by the hands of men. By which means, he hath hindered their
frequenting the temple of Diana; and hath turned them aside from
our antient and established religion, and from buying up of our
shrines. If things go on thus; and all should run after this Paul,
as several have done; our business is not only in great danger of
being brought into contempt, and of being laid aside, as useless;
but the public religion will suffer. For the temple of Diana will
be slighted, and her deity contemned. Though we have both an-
tiquity and universality on our side. For the godesse fell down
from Jupiter, many ages ago. And all Asia; nay, even the
world itself; doeth reverence and worship her." The company of
silversmiths understood him. And, betaking themselves to the
common method, of concealing private resentment and sinister de-
signs, under the mask of a public spirit, and a zeal for religion;—
they ran about the city, in a most wild, tumultuous, manner;
crying out, "The church is in danger. The magnificent temple of
Diana! the temple, the temple! Great is Diana of the Efesians!"
By this mean, they, in a little time, filled the whole city with con-
fusion and uproar. And, though they could not meet with the apo-
stle himself, they seized upon two of his companions; namely,
Caius and Aristarchus, who were both Macedonians. And these two
they hurried into the theatre; very probably, with a design to have
them tried, before the court there; and, if they could obtain their
condemnation, to throw them to the wild beasts. St. Paul had so
much fortitude, as that he would have ventured in, after them, to
have made his defence, before the people; or to have suffered with
them, or in their stead. But the christians would not consent to his,
attempting any such thing. And some, even of the Asiarchs (who-

Ver. 29. I had once conjectured that Caius, mentioned 1 Cor. i. 14. Rom. xvi.
23. Acts xx. 4. 3 John, ver. 1. and in this text, had been one and the same person.
But, since that, I am dubious; and suspect they might be different persons. [See the
history prefixed to the 2d. and 3d. epistles of St. John, § 5.]
were both magistrates of Asia, and masters of the theatre; presiding over their solemn rites, and the games, which used to be celebrated in honor of Diana:—Even some of the Astarchs, I say,) were so much his friends, as to send privately to him, to give him notice of the present temper of the people; and to beg of him not to venture himself into the theatre. Probably, they remembered what a narrow escape he had already had there. And, if he had now gone among them, it would scarce have been in the power of those magistrates to have saved him, among such an incensed rabble. The tumult still continued. And they seemed mightily enraged. Though the greatest part of them knew not for what. However, Demetrius, and his companions, still continued to blow up their zeal. By which means, the confusion continued; and the multitude kept together, and persisted in their clamor: some crying out one thing, and some another. At last, they, by force, singled out Alexander. And the Jews, also, pushed him forwards. For they would gladly have had him speak to the people: probably, as hoping that he would throw off the odium from them; and fix it all upon St. Paul, and such as adhered to him. I take this to have been Alexander the coppersmith; who was one of the most violent Judaizing Christians. And, consequently, one of the greatest enemies to St. Paul; and most in favor with the unbelieving Jews, of any that professed Christianity. And, if so; no wonder that the Jews should be desirous of his making an oration to the people. But, when he himself would have spoken, and beckoned with his hand for silence; the people would not hear him. For they knew that he was of the race of the Jews. And, consequently, an enemy to Diana, and to their idolatry. They, therefore, began to bellow out again, all at once; and they held it for two hours; crying out, "Our antient religion! the goddess Diana! Down with the Jews and the Christians, with their unknown God! Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" But, though Alexander was thereby prevented from speaking in public; he afterwards did the Apostle, and the Christian interest, a great deal of harm, by his private treachery, and opposing the liberty of the Gentile converts; that is, their freedom from the Mosaic law. When that enraged multitude had spent their zeal and their breath, and could be spoke with; the recorder of the city quashed the tumult, by the following speech: "O ye Ephesians, what hath moved you to make such a riot? As if the church, or the temple, or our antient religion, was in danger? Doeth not all the world know, that the city of Ephesus has devoted itself to take care of, and adorn, the temple of the great goddess Diana; and
The recorder's speech appeases the tumult.

and worshipeth that image of hers, which (according to tradition) fell down from Jupiter?* As no man hath contradicted these things, so as thereupon to make any tumult, or innovation; you ought to have been quiet, and not to have acted so rashly and irregularly. Why have you apprehended these two men? They have neither robbed your temple, nor blasphemed your godess; nor said anything in particular about her, that I know of. For, supposing they have spoken against images, made by the hands of men; it is well known, that this image of Diana fell down from Jupiter himself, and was not made by the hands of any man. Demetrius, and his companions, have imposed upon you; and engaged you in their private quarrel. But they ought to have taken another method. For, if they have just and legal accusations against any man; there are court-days kept frequently, and proper judges before whom

Ver. 35. τὸ Διότρετον [of the image, which fell down from Jupiter.] There is an account of Cybele, the mother of the gods, which is so like this, that it may not be amiss to relate it; that, by comparing them, we may see, whether it was not, originally, one and the same story.

Herodian. l. i. Oxon. p. 26. Bosc. l. 34. autó μεν τὸ αἰγαμπεροτέρων, ὡς λάγοντα, κτλ. τὸ θείαν, as they say; it not being known of what materials, nor by what artificer, it was made; neither was it formed by the hands of men. The report is, that it fell down from heaven, long ago, into that part of Phrygia, called Pessinus; which place had that name given it, from the image's falling down, and first appearing, there. But others account differently for the name of that place, &c.

The image of Diana, in the temple of Taurus, in Scythia, is also said to have fallen down from heaven. [Eurip. Iphigen. Ad. 4. West. p. 194. Ad. 5. p. 220.] Vid. Pali. in loc.

Ver. 37. The apostles, and their afflents, were very careful to give as little offence, as possible, to persons of different sentiments and religions; and observed an extraordinary decorum, in their words and behavior; considering their zeal and fervor, and the averton which they had to idolatry and wickedness.

Ver. 38. έκγράφω, originally, signifies a congregation, or assembly, of people. And from thence it comes to signify, likewise, the place of assemblings, the forum, whether underfoot of a market, or a court of judicature. έγραφαί, or έγραφαι, (about which difference of accent, writers are not agreed) denotes a thing belonging to the έγράφω, in either sense. Hence έγραφων έγραφων is one of the rabble, a man beating the streets, or sauntering in the market-places; in which sense it is frequently used, by Aristophanes, and other writers; and Acts xvii. 5.—It likewise signifies a person conversant in law and court pleadings. Thus Plutarch speaks of Thucydides, in the life of Pericles, p. 287. edit. Hen. Steph. ἐν τοῖς μὲν ὀπλιγμοῦ τοῦ Κλέαρι, έγραφαί η τον πολιτείαν μάλα, ὡς καὶ τῷ πατρὶ τοῦ περιπετείου εὐπλεκόμενος, ταύτα τῆς πολιτείας ἐν αὕτης ἐποίησαν κατάβασιν. Herodian. l. 6. c. 1. § 7. edit. Bosc. mentions ώς ἐπισκόπους συμβουλεύειν τοις ad missions civils et foresens. And l. 7. c. 9. § 5. έν τοῖς έγραφοις έγραφαί εἰς δικαιοσύνην. έγραφαί is interpreted, by Suidas, to be ἐν κυρία ἐν αὐτοῖς τοις ἐν κυρία τοις. For so Strabo uses it, l. 13. p. 629.
St. Paul now leaveth Ephesus.

An. Chrifi 184. whom they ought to bring their differences. And, there; they 58. may have justice done them. But, if you inquire, concerning Nero. 4. " other matters; (as, whether the temple is in danger, or no; or Ch. VII. sect. V. what persons, or religions, shall be tolerated in the city;) you Acts xix. proconsul, (Publius Suilius) for this day's concourse and uproar. 38, &c. " assure you, we are in danger of being called in question, by the " And, I am greatly afraid, we shall not be able to give any good " account of the matter." And, when he had made an end of his speech, he dismissed the people; commanding them to disperse, and to go each of them to their own houses.

C H A P. VII. S E C T. VI.

The Apostle Paul leaveth Ephesus; goeth to Troas; delivereth Hymenæus and Alexander over to satan. The time, place, and occasion, of St. Paul's writing the first epistle to Timothy. The subject of that epistle considered. Acts xx. 1.

St. Paul finding it unsafe to tarry, any longer, at Ephesus; and his favorite, Timothy, being now returned from Corinth, as he expected; [1 Cor. xvi. 11.] he resolved to depart, with all speed; for

p. 629. edit. Cassaubon, where he sais, that the parts of Phrygia, Lydia, Caria, &c. were intermixed, and not easily distinguished from each other; and he assigns this reason for it. ος η του συγκεκριμενον του παλαιον μετα συλλαμβανειν, το τον Ρωμαιον μετα κειμεν φυλα νευλα αυτοι, αλλα ετυμω τρειον διαηρεται τοις δικαστησιν, εν αυτοι τοις δικαιονται παιδας οι τοις συναναδικαιαι. Upon which, Cassaubon, in his notes, "scripsi quidam habent taa dico-

Non recte. Praeside in provincia, quando juis dicit, forum agere, vel conven-
tus, latina-dicitur; græce δικαιας παιδας. Conventus enim Græci vertunt δις-
cenas. Sic accipendum apud Lucam, Acts xix. 32." If the article had been pre-
fixed, viz. σοι δικαιας δικασται [τελ. συν&zeta;] the expression had been plain and clear: but the want of the article seems to be compensated, by the word δικασται, and by the addi-
tion of δικαιας παιδας, i.e. there are courts, or sessions, held; and there are judges. For the proconsuls, or pretors, were judges, in these provincial courts. And Asia, being one of the provinces belonging to the senate, was governed by a proconsul, and not by a prætor; as the word δικασται implies.

N. B. This note was communicated to the author, by a learned friend.
Hymenæus and Alexander delivered over to Satan.

for fear of occasioning another tumult, or of drawing any farther odium upon the christian. Before the riot, raised by Demetrius, and his company of silversmiths, the apostle had sent Titus, to Corinth; and another christian brother, along with him; to see what reception his first epistle had met with, in that church. [2 Cor. xii. 18.] And he himself designed to have tarried at Ephesus, till Titus returned; and then to have gone directly to Corinth; from thence, to Macedonia; then back again to Corinth. [2 Cor. i. 15, 16.] But the riot forced him to alter his scheme. As, therefore, the apostle was forced away, from Ephesus, sooner than he had designed; and the unbelieving jews and gentiles, as well as the judaizing christians, were exceedingly averse to the true christian doctrine, he desired Timothy to stay behind him, in that idolatrous city; that he might, in his absence, take care of the christian church, which had been so lately planted there: at least, till true christianity was a little more rooted, and established, among them. And St. Paul himself, having called together the christians, at Ephesus; and, in a solemn and affectionate manner, taken his leave of them; he set out, by sea, for Macedonia; having already dispatched orders to Titus, to meet him, at Troas. [2 Cor. ii. 12.] As he went along the road, it is highly probable, that he ruminated, very much, upon the state, in which he had left the church of Ephesus: and that, in his journey, or as soon as he arrived at Troas, he delivered Alexander and Hymenæus over to Satan; that they might be tormented with some bodily pains and diseases, to teach them not to blaspheme, nor rail at, the true christian doctrine; of which they had been notoriously guilty. [1 Tim. i. 20.] They had, both of them, in profession, embraced the christian religion; but they were zealous judaizers, and men of immoral characters. For they understood the true christian doctrine, and had sufficient evidences of it's excellence; but, to please the unbelieving jews, and to compass their other low designs, they had prostituted their own consciences, and made shipwreck of the true christian faith. However, bad as they were now, they afterwards grew worse. For Hymenæus came, at length, to assert, that the resurrection was already past; and thereby caused some professed christians to despair, and apostatize. [2 Tim. ii. 17, 18.] And Alexander opposed St. Paul, and did him a great deal of harm; [2 Tim. iv. 14, 15.] either by venting erroneous and wicked doctrines, and fathering them upon that apostle; or rather, perhaps, by zealously and furiously contending, that the doctrine of the judaizing christians was the true gospel-doctrine; and that not...
St. Paul writes his first epistle to Timothy.

Only the Jews, but the Gentiles, also, ought to be subject to the whole law of Moses, as necessary to their salvation. The riot, which the silversmiths raised, against the Apostle, seems, in part, to have affected him. But the furious opposition of the unbelieving Jews, at Ephesus, appeareth to me to have affected him much more. The Judaizing Christians would have compelled the Gentile converts, in the churches of Galatia, to have been circumcised; that they themselves might avoid the persecution, raised by the unbelieving Jews. [Gal. vi. 12.] And it is evident, [from 1 Tim. i. 4; 7.] that the Judaizers had a strong party, in the Christian church, at Ephesus; "who gave heed to fables, and endless genealogies;" and pretended to be doctors of the law, though they understood it not, nor the design of it." One so deeply engaged, as St. Paul was, in spreading true Christianity; and that had so lately left a church, of his own planting, which was yet in its tender state of infancy, and in the midst of such enemies; must needs be very anxious for Timothy, and that church at Ephesus. And, therefore, it is no wonder that he should write to them.—To them, I say. For it is evident, from many passages in the first epistle to Timothy, that he wrote that letter, not for Timothy's sake alone; but for the sake, also, of the Christian church at Ephesus; and with a design, most probably, that Timothy should read it to them. This, therefore, may be looked upon, as the true epistle to the Ephesians. Whereas; what we commonly call so, appears to be St. Paul's epistle to the Laodiceans.—That the first epistle to Timothy was written, from Troas, and at this time, is what I incline to believe, for the following reasons. (1.) What is said, 1 Tim. iv. 12. Let no man despise thy youth. For, supposing Timothy to have been sixteen years old, in the year of our Lord 46. when he was converted to Christianity; he would only be twenty, in the year 50. when St. Paul took him, along with him, as an evangelist. And younger than that, we cannot well suppose him to have been. He was now, therefore, [that is, in the beginning of the year 58.] about twenty-seven. And, surely, this age was much more likely to occasion such an injunction, from St. Paul; [namely, that no man should despise his youth;] than thirty-four, or thirty-five; which he must have been, in the year 65; the time, which hath been pitched upon, by many, for the writing of this epistle. A man of thirty years of age, or above, is in no great danger of being despised for his youth. Thirty is reckoned a mature age. It was the year, in which the Levites, under the law, entered upon their office. [Numb. iv. 3; 23; 30; 35; 39; 43; 47.]
The time, when St. Paul wrote I Timothy.

47.] About that age, our blessed Lord (as well as John the bap-
tist, his forerunner) began his ministry. And, about that age, I Nero.
reckon St. Paul to have been, when he was made Apostle of the
gentiles. If Timothy, therefore, was above thirty, in the year 65; we may reasonably suppose this epistle to have been written before that

time.—Again; it is said, [1 Cor. xvi. 10, 11.] “If Timothy come; Acts xx.

“(that is, to Corinth) let no man despise him.” Most probably, St.
Paul was afraid of his being despised there, also, upon the account
of his youth. That, therefore, is a confirmation of what hath been
said. For the first epistle to the Corinthians was confessedly written,
a little before this time. And these two cautions seem to have
risen, from the same anxious concern of the Apostle, for his young
friend, who was so deeply engaged in so arduous a work. (2.)

“The first epistle to Timothy doeth very well suit the state of the
church at Ephesus, and agree with the history of St. Paul’s
travels and labors; if we suppose it to have been written, at this
time; but will not suit the state of things, in the year 65.” By
the strain of the epistle, it appeareth, that corruptions were just creeping
into the church at Ephesus: that “they were beginning to swerve
from the charity, which they owed to the gentile christians; and
were turning aside to vane janglings; desiring to teach the law,
in order to please the Jews, and judaizing christians.” Accordingly;
Timothy was desired “to tarry there, and warn them to teach
no other doctrine, than what the Apostle had taught. This ad-
vice, St. Paul gave him, in hopes of returning shortly to Ephe-
sus, and backing it with his own authority. Or, if he was pre-
vented, that Timothy might not want directions, how to behave in
such a situation.” When the Apostle came, afterwards, to Mi-
letus, and had sent for the bishops of the church of Ephesus; he in-
timated, that “the corruptions among them would yet grow worse.”
[Acts xx. 29, &c.] And, when he wrote his second epistle to Timo-
thy, they were actually grown worse. [See 2 Tim. i. 15. and ii. 17,—
26. and iii. 6,—9.] But it is probable [from Rev. ii. 1, &c.] that they
were, in a great measure, recovered from this corruption, in the year
96. when I suppose St. John wrote the revelation.

Another strong circumstance, to the present purpose, is this:—
It was common with the Apostles, not to ordain bishops and deacons,
upon the first planting of a church. But, after they had made some
progress in knowledge, and were established in the faith; then the
Apostles, or some of their attendants, went, and ordained the most
knowing, prudent, and distinguished, of the first converts, to be

A a 2 bishops
The time, when St. Paul wrote

An. Christi 58.

Nero. 4. Now, it doeth not appear that there were any bishops, or deacons, at Ephesus, when St. Paul left that city. For Timothy is told what qualifications he was to look for, in the persons, to be set apart for those offices; [1 Tim. iii. 1, &c.] and is charged to lay hands suddenly on no man. [1 Tim. v. 22.] Whereas; it is evident that there were bishops, at Ephesus, not long after, whom St. Paul sent for, to Miletus: [Acts xx. 17; 28.] the very persons, I suppose, whom Timothy had ordained. Now, that was in the conclusion of this year, 58. In the beginning of which year, I suppose, the first epistle to Timothy was written. A long time before the year 65! (3.) The dating of this epistle, in the year 65. appeareth to have been grounded upon a mere mistake: that is, because St. Paul had sent Timothy, with Erastus, to Macedonia and Achaia, a little before he wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians. [Acts xix. 21, 22. 1 Cor. iv. 17.] Therefore, it is objected, "that Timothy could not be with the Apostle, when he was leaving Ephesus, nor be then desired to tarry behind him." To which I answer. It is plain, [from 1 Cor. xvi. 8; 10, 11.] that St. Paul expected Timothy to return to him, at Ephesus. And St. Luke's silence, about his return, is no sufficient objection against it: because, for the sake of brevity, he hath passed over many things of the like nature. Nor doeth it appear that Timothy's return was impossible. On the contrary: the state of things render it highly probable that he did return. For, it is generally agreed, that St. Paul wrote the first epistle to Timothy, as he went; from Ephesus, to Macedonia. And, indeed; what is said, 1 Tim. i. 3. seemeth to be a sufficient confirmation of that. Now, two such journeys, are all that are contended for. The first is undeniable; [from Acts xx. 1, &c. 1 Cor. xvi. 5. 2 Cor. ii. 12, 13.] that is, in the beginning of this year, 58. For the latter, there are only conjectures; namely, because he had told the Philippians, and some of the Colossians, that he designd them a visit, after he was set at liberty, from that, his first confinement, at Rome; [Phil. i. 23.—26. and ii. 24. Philemon, ver. 22.] "therefore it is supposed that he took such a journey; and took Ephesus' in his way, between Colosse and Philippi." That he did take this rout, after he had got his liberty, is a mere conjecture. But, that he took Ephesus in his way, is utterly improbable. For he had never promised to return again to Ephesus. On the contrary; he plainely and expressly prophesied, and declared, that "he knew the bishops of Ephesus would see his face no more."
The first epistle to Timothy.

"more." [Acts xx. 25.] And, if the first be the onely journey; and An.Christi
this epistle was written in, or soon after, that journey; the date is fix-
ed, at the time, for which we are now contending. Estius, Baroni-
us, and Dr. Lightfoot, do all date it about this time. And Dr. Ham-
mond, not onely dates it at this time; but intimates, that Troas was,
most probably, the place, where the APOSTLE wrote it. But the
noble author of Miscellanea Sacra, has carried the thought farther,
in his postscript to the præface. Which is well worth the perusal.

—What arguments are here added, to confirm that account, may be
casily seen, by comparing this history with that postscript.

The Coptic version, indeed, has these words, at the conclusion of
this epistle, Δω Τίτων, μακρινυ αυτου, intimating, that "St. PAUL
sents this epistle, by Titus, his own convert." [Vid. Mill. in 1 Tim.
vi. ad fin.] If that be an authentic tradition, this epistle was written,
not from Troas, but from Macedonia. Or, if the APOSTLE wrote
it, at Troas; he must have carried it into Macedonia, and have sent
it, from thence, to Ephesus. For Titus did not come to Troas, as St.
PAUL expected; but met him in Macedonia. [2 Cor. ii. 12, &c. and
vii. 5, 6.] But, if that reading of the Coptic version be onely an in-
genious conjecture, (and that is all, which it appeareth to be,) no argu-
m-right can be drawn from it. However; I am more concerned a-out fixing the time, than the place. And the Coptic version rather
confirms what has been said upon that head. I reckon that this was
written the fifth of St. PAUL's epistles. But, by whom it was sent,
doeoth not now appear; unlefe we may depend upon the reading,
that has just been produced, from the Coptic version. Which, I ap-
prehend, one cannot rationally do.

ST. PAUL begins with aserting his apostolic character; which the ju-
daizers had, very probably, called in question; and directs the epistle
to Timothy, his own convert; wishing him all happinesse. And then, he
enters upon the grand design of the epistle; acquainting Timothy, that,
when he set out for Macedonia, he left him at Ephesus, to oppose the
"judaising christians; to warn them to keep close to the true, apostolic,
doctrine; and to lay no stifle upon fables and endless genealogies; but,
to exercisē love, especially towards the gentile converts. For such, as
turned aside from the sinceritie and love, required by the gospel, that
they might impose the law of Moses upon the gentile christians, did not
duely consider what they did, nor what was the grand design of the law.
A law is made to restrain, and condemn, (not the good, but) the wick-
ed. And the gospel condemneth all manner of wickednesse. Of this;
The first epistle to Timothy.


Book III. Ch. VII. Sect. VI. Acts xx.

"most excellent dispensation, St. Paul had been made an apostle; even after he had been an enemy, and a persecutor. Which he could not think of, without transport, and the warmest gratitude! And; from God's superabundant mercy to himself, he inviteth all sinners to repent; as having no reason to doubt of mercy, and acceptance. And then he breaketh out again, in praise, to the great God, the King of the several dispensations; as astonished at the wisdom and goodness, which shine through them all. In this rapturous strain, he letteth Timothy know, that he committed this work to him; remembering, that he had been pointed out, by prophecy, as one, who would be fit for such service. And he doubted not, but Timothy would preserve the purity of the christian faith, and a good conscience; though some of the judaizing christians had preferred neither. And two of them, in particular; namely, Alexander and Hymenæus, had acted so wickedly and maliciously, as to occasion the delivering them over to Satan; to torment their bodies, that they might be reduced to repentance, for their wilful misrepresentations of the true, christian doctrine.

Ch. II. The Jews, and judaizing christians, confined their charity very much to their own sect, or nation; and would not pray for the uncircumcised gentiles. They were, likewise, apt to despise the princes of other nations, and did not pay a proper reverence to them. In opposition to their seditious, and uncharitable temper, the apostle ordered that christians should pray for all men; for governors, or subjects; jews, or gentiles. For God himself would have all men to be saved; and (as the most excellent mean to that end) to embrace true christianity. Why, then, should men confine their charity to a few? There is one and the same God, and one and the same mediator, for all mankind: which mediator died, as a ransom for all. From him, St. Paul had his commission, as apostle of the gentiles. And, therefore, his injunctions came with authority. By that authority, he farther ordered, that the men should offer up their public prayers; and that in any place, as well as in the jews's synagogue, or temple: intimating, that, in every place, they would be accepted, if they prayed with holiness and charity. That the women should wear decent and modest apparel, and not delight too much in a rich, or gay, dress; but, that their glory, and chief ornament, ought to be their good works. That the women should learn, and never teach, in the church: (that is, unless when they were under immediate inspiration.) And, that they should always be in subjection; as the woman was created for the man, and helped to seduce him. Notwithstanding, which, the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. And the sex, which introduced death, shall introduce life. For, by procreation of children, and especially of that remarkable child, the Messiah, they themselves, as well as the other sex, shall be saved: provided they continue in the true faith, in christian love, and in holiness; and behave in a prudent, discreet, manner.

"It
It doeth not appear that the Apostle himself, during his long stay at Ephesus, had appointed any to be bishops, or deacons. But he left to do this, as well as other things. And now ordered, that such, as were admitted to be bishops, should be men of prudence and piety: capable of teaching, and governing, the church; and that would behave so, as to recommend Christianity: not novices, but persons of some standing in the Christian church; lest they should grow proud and insolent. As to the deacons; they, also, were to be men of virtue, prudence, and integrity. And, that he might choose such, the Apostle ordered, that they should first be approved, as private Christians. The deaconesses were, likewise, to behave well; lest their wickedness, or folly, should be a reflection upon the Christian religion. If the deacons behaved well, in private life, as well as in their public stations; he assured them, the office was not contemptible. These directions the Apostle gave; that, if he should not return to Ephesus, shortly, as he then expected, Timothy might know how to behave. For (the scheme of the gospel doctrine) the mystery of godliness was great; and the mystery of iniquity was beginning to work. And he seemeth to point out the Judaizers, as the persons, who made way for the grand apostate; though that apostate would not come to its height, till the latter times. Such pretences to angelical purity, and such distinctions of meats, are of no account; in comparison of true godliness, and that substantial virtue, to which God hath annexed a blessing, both in this, and a future, life: that God, who is the favor of all men; whether Jews, or Gentiles; if they believe, and obey, the gospel. These things Timothy was to teach; and to behave so, as that no man might despise his youth. On the contrary; he was to be an example, to the Christians, of every virtue. And, by private study, and public instructions, he was to improve his spiritual gifts; and recommend the doctrine, which he had imbraced. His prudence was, particularly, to appear, in his treating aged persons, in a filial and modest manner, to comply with what was their duty: and, in his dealing with younger persons, with familiarity and affection; but, without levity, or any indecency. Such poor widows, as had children, or grand-children, were to be maintained by them. For such, as were able, were not to burthen the church with their indigent relations. But such widows, as were entirely defoliated, and pious, were to be maintained, by the Christian church; and to minister to it, as deaconesses, in any offices, where they could be of service. To prevent scandal, they were not to be taken into that office, under sixty years of age; and then they were not to be admitted, unless they had lived piety, and behaved prudently, in the former part of their life, and in a more private character. The younger widows would be more able to maintain themselves; and, if taken into the number of such, as were restrained from marrying among the Christians, they would be under a temptation of marrying to such as were not Christians, and of throwing off Christianity itself. They were, therefore, to marry; that they might bear,
bear, and piously educate, children; and so behave, as that Christianity
might not suffer. For some had (probably, by such restraints) been
made to forfake the christians. The elders, who presided well, and also
taught Christianity, were (like the first borne) to have a double portion.

For it is a most reasoning thing, that the laborer should have his re-
ward. The character of the elders was of great importance. And,
therefore, Timothy was not to encourage idle reports against them; nor
to hear any accusation of them, unless it could be attested by two or
three credible witneses. But such, as were convicted, were to be re-
proved publicly; to deter others from offending. In ordaining bishops
and deacons, Timothy was warned not to proceed rashly; and told, that
some cases are plane, and others more involved. And, therefore, men’s
characters were to be carefully considered; before he laid his hands
upon, and ordained, the good; or reproved, and rejected, the bad.

The slaves, who were converted to Christianity, were to continue faithful-
ly to serve their infidel-masters. Or, if their masters were christian bre-
thren, they were not to despise them; as if Christianity made any altera-
tion in temporal affairs, or raised slaves to an equality with their mas-
ters. If the judaizers, or any other persons, taught otherwise; they
did not regard the true christian doctrine; but loved contention: and,
from a covetous temper, fell in with the prejudices of their hearers.
Whereas; a good conscience, and a contented mind, are preferable to
all the enjoyments of this world. But, covetousness will, in the end,
ruine falle teachers. Do you, therefore, O Timothy, (lais he) avoid
such arts; and act with the sincerity, candor, and faithfulnesse, which
you have hitherto manifested. So will you approve yourself to your
judge, at his coming. Such christians, as were possesed of riches, were
to be put in mind of their obligations to be generous and beneficent;
that their riches might turn to the best account, and they themselves at
last obtain the inheritance of eternal life. And, finally, as full of the
grand subject of the epistle, the apostle leaveth Timothy, with a caution
against the judaizing christians; charging him to mind his directions,
and to avoid their idle dreams. And then he concludeth, as usual;
THE FAVOR OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU. Amen!"
St. Paul at Macedonia. Goeth to Greece; &c. 193

CHAP. VII. SECT. VII.

St. Paul goeth from Troas, to Macedonia, to meet with Titus. From thence he and Titus go to Greece. He now wrote his second epistle to the Corinthians.

Acts xx. 2.

WHILE St. Paul was at Troas, a door was opened unto him of the Lord; that is, he had a prospect of success, in preaching the gospel, and of making several converts to christianity there. But, because Titus came not, as he expected, to give him an account of the state of the churches in Macedonia, and Achaia; and, particularly, how the church of Corinth stood affected; and what reception his former letter had met with, among them: Missing, I say, of Titus, he had no rest in his spirit. And, therefore, he did not stay long, to preach the gospel, in that city; but took his leave of the few converts, whom he had already brought over to christianity. And then he set out, for Macedonia; as thinking that Titus might, probably, be gone thither, in quest of him. [2 Cor. ii. 12, 13.] For, before he left Ephesus, he had talked of going to Macedonia. [1 Cor. xvi. 5,—8. Acts xx. 1.] But, when he came to Macedonia, and could hear nothing of Titus, he was still more uneasy; being afflicted on every side; his enemies tormenting him without, and his fears within. But that gracious God, who comforteth the dejected, did at last comfort him, by the arrival of Titus. For he was not only revived, at the sight of his friend, and fellow-laborer in the gospel; but much more, with the account, which he brought him. For he could tell him of the flourishing state of christianity in Macedonia, and Achaia; and what good effects his letter had had, among the Corinthians; who had (most of them) repented of their patronizing the incestuous person, and of their other irregularities: and, particularly, that they remembered him, [their apostle, and father in the gospel,] with affection, and would again be subject to his orders, and no longer hearken to the delusions of the false apostle. This made him exceeding glad. For the success of the true christian doctrine was all his glory, and his joy. [2 Cor. vii. 5, &c.] Having received liberal contributions, from the gentile christians, in Macedonia, for the
the use of the poor christians, in Judæa; [2 Cor. viii. 1.—5.] and, having comforted the Macedonians, under all their dark prospects, and exhorted them to virtue, patience, and perseverance;—St. Paul, Book III. and his company, departed into Greece. This is the second time Ch. VII. that this industrious APOSTLE might say, "he had, by a miracu-
Acts xx. lous and divine power, preached the gospel of Christ; even 2. "from Jerusalem, round about unto Illyricum." [Rom. xiv. 19.]

For Macedonia bordered upon Illyricum; the Scardican mountains, and the river Drilo, being the boundaries between them.

In Macedonia, St. Paul wrote the second epistle to the Corinthians. [2 Cor. viii. 1.—14. and ix. 2.] Before the APOSTLE himself would go, in person, to Corinth, he sent Titus back, and several persons along with him. One of whom, I suppose, to have been St. Luke; who was greatly esteemed and praised, through all the chris-
churches, for his zéle and diligence in spreading the gospel; and who was chosen, by the churches, to go along with the APOSTLE, as one of their messengers, to carry that great charity to Jerusalem. [2 Cor.
viii. 6; 16; 18, 19.] There was, also, another person, whose fidelity and diligence, the APOSTLE faith, he had experienced, in many things; and that he was peculiarly active about this affair, from the good opinion, which he had conceived of the Corinthians, since the APOSTLE had wrote his first letter to them. [2 Cor. viii. 22.] I should have thought that this was Timothy, had he not joined, with the APOSTLE, in writing the second epistle to the Corinthians. For it can hardly be supposed, that he should join in writing a letter, of which he himself was appointed one of the messengers, to deliver it to the Corinthians. I, therefore, conjecture that it might be Silas. The design of sending these messengers, was, partly that they might carry along with them the second epistle to the Corinthians; but, chiefly, to hasten and finish the collection, among the christians at Corinth, for the use of the poor christians in Judæa. For St. Paul had often boasted, in Macedonia, of the generous proposals of the christians in Achaia; and, thereby, incited the Macedonians to greater liberality: and, if the churches of Achaia, (among which, that of Corinth was the chief) had not been ready, when the Macedonians came thither, along with the APOSTLE; both the Corinthians and he would have had reason to have been ashamed; they, for their former generous proposals; and he, for commending them, so much; and animating others, by their example. [2 Cor. viii. 6. and ix. 1.—5.] When St. Paul sent these messengers; and, by them, his second epistle to the Corinthians; he
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he intended to follow them, to Corinth, in a little time. And, as we shall hereafter find, he actually did so.

"ST. Paul had wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians, to try what authority he had, in that church. [2 Cor. ii. 9.] There was, then, a great faction against him; which he was attempting to break. And he was in pain, 'till he found what success he had. But, Titus having all ready brought him an account of the good effects of his former letter, and that many had forsaken the judaizer, who had made the disturbance; the apostle, in this letter, speaketh of himself more freely; and dealteth more sharply and roundly with his opposers, than he had done, in his former epistle. And it will be obvious, as we go through the epistle, that the main business of it, was, to take the people entirely off from the false apostle; and wholly to put an end to the faction, and disorders, which he had caused, in the christian church, at Corinth. As his authority was still partly opposed; he begins again, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, &c. And he wrote, in his own name, and in the name of his beloved Timothy; who, having settled affairs at Ephesus, came from thence, and met the apostle in Macedonia, in order to go along with him to Jerusalem. For the apostle had designed to have gone directly from Corinth to Jerusalem. [2 Cor. i. 16.] And, after his usual introduction, in which he wishes them all manner of blessing, from God, and from the Lord Jesus Christ; he begins, with vindicating his own sincerity; alleging the many, and great sufferings, which he had undergone; and taking notice of the anxiety he was under, for them, when he heard of their being seduced; and the joy of his mind, to find them penitent; as proofs of his sincerity, and of his great affection for them. And assureth them, that his not going, in person, among them, a second time, was not out of fear, or levity of mind, as his enemies might perhaps suggest; but that he, and his companions, were steady and uniform, in their doctrine and practice. And, that the reason, why he had hitherto refrained coming among them, was out of tenderness and compassion for them; to give them an opportunity to repent; and to take away all occasion of severity towards them. That, for the very same reason, he had wrote, to them, with a troubled heart; as taking no pleasure in grieving them, but as desiring to reclaim them; that he might have comfort from them. He was now satisfied of the sincerity of the incestuous person's repentence. And, therefore, he recommended it to them, to take off the church-censure, and to comfort the penitent; lest his sorrow should overwhelm him. And he leteth them know, that, along with their forgiveing him, he also, in the person of Christ, would forgive him. He points out his affection for them, in the anxiety, which he had, when he did not meet with Titus, at Troas, nor at his first coming into Macedonia. But he thanketh god,
Writen from Macedonia, An. Chri. 58.

He did not make a gain of the gospel; nor sophisticate it, to please men; nor commend himself; nor procure commendatory epistles to the Corinthians, or from them. Though the false apostle had done all these things.

The Christian doctrine, written in the hearts, and manifested in the holy lives, of the Christians, at Corinth, was St. Paul's commendatory epistle; which all their neighbors could read: an epistle, superior to that brought to them, by the false apostle; and even superior to the two tables of stone, on which God wrote the ten commandments; and which he delivered to Moses, as a testimony unto Israel. Not that St. Paul could, of himself, have either discovered the gospel-doctrine, or spread it so successfully in the world. But he had extraordinary illumination, and miraculous powers. And they were given him, not to spread the law of Moses, (which condemned offenders, without mercy;) but the gospel of Christ, (which offereth life to the penitent.) The law of Moses, though it carried such terror in it, was glorious. But the gospel is much more glorious; as exhibiting so much mercy; and as attested by greater spiritual gifts, and miraculous powers. The law was abolished; the gospel is to induce till the final consummation of all things. The law was obscure, and shadowy; so that the Jews, who rejected Christianity, understood it not. The gospel is plain truth. And, therefore, should not have been veiled, and obscured; as it was, by the false apostle. However; St. Paul preached it, in a clear manner, and without any veil. And (as he was extraordinarily assisted) he proceeded, without flagging in his work; renouncing all tricks, and dishonest craft, in preaching the gospel; and laying it before the world, with such clearness and evidence, that it could not be hid to any, but such as were resolved to continue in wickedness. For he did not preach it, with a view to set up himself, but to advance true Christianity. And, though his person was mean, and infirm; yet it was the more evident, that a divine power resided upon him. A power, which supported him under the greatest distress and persecution; and made him willing, either to live, or die, so as might best promote the spreading of the gospel! A power, so mighty, as to raise Christ from the dead; and, therefore, fully able to support him here, and make him happy for ever. And, to that eternal state of happiness, he had the principal regard; or else he could never have done, and suffered, as he did. But he knew, that, after the dropping of his terrestrial body, he should have a celestial one superinduced. For which he most earnestly longed; as satisfied that that would, finally, be his portion. With that prospect, therefore, he made it his constant care to approve himself to Christ; as remembering, that he should stand before his tribunal, and receive according to what he had done in this life. And, knowing the terrible punishments, which then will fall upon the wicked; he persuaded others also to prepare
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"pare for that day. However; as that day was at a distance; he intimated, that he could appeal, at present, to the consciences of the Corinthians; who could not but approve of his sincere behavior. Though he did not mention it, out of vane-glory; but to put something in their mouths, whereby to vindicate him, against the aspersions of his enemies. The extensive love, which Christ had manifested, constrained him to stand up, as he did, for the gentile converts. For Christ died for all; as the world, in general, was immersed in ignorance and wickedness. And he died (as he also lived) that men might forsake their sins, and live piously and virtuously. As, therefore, Christ died for all; gentiles, as well as Jews; St. Paul no longer distinguished a Jew from a gentile, with respect to the privileges of christianity. What, though Christ had been circumcised, and was of Jewish extraction; that distinction, of circumcised and uncircumcised, Jews or gentiles, had no place in the christian church. But, if a Jew had embraced Christianity; he was (like a proselyte from the beastens, to the Jewish religion) created, and born again. This was the appointment of God; who had also reconciled the gentiles to himself, or taken them into the christian church; and had committed this ministry of reconciliation to St. Paul; who earnestly intreated the Corinthians, at Corinth, in the name, and as the ambassador, of Christ, to be reconciled unto God, and retain the pure christian doctrine. For that was the way to final acceptance with God, through Jesus Christ. As he was the ambassador of Christ, he begged of them to regard him; and not to receive his gospel in vane. For, though he manifested so much zeal, he took care, as much as he could, not to offend any body; but to approve himself faithful to Christ. Which he had indeavored to do, at all times, and in all places, and circumstances; in prosperity, and adversity; in thought, word, and deed; by his own natural powers, and by his extraordinary gifts; in good report, and bad report; by life, or by death. In the midst of this warm and pathetic speech, he expressed his affection for the Corinthians, in a lively and ardent manner. And procedeth to advise them against marrying with idolators; lest they should insnare them; and lead them back to their idolatry, and other vices.

The false apostle seemeth to have charged St. Paul with false doctrine, and covetous designs. But there was too much ground to retort the charge upon the author of it. And the Apostle hoped that the Corinthians would acquit him, and fix it where it was proper. As for himself, he had been very uneasy; 'till he had received, from Titus, an account of their repentence. And he was glad that his first epistle had affected them so much. Not that he took any pleasure in grieving them; but he rejoiced, as it had made the guilty to repent; and to throw off their regard for the impostor, who had deluded them. He could now repete his former glorying, in his converts at Corinth; when he considered what satisfaction Titus had given him; and that they were again reduced to obedience.

The
The second epistle to the Corinthians.

Writen from Macedonia.

An. Chr. 58.

Nero. 4.

Book III.
Ch. VII.
Sec. VII.
Acts xx.

Ch. VIII.

Ch. IX.

Ch. X.

The next paragraph, in this epistle, is about an affair, in which St. Paul was deeply concerned, at this time, that is, the making a collection, among the gentile churches, for the use of the poor christians, in Judea. And he excites the Corinthians to be liberal, upon this occasion, from the generous example of the Macedonians; who, in a time of persecution, and in narrow circumstances, had contributed considerably to that charitable design. And he letteth them know, that he had sent Titus before-hand, on purpose that they might be ready. And he hoped that they would abound in their liberality, upon this occasion; as they already abounded in the gifts of the spirit. Not that he commanded them to be liberal, but showed them, that it was agreeable to the example of Christ, who denied himself for the public good. And, as the Corinthians had promised great things, a year ago; and he had spoken of that, in Macedonia; he hoped, they would, every way, answer his good opinion of them. Not that he desired them to do all, and other churches nothing; but that they should give, in proportion to their ability. He chose to send Titus, to finish this affair; because he had a most tender concern for them. And, along with Titus, he sent two more; who were men of integrity, and had been of great service in spreading the gospel. One of them had been nominated, by the churches, to take care of that charity. And he doubted not, but they would all be acceptable persons; and that the Corinthians would be so generous, as, at the same time, to shew their love to him; and, that he had not boasted of them, in other churches, without reason.—For some of the Macedonians were to come along with him to Corinth. And, if they should find the Corinthians had not done, as they had proposed, both the apostle, and the Corinthians, would be put to shame. It was, therefore, highly proper to send those messengers, to Corinth, before-hand; to finish that collection: and to put them in mind, that, as they sowed here, so they might expect to reap hereafter; and, that the generosity of the christians at Corinth, would turn to the honor of God, and the credit of christianity in the world.

Among other things, to disparage St. Paul, the false apostle had insinuated, that, though his letters were well written, and had great force and eloquence in them; yet his bodily presence was mean, and his speech contemptible: and that he dared not to act, or speak, so boldly, when he was among them; as he did, when he writ to them. To which, the apostle answereth, that he had miraculous powers; with which, if he was present, he could make such professed christians, as were the enemies of true christianity, tremble. And he intimateth, that, if the false apostle did not repent, he should experience this; when the Corinthians were reduced to obedience to the true gospel-doctrine. And that (notwithstanding his mean outward appearance) he was an apostle of Christ; whatever his adversary was; and had apostolic power, to punish the disobedient; which he was unwilling to make use of, unless he was obliged to do so, by the wickedness of the false apostle. That he was the same man, present or absent; and propagated the same doctrine; whether he preach-
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To person, or wrote epistles. For, though he did not commend himself, (till the aspersions cast upon him obliged him to it) as his enemy had done, without any just occasion; nor boasted of the fruits of other men's labors; but had generally chose to plant the gospel, where it had never been heard of; yet he was more truly praise-worthy, as having the divine approbation. And, as the clearest and strongest proof of his having the divine approbation, (after he had made an apology for the mentioning such things; as what was necessary to his own vindication, and to preserve them from being deluded) he intimateth, that he had communicated the spirit to them; and manifested himself, by miraculous powers, to come behind none of the apostles. That he had plainly shown how extensive his knowledge was; though his speech was not so eloquent, as that of their new instructor. He had, indeed, preached the gospel, gratis, among them. But he intimateth to them, if that was a fault, it was a fault which they might easilie forgive. He had taken presents, from other churches, whilst he labored among them; and had avoided being burthensome to them. But that was the strongest evidence of his affection, and tender concern, for them. And he would perswist in this, that the false apostle might have no pretensions to burthen them, from his example. That judaizer might pretend to what sanctity he pleased, he was no true apostle; any more than satan (under all his appearance of sanctity) can be accounted an angel of light. Again; he might pretend to great wisdom, and charge St. PAUL with folly. But it was easie to obverse, how unjust the charge was; and how much it belonged to the author of it, who had fleeced the Corinthians; and had been guilty, not only of folly, but of great wickedness. For all the mighty pretensions of the false apostle, St. PAUL was as much a jew, by birth and education, as he; and more the apostle of Christ; as he had manifested, by going through the most amazing trials and sufferings; both by sea and by land; by day and by night; from within and from without; in cities and deserts; from pretended friends, as well as open enemies: and all this, because of his industry to spread the gospel. Nay, more; these outward afflictions were accompanied with a daily anxiety for the welfare of all the christian churches; and a tender sympathy and concern for every particular christian in distress.

As his suffering so much, and for such a length of time and patience, was a proof of his sincerity; the following things were most manifest evidences of his having that extraordinary assistence, to which he pretended. For, fourteen years before he wrote this epistle, he had been rapt up into heaven; had seen CHRIST in person; and had, by him, been instructed in the scheme of the christian doctrine. And (as they reproached him with his mean bodily presence) he sheweth them, that his bodily disorder happened, in such a way, as that he had reason to glory in it. For, lest he should be unduly elevated, through the abundance of revelations, then communicated to him; that thorn in the flesh was given him:—that malady, which afforded the false apostle, the mettenger of satan.
The second epistle to the Corinthians.

Written from Macedonia, An. Chr. 58.

Nero. 4. Book III. Ch. VII. Sect. VII. Ch. VII. Acts xx.

They had despised him, though he had given sufficient proof of his being a true apostle. He had not, indeed, claimed a maintenance; as, by his apostolic power, he could have done. But that was a proof of his apostleship, which he would never make use of, among them. He left that to the false apostle. However; he would take as much care of their souls, as if they had obliged him with the greatest presents. And, as he himself had taken nothing of them; he farther adds, that Titus, and such as he sent along with him, had avoided taking any thing of them: not out of want of affection for them; but out of kindness and good will, and for the advancement of the gospel among them. He was designing to make them another visit at Corinth; but he was afraid, their factions and parties were not quite over; and that some of them would still grieve him, by retaining the vices, in which they had formerly lived. However; he giveth them fair warning, that, if he found any of them incorrigible, he would not spare them. As they wanted a proof of his having a divine power; the obstinate and impenitent would find him able to give such a proof, as they would have cause to repent. Though he begeth of God, that they might repent. For he had much rather be thought to want such a power, than to have occasion to exert it in so terrible a manner. For, if they retained the true christian doctrine, and lived accordingly, he had no power to inflict any bodily disorders upon them. And, therefore, he desired, much rather, that they should hold the truth, and live virtuously; than that he should be indwelt by that extraordinary power, which the Lord Jesus had committed to him; not for destruction, but for edification. For this purpose, he wrote, to give them warning, whilst he was absent; that, when he came, they might all be reformed, and prevent his making use of such a severe method of correction. He concludeth, with recommending to them love and unity; wishing them all, while they followed such right methods, the favor of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and a participation of the holy spirit. Amen!

CHAP.
CHAP. VII. SECT. VIII.

St. Paul goeth, the second time, to Corinth. There writes his Epistle to the Romans. The occasion, and subject, of that Epistle. Acts xx. 3.

FROM the other parts of Greece, St. Paul, in a little time, An. Chr. 58, followed his second letter, and the messengers, to Corinth. This was the second time, of his being, in person, at that city. His stay at Corinth, and in other parts of Greece, was now about three months. Book III. Ch. VII. Sect. VII. It hath been observed above, that he knew of the planting of a Christian church at Rome. Possibly, some of the Jews, and proselytes of righteousness, mentioned Acts ii. 10. had embraced Christianity; and, upon their return, first planted a Christian church, at Rome. But, it is not likely that they preached the gospel to any Gentiles. For St. Peter had not then received the first-fruits of the devout Gentiles into the Christian church. However; some of the Christians had gone to Rome, and converted Gentiles to Christianity. And St. Paul seemeth to have received an account of this, when he was first at Corinth, from Aquila and Priscilla; who were then banished from Rome, by a decree of Claudius Caesar. Whether that decree affected the Gentile Christians, is not easy to determine. Though, if the Christians, in general, were looked upon, as a sect of the Jews; it must have affected them all. However; that decree died with the Emperor, who made it; the Christians, as well as the Jews, could then return to Rome. And, accordingly, we find that some of St. Paul's relations were there; who had been converted to Christianity before him: [Rom. xvi. 7.] that Aquila and Priscilla were returned thither: [Rom. xvi. 3.] and, that a great number of St. Paul's acquaintance were gone to that imperial city. [Rom. xvi. 8, &c.] Very probably, they had converted some of the Gentiles; or increased the number of Gentile converts, very considerably. But, by the strain of the Epistle, it appeareth that they were not altogether free from Judaizing opposers; though they do not seem to have been, as yet, so violent, as in some other churches.

That St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans, at this time, will appear, very planely, from his own words. For he saith, he had been making a collection, for the poor Christians, in Jerusalem, among
Among the churches of Macedonia and Achaia; and was designing to go to Jerusalem, with it, himself. [Rom. xv. 25, 26.] And, that he wrote from Corinth, will appear, from Rom. xvi. 23, where he sends salutations, from Erastus, the chamberlain of Corinth. For that was the city where Erastus lived. [2 Tim. iv. 20.] And from Caius, who lived at Corinth; [1 Cor. i. 14.] and whom St. Paul hath called "his host, and the host of all the Christian church there." [Rom. xvi. 23.] And from his recommending Phoebe to the Christian church at Rome. For she was deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, the eastern port, or haven, of Corinth. [Rom. xvi. 1.]

As the gentile Christians, at Rome, were in some danger of being subverted, by the judaizing Christians, he was anxious for them; and wrote this epistle, very much with a view to prevent their being led away by such judaizers. Nor were his fears groundless; as the event plainly testified. For he found some violent judaizers, when he himself came, afterwards, in person, to Rome. However, as he had not yet been at Rome; and, consequently, no opposition had been made to him there; he pitched upon a medium, in his introduction to this epistle; neither asserting his apostolic power and authority, in so high a tone, as in some other epistles; nor yet wholly omitting the mention of it: "Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." And, through the whole epistle, it may easily be observed, that he speaks in a more mild and condescending manner, than he generally doeth, in those epistles, which were written to the churches of his own planting; especially, if there had been any apostate from him, and his doctrine. Then he puts on the air and tone of a master; reproving, rebuking, and exhorting, with all authority. Here, he was only under some apprehensions, that the gentile Christians, at Rome, might, possibly, be led astray, by the doctrine of the judaizers. And, therefore, he cautions, and exhorts, them, rather in a friendly, than in an authoritative, manner; alleging a variety of reasons, why the Jewish Christians ought not to impose such things upon them; and why the gentile converts ought not to submit to such impositions. In the epistles to the churches, where he himself had been in person, he rather supposes, than repeteth, the general scheme of the Christian doctrine. But, as he had never been at Rome; and, therefore, knew not what had been taught them, nor what progress they had made, in Christian knowledge; he faith much more, about the Christian doctrine in general, that they might not continue without sufficient instructions.

"After intimating that he was commissioned to be an apostle of the Gentiles, and wishing the Christians, at Rome, all manner of blessing, from God, and the Lord Jesus Christ; he mentions it, to their honor, that their Christianit.y was talked of, throughout the Roman empire. He then intimateth,
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Writing from Corinth, An. Chr. 58. Once he intimateth, that he had long desired to see them; and often prayed to God, to grant him a prosperous journey to Rome. For, as he was apostle of the gentiles, he thought himself obliged to go to them also; in order, more particularly, to establish their faith, by communicating to them the gifts of the spirit. For, none but apostles could do that; and it doeth not appear that any apostle had, as yet, been at Rome. However; though he had hitherto been hindered from coming to them, he letteth them know, that he was neither afraid, nor ashamed, to preach the gospel, even at Rome; that polite and magnificent city. No! The gospel was a wise institution, and pointed out the method of salvation, both to Jews and gentiles; which was by faith: such a faith, as produced virtue, or holiness. For the christian revelation doeth openly declare the wrath of God, against idolatry, and all manner of vice and wickedness. The heathens might, indeed, from the visible creation, have discovered the true God. But they (notwithstanding all their boasted knowledge) fell into the most grosse and absurd idolatry. Whereby they, in a great measure, obliterated the notions of good and evil. And, in consequence, relapsed into the most enormous and vile practices. God justly turning their sin into their punishment; leaving them to the effects of their own blind and injudicious minds. For, though they had the light of nature, to discover to them the divine rectitude; yet they did not sufficiently attend to the evil of sin, nor know that death was the wages of it. How ever; they were more candid than the wicked Jews. For they did not censure such as lived in the same vicious courses, which they themselves persued. Nay; what aggravated this fault, in the Jews, was, their greater light, and superior privileges; which would, at the last, highly aggravate their condemnation. For God will be an impartial judge; and will, finally, reward such as persever in a course of virtue. But such, as reject the truth, when proposed with sufficient evidence, and practice unrighteousness, he will punish; whether they have been Jews, or gentiles. The wicked gentile shall be condemned by him; and the wicked Jew (who, though he hath had the law of Moses, hath not taken care to live according to it) shall not escape. On the contrary; the virtuous gentile, who hath attended to the law of nature, written upon his heart, may expect to find favor with the righteous judge; when he, who hath valued himself, for being of the race of the Jews, and piqued himself mightily, for his knowlege in the law of Moses, shall (because of his wickedness) find that circumcision did, of itself, signify nothing; without an observation of the moral rectitude of the law: and, that the uncircumcised gentile, who, by his reason discovered, and in his practice observed, the moral rectitude of the law, will be regarded, of God, as the true spiritual Jew; and rewarded, in the future state, when the others shall be punished. Upon this, the Jews would be very ready to ask, What advantage they had, then, above the gentiles? To which, the apostle answers; They had many, and great, advantages. The chief of which, was, that they had the old testament revelation, to prepare...
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Book III. Ch. VII. Sect. VIII. Acts xx. 3.

The Jews would, again, be ready to ask; What then! are not we, Jews, in a better condition than the Gentiles? Not at all; the Apostle replieth. For they had been, in proportion, as bad; considering that they had sinned against greater light and privileges. There was a general corruption and deprivation of manners among them. And the law of Moses, which they had broken, condemned them without mercy. But he withall telleth them, that there was a way, by which they might be justified, revealed, in the gospel. Which (though it was not by a conformity to the law of Moses) was attested to, both by the law and the prophets; and was to be attained, only by a conformity to the Christian revelation. By this method, both Jews and Gentiles might be justified, without difference or distinction. And there was the highest reason for all to attend to it; because of the universal spread of wickedness; and of the guilt, which they had incurred; by which they were liable to fall under the divine condensation. But, if they embraced the gospel, and conformed to it, they had the strongest assurance of pardon, from God, through Jesus Christ. A favor, which they had not merited; but which would be freely bestowed, both upon Jews and Gentiles! This excluded all the boasting of the Jews; in the law of Moses, and in their conformity to it. For God was now manifested to be the God of the Gentile, as well as of the Jews, Christians; and to justify both of them, in the same way; that is, by a conformity to the gospel. This was the method, whereby the law of Moses was established. For the design of that law, was, to prepare the Jews for the gospel; and the moral part of it is adopted into the Christian law.

In the next place, he goeth back farther, even to the patriarchal state; and showeth, that Abraham, in whom, as their father, the nation of the Jews so much gloried; even he, was not justified by circumcision; but before he was circumcised, and that, by such a faith, as produced obedience. And, if Abraham was justified, without circumcision, and the works of the law of Moses, the Gentile Christians might reasonably expect the like merciful treatment. For they were the true spiritual seed of Abraham, as well as the Jewish converts; as long as they imitated Abraham's faith and obedience. The promise of the everlasting inheritance was
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was made, to Abraham himself, not upon the account of his observing the law of Moses; but upon the account of his faith and obedience, long before the law was given. And, by his seed, who were to inherit the blessing with him, was not meant his natural descendents; or they, who were under the law of Moses; but they, who had like faith and holiness, whether Jews, or Gentiles. For he was to be the great father of the faithful; and, in him, all nations were to be blessed. His faith appeared, in a very particular manner, when God promised him Isaac. And, in that (as well as in many other instances) he showed it to be a rational trust in the power, wisdom, and goodness of God; of whose being and perfections he was fully convinced; and whose miraculous, and extraordinary, care and concern, he himself had already experienced abundantly. Such was the temper of mind, which Abraham manifested. And God was so highly pleased with it, as that he accounted it to him for righteousness. And God's accounting such a faith unto him, for righteousness, was left upon record; not only out of respect to the memory of Abraham, but to promote such a temper in Christians; and to encourage them to hope, that their faith will be, likewise, accounted to them for righteousness, upon their believing the Christian revelation, and conforming to it.

The Jews had boasted in circumcision; and in having the law of Moses. For God was their God, and they gloried in being his peculiar people. But, as the Gentile converts were justified by the Gospel method, they had more reason to boast and triumph. For they had hopes of the glory of God. They had the honor to suffer for their religion. And were supported, under those sufferings, by the miraculous gifts of the Spirit; which were the grand pledge of their being adopted, and in the divine favor. Christ had died, to open the kingdom of heaven to them; when they were wandering after idolatry, and many great vices. And, if God had given his Son, to die for them, when they were such a profligate race, that they might be admitted into his church and kingdom, here upon earth; how much more might it be expected, that he would deliver them from wrath, and make them perfectly happy, at the last day; now, that they had embraced the true religion, and were ready to conform thereto? Another ground, which the Gentile (as well as Jewish) Christians had for glorying, was, that now the true God was their God; and they were reconciled to the true religion. But the unbelieving Jews had no just claim to that honor; as they refused to submit to Jesus, whom God hath appointed Lord over all.

The Apostle had already referred them, first to the law of Moses; and then to the Abrahamic covenant. But now, he goeth farther back; even to the fall of our first parents; and presenteth them with a short view of God's dealing with mankind, through all ages, with reference to life and death. By one man; that is, Adam, sin entered into the world; and death by sin. For that was the penalty annexed to the offence, of eating the
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"the forbidden fruit*. Thereby Adam himself was reduced to his natural state of mortality. And, in consequence, the descendent of that mortal man became likewise mortal: though they had not sinned after the multitude of Adam's transgression; that is, though they had not eaten the forbidden fruit; or transgressed any particular law, to which death was annexed as a penalty. In the fall, Adam was the public head of mankind; as Christ, the second Adam, is, in their redemption. And the benefits of Christ's death will be as readily extended to all, as was the consequence of Adam's fall. For, as, in Adam, all died; so, in Christ, shall all be made alive. Nay; herein the favor, received through the second Adam, exceeds the dimensions of the damage, occasioned by the lapse of the first Adam. For, though that one offence, of Adam's eating the forbidden fruit, reduced all mankind to a state of mortality; the favor of God, manifested by Christ, extendeth, notwithstanding many and repeated offences, to justification of life. Again; herein the great goodness of God, in Christ, is remarkably manifested. For, though it was by that one offence, of Adam's gratifying his appetite, in eating the forbidden fruit, that all came under the sentence of death; yet it was not without that one act of righteousness, the painful death of Christ, that they were again restored to life. And, the gentle Christians had no occasion to submit to the law of Moses, in order to partake of the benefit of the gospel; as he farther shows, by intimating, that the law of Moses did not deliver the Jews from a state of death. But, on the other hand, by it's taking place over that one nation, the offences, to which death was annexed as a penalty, were increased among them. There was, therefore, much more favor manifested to the Jews, by the gospel, than there had been, by the law; because the gospel made them offers of life, upon their repentance; notwithstanding the many sins, which they had committed; each of which, by the law of Moses, rendered them liable to death. As St. Paul had said so much, about the mercy of God abounding..."

Gen. ii. 17.

* I have been obliged here to enlarge, (as well as elsewhere;) because an abridgement would have given no light to such obscure places. The Jews, if they had obeyed the law of Moses perfectly, would have attained to life thereby. [Lev. xviii. 5. Matt. xix. 17. Rom. vii. 10.] But, if they disobeyed, in any instance, they were liable to death. [Deut. xxvii. 26. and xxx. 19.] They were, indeed, mortal, as well as other men; as they descended from mortal Adam. But, by the law of Moses, though it eventually increased the sins, to which death was annexed, as a penalty; they had three advantages. (1.) It restrained them from idolatry, and some other great vices, into which their heathen neighbours fell. (2.) They had a trial for life; that is, if they had kept the law, (which was not naturally; though, perhaps, it was morally, impossible) they would have escaped death. Which, without that covenant, was unavoidable to them, as well as to the rest of mankind. (3.) When they found themselves under a moral incapacity of attaining to life, by the law, they were led to regard it, as a severe tutor. Which might make them long for the coming of the Messiah; by whom they were to attain to life, in a more easy and merciful manner. Gal. iii. 23, 24. [See Mr. Locke, on Rom. v. 20.]
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"ing most, where sin and death had most abounded; the gentile converts Write*" might have been in danger of making the same wrong inference; (which he had already obviated, in addressing himself to the jews, namely, Let us then continue in sin, that grace may abound! To which, the apostle replies, with indignation at the thought, God forbid! And then he probable, with indignation at the thought, God forbid! And then he Nero. 4.

proceeds to show, that their initiation into the christian church, by baptism, obliged them to the contrary. For, as by baptism they were figuratively buried with christ, they ought to die unto sin; and, in conformity to his resurrection, to rise again unto holiness of life. And, if they thus lived up to their profession, as christians; they might expect to be actually raised again from the dead; and to live with christ, in glory and perfect happiness, for ever. The same thought he persueth farther, by comparing sin and righteousness to two masters. To serve the first, is to live at present in constant bondage and slavery: and it's wages will, in the end, be nothing but death. But, to serve the latter, is peace and liberty, in the present world; and an eternal life of perfection and happiness, in a future world. Which, though it is not the proper wages of our imperfect righteousness; yet it is what god, out of his bounty, will bestow, upon all such as believe in christ, and sincerely endeavor after righteousness.

He, in the next place, addresseth himself to the jewish christians; and affreeth them, that, by imbracing christianity, they were as entirely freed from all obligation to the law of Moses, as a woman is freed from her husband, when he is dead. But they were still under obligations to live according to the christian law. And, to show the jews the necessity of leaving the imperfect dispensation of the law, imbracing the gospel, and adhering to it alone; St. Paul personateth an unbelieving jew; and pointeth out the unhappiness of his state, under the law of Moses. He, by sinning against that law, was in a state of death. From which, he could not be delivered, but by the grace of god, manifested in the gospel. Not that the law allowed of any sin; but condemned the very desires and inclinations, as well as the outward acts, of sin. Nor was it the law, which brought death, upon those, who were under it; but it was sin, that first prevailed upon them to transgress the law; (which, in itself, was holy, just, and good.) And then, by the power, which it received, from the law, it brought death upon them. Such was the very malignant nature, and pernicious influence, of sin! And such the wickedness of the unbelieving jew, (whom the apostle here personates) that he was in a carnal state, and the willing slave of sin; doing what his conscience condemned, and neglecting to do what he knew to be his duty; highly approving, in his own mind, of the moral part of the law of Moses; but, in his practice, breaking that law, by complying with his fleshly appetites, and living in sin and wickedness. But (as he knew that the law of Moses condemned every offender to death, without mercy,) he had reason to cry out, Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? To which inquiry, the apostle answers: That
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Nero. 4. "confented to, and approved of, the law of God.

... that the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, (or embracing the gospel, and living according to it) would deliver him. Though, till the believing Jew took that method, he would continue to obey the lusts of the flesh; in contradiction to the better dictates of his own mind, which having already shown that the Gentile Christians, who were not subject to the law of Moses, were saved, merely by the gracious method proposed in the gospel; which required that they should not indulge themselves in sin, but steadily and sincerely endeavor after perfect obedience; and having likewise shown that the Jewish converts, who had been under the law of Moses, were saved, solely by the same gracious method; because the law condemned them, for every, the least, transgression, to death, without mercy;—he now cometh to show, both Jewish and Gentile Christians, that they would be free from death and condemnation, if they performed what Christianity required of them; that is, not to live after the flesh, but after the Spirit; mortifying the deeds of the body, and following the dictates of the spiritual part of their make, as guided and illuminated by the gospel. Otherwise, their profession of Christianity would answer no end; but only aggravate their condemnation. Whereas; if they lived pious and virtuous lives, he assures them that they were the sons of God; and represented their having the Spirit, as a proof, which might satisfy them of their adoption; notwithstanding their past idolatry and wickedness. From which consideration, he induceth to arm them with patience under afflictions; as they had such well-grounded hopes of a glorious resurrection, and eternal happiness. The new creature, that is, the Christian, has been made subject to vanity, (liable to frailty, and mortality,) as well as other men. But, the Christian hopes to be delivered from the bondage of corruption; and, by a resurrection to complete and endless happiness, to be brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. And, not only Christians, in general, earnestly wish, and look, for this happy change. But, even we, [Apostles and prophets,] who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, expecting the fruit of our adoption; namely, the redemption of our bodies. For, as many as had embraced the call of the gospel, of what nation, or family, ever; if they persevered in obeying the truth, he intimateth, that God would never leave them, 'till he had put them in the full possession of the inheritance of eternal life, with Christ, in glory: from which nothing should be able to exclude them; and to which, all the sufferings of this life bear no manner of proportion.

This is the reading of some of the best manuscripts and versions. [See Dr. Mill.]
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* prejudiced against his own nation; since he pretended to be the Apostle of the gentiles. He, therefore, begineth this section, with a very solemn declaration of his concern and affection for the nation of the Jews; and of his willingness to suffer those temporal judgements, which were coming upon his brethren; if he could have thereby prevented their destruction. But he, likewise, proceedeth to shew, that whatever privileges the Jews had enjoyed, above other nations; and whatever expectations the promises, made to their fore-fathers, might raise in them; their unbelief, and disobedience to the gospel, would cause them to be rejected. Acts xx. Not that the promise, concerning the spiritual seed of Abraham being numerous, was thereby frustrated. For it was never designed, that the natural descendents of Israel should be the only persons, who were to make up this chosen race. Much less all the natural descendents of Abraham himself. But the children of the promise, as Isaac was, are to be accounted Abraham's seed; that is, all such as imitate his faith and obedience; whether they be, or be not, his natural descendents. That God's casting off the nation of the Jews, from being his peculiar people, under the gospel, was according to his usual conduct, may farther appear, in that all the descendents of Isaac were not equally favored with temporal blessings, or spiritual privileges. For, before Esau and Jacob were borne, God had determined to bestow the land of Canaan, and many spiritual advantages, upon the descendents of Jacob; and to put Esau so much behind him, as that, though he was the elder brother, his posterity were to serve those of his younger brother, Jacob; and that his mountain and heritage should be laid waste; while Jacob's posterity flourished. His granting more temporal privileges to one nation, than another, is, according to God's declaration, by Moses, that he would show mercy, and grant such favors, as he himself judged most wise and proper. For he, being infinite in wisdom, is, in all cases, the most competent judge. He had, formerly, suffered Pharaoh to go on, a long time, triumphantly, in his wickedness. But, when that proud king hardened his heart, after the various means, which God had used to soften and subdue it, God raised him up, and punished him with exemplary destruction; as a terror to mankind, to warn them against like wickedness, and hardness of heart. And thus might God justly cast off the unbelieving Jews, from being his people; as they hardened their hearts, after so many means had been, in vain, tried upon them, to reduce them to subjection to the gospel of Christ. And he might (on the other hand) take in the believing gentiles, who had not been his people, for many ages; and grant them peculiar privileges; as he had done, formerly, to the nation of the Jews; when he depressed the Egyptians. Nor doeth God's makeing such a distinction, in the temporal blessings, which he distributeth among mankind, afford any more ground for finding fault, or makeing objections to his proceedings, than the clay could have against the potter's moulding it into this, or that, vessel. Because, none are to answer, in judgement, for any privileges, but what they have injoyed, in this state of trial. And
"they will receive exactly, according to their improvement, or miim-""Account of the jewish convers to the reception of the gentiles, under the gospel, was, that it was foretold, in their antient prophets. As was, also, the rejection of the body of the jewish nation, for their unbelief and disobedience. For the reason, why they were rejected, was, because they would adhere to the law of Moses, after the coming of the gospel. Whereas; several of the gentiles had imbraced the gospel; and, by that mean, had entered into the right method of attaining to righteousness, and acceptance with God. But St. Paul again intimateth, that, whenever he spoke of the rejection of the body of the jewish nation, he did it with great anxiety of heart; and earnestly prayed to God, that they might imbrace the gospel, and be saved. For, they had a great zeal; but it was not according to knowledge; as long as they sought justification by the law of Moses, and refused the method, proposed in the gospel; to which, even the law itself directed. For Moses declared, that none could attain to life, by the law; unless they performed exact obedience to all things contained in it. Whereas; the gospel is clear, and express, in this; that, whosoever believeth it with his heart, professing it publicly, and making conscience of practising accordingly; (though he attain not to the temporal deliverance, which the Jews expect, under the Messiah;—yet he) shall attain to life and happiness; whether he be Jew, or Gentile.

For the gospel maketh no difference between them. And, if the gentiles were to be received into the number of the people of God, under the Messiah; it was necessary that St. Paul, and others, should preach to them. For they could not believe a doctrine, of which they never heard. And, that they should be preached to, had been predicted; as well as that all would not submit to the clear evidences proposed. In the next place, the apostle intimateth, that the reception of the gentiles, was to provoke the Jews to jealousy. Not that all the Jews were rejected. For he himself was of that nation. And, in the days of Elijah, when that prophet complained, that he alone was left of the worshipers of the true God, it appeared, that there were seven thousand more. So, likewise, there were more Jews, who had imbraced the gospel, when St. Paul wrote "this epistle, than one would have thought, upon a cursory observation. And all these (if they perverted) might expect justification, upon the merciful terms of the gospel. Instead of the Jews, who refused to imbracethe gospel, and who had wilfully shut their eyes against the light, God chose, out of the gentiles, such as complied with the divine call, and they were put into the way of obtaining justification, and happiness. Not that the race of the Jews will be utterly, and finally, rejected. No! in the mean while, upon their rejection, many of the gentiles are (fais he) taken in. And there will come a time, when the Jews will, again, be taken into the church of God; and that, as an accomplishment of the promises, made unto their fathers: when God will also mercifully add, to them, the fulness of the gentiles. The apostle, then, proceedeth to caution"
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caution the gentile converts against despising the jewish christians; or a-busing the privileges, which God had, under the gospel, granted them.

For, if they despised others, and abused their own privileges, they must expect to be treated with justice and severity. And, finally, upon summing up those various dealings of God with the jews and gentiles, for a succession of ages; and his allowing them different blessings, and opportunities; he breaketh out, into a strain of praise and admiration, at the unsearchable wisdom and goodness of God, who is the sovereign possessor of all; and whose methods of providence cannot all be traced, by any finite understanding whatever.

Having finished the doctrinal, or argumentative, part of the epistle, he procedeth to give them several practical directions; particularly suited to the city of Rome, and to the christian church there. In the first place, he diffuses them from indulging bodily lusts; and exhorteth them, instead of falling into the vices of a wicked world, to live in purity, and obedience to God. In the next place, he cautions them against pride, and insinence; and exhorteth them, to look upon one another as members of the same body, who ought mutually to assist and serve one another: and, particularly, that such of them, as had spiritual gifts, should make use of them, so as might conduce to the general good. [For, though the late converts at Rome might, many of them, be destitute of such gifts; yet the christians, who had been banished from Rome, by Claudius Caesar, and had seen any of the apostles, in their dispersions, were, most probably, partakers of the spirit. And so, likewise, Aquila and Priscilla; and such of the christians, as had gone from Judea, or the neighboring countries, to Rome, since the death of Claudius Caesar. And it ought farther to be observed, that, as no apostle had then been at Rome; nor, perhaps, any superior prophet; none but the inferior gifts of the spirit are here enumerated.] St. Paul, in the next place, recommendeth mutual love to the christians; diligence in their lawful business; hope in God; liberality to the poor, and to such as travelled about preaching the gospel; meekness and benignity towards such as persecuted them: to rejoice with the happy, and to mourn with the afflicted; to be humble and lowly; free from malice, and a spirit of revenge; to return good for evil; and to win an enemy, by kindnefs, as most agreeable to the amiable spirit of christianity.

The apostle acquainted the christians at Rome, that christianity alters nothing in men’s civil rights, or duties. Whatever they might lawfully enjoyn, or were obliged to do, before they imbraced christianity; that they might still enjoyn, or ought to do. And, therefore, they were to continue good subjects to their governors; not only out of fear of punishment, but from a principle of conscience, and out of a sense of their duty. For the power, which magistrates have from God, is merely to do good to the community; and to punish none but the wicked. The christians, therefore, were not only to pay taxes cheerfully; but even to pay reverence, fear, and love, where-ever they were due: to abstain...
from idolatry, murder, theft, false witness, and covetousness; and to do to every man, as, in like cases, they could reasonably desire others to do to them. And this virtuous, excellent behavior, he recommended from the following considerations; namely, that the night of this imperfect, afflicted, state of temptation and trial, was far spent; and the glorious day of salvation was at hand. They were, therefore, without delay, to put off the works of their former heathenish darkness; that is, drunkenness, lasciviousness, and strife; and to do such actions one- ly, as would bear the light.

58. The Jewish Christians still retained a great regard to the law of Moses, even in its rituals; and continued to distinguish between meats clean and unclean, and between holy days, and common days. Nay; and this, their opinion, they would have imposed upon the Gentile converts; and reduced them to a subjection to the same laws. On the other hand; the Gentile converts laughed at the Jewish Christians, and despised them, for making such distinctions. The Apostle condemneth them both: the Jewish Christians, for endeavoring to impose such things on the Gentile converts, or for cenfuring those who would not comply; and the Gentile Christians, for thinking the worse of such Jewish converts, as had not got over their scruples. For, if they acted from a principle of conscience, they were (both of them) accepted of God. But mutual cenfuring and cen- temming one another, was undoubtedly a great crime, and taking the work out of Christ’s hands; who will be judge, and determine right- eously, concerning every case. The great thing required, on both sides, was not to offend, nor cast stumbling-blocks in each other’s way. Not but that the ceremonial law was abolished; and it was lawful for the Jewish Christians, to eat of all sorts of wholesome meats, without distinction; provided they could get over their scruples. But, till then, it was more becoming the gospel, for the Gentile Christians to abstain from what was lawful, in the presence of their Jewish brethren; lest they should give oc- cafion, to them, to entertain hard thoughts of them; and so cause shy- neffe and distance among them. Though all distinction of meats was ta- ken away, by the gospel; yet peace and charity were more strictly injoin- ed than ever. The Apostle acknowledgeth, that the Gentile Christian had faith, or a right persuasion concerning his Christian liberty: and he ad- vized him, by no means, to part with, or difsemble, it; but, with respect to himself, or his own conscience, to hold it fast, as in the sight of God. But he was, also, to consider that such, as had not that faith, would be condemned, if they eat of all sorts of meats, indifferently; and acted contrary to the persuasion of their own minds. He, farther, exhorts the wiser, and more knowing, to bear with the infirmities of the weak and scrupulous; and (in imitation of the example of Christ) not to study how to please themselves, but to promote the common good: Which he earnestly prays to God they might all do. He acknowledges, to the Jewish Christians, that Christ himself preached only to their na- tion. But then he, all along, designed that (agreeably to the antient
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Prophecies) the gentiles should, in due time, be called into the church; and he hoped that the gentile (as well as jewisb) christians, at Rome, would have the pleasure and satisfaction, which would naturally flow from the consideration of such a favor; and that they would behave agreeably to the rules of the christian institution. And, then, he maketh a sort of an apology for the liberty, which he had taken, in saying so much to them. But intimateth, withall, that christ had made him apostle of the gentiles; which gave weight and authority to what he said. Not that he boasted of what he had never done. For he had planted christian churches, by a miraculous and supernatural assistance, from jerusalem, round 3. about, unto illyricum; and that, in places, where no christians had been before him, to lay any foundation. And, having done so much, in other churches, he was now desiring to go to Rome, in his way to Spain. For it was what he had desired to do, a long time. In the mean while, he was to go to Jerusalem, to carry a large charitable contribution, raised, by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, for the use of the poor christians at Jerusalem. Which was a sort of a grateful return, for their receiving the gospel from thence. When this affair was finished, he would hallet to Rome; and, among other things, he would impart unto them, plentifully, of the gifts of the spirit. In the mean time, he beged their prayers: particularly, that he might be delivered from the unbelieving jews, who had often sought his life; and that (having successfully managed the present affairs) he might have a prosperous journey to Rome; and see them, to his great comfort and satisfaction.

The apostle recommendeth Phœbe, the deaconesse of the christian church at Cenchrea, to their kind treatment. He saluteth his affectionate friends, Aquila and Priscilla; who were now returned to Rome, and had a church in their house. Which church the apostle also saluteth. Besides many others, he saluteth two; that is, Andronicus and Junias; who were his own relations, and who had been christians before him; and once imprisoned, along with him, for spreading the christian religion: who were, also, men highly esteemed, by the apostles of the circumcision. He, likewise, saluteth Hermas; who is reckoned to have been author of a book, still extant; which is called the pastor, or shepherd. The other persons saluted, are no way famous, at this day. And, therefore, the particular mention of them is omitted.

But it is fit to take notice of the express caution, which he giveth them, against paying any regard to the immoral judaizers; who often made divisions in churches, as well as propagated false doctrines, and subverted the weak and unwary.

He sendeth salutations, from Timothy; from Erastus, the chamberlain of the city of Corinth; and from several others: particularly, from Caius; whom he calleth his host, and the host of the whole church. The fame person, I suppose, to whom St. John wrote bis third epistle. And, after he had, as it were, concluded, with wishing them the favor of our lord Jesus Christ; he broke out again, with recommending them to God,
St. Paul, having finished the collection,

"God; who was able to guard them against the judaizers, and to preserve
them in the true gospel-doctrine, which he preached. And, in hopes that
God would do so, the apostle ascribes to him eternal glory, through
Jesus Christ. Amen!"

It is probable, from Rom. xvi. 22, that Silas was the apostle's aman-
ten, in transcribing this epistle; and that he latinized his name, in
writing to the Romans. For Silas signifies the same, in hebrew, as Tertius
Acts xx. doeth in latin; [that is, the third.]

This epistle to the Romans, was written just before the apostle left Cor-
inth; and was sent, to Rome, by the hands of Phœbe, who was deaconess
of the christian church at Cenchrea; the port, or haven, on the east-side of
Corinth.

CHAP. VII. SECT. IX.

St. Paul, with the messengers of the churches, set out,
from Corinth, to go to Jerusalem. They came to Tro-
as; and there the apostle raised Eutychus from the

St. Paul's first intention was to have failed, from Achaia, di-
rectly, to some port in Syria; and so to have gone the highest
way to Jerusalem. But, when he understood that some of the unbe-
lieving jews had got notice of his design; and intended to way-lay
him, and to take the money from him; and, very probably, to
murder him too; he altered his purpose, and resolved to return, by
the way he came; namely, through Greece and Macedonia. He had
now finished the collection; and was upon the road, with his compa-
nym, to carry it to Jerusalem. From the other parts of Macedonia,
the apostle went to Philippi. Where he had been before, and
had converted Lydia, at the praefuca; disposessed the pytboness;
and converted the jaylor, and his family. Here, St. Luke was with
him,

Ver. 3. a Beza mentions one manuscript, which intimates, that this resolution was
taken, in consequence of an impulse of the spirit. Which reading seems to be con-
}
returneth, with his companions, to Troas.

him, again. For he speaketh of himself, as one of the company; which he hath not done, in any part of the history, since the Apostle's first coming to Philippi. I suppose, St. Luke had been travelling, up and down, among the churches, to promote Christianity, as much as he could, according to the directions of St. Paul. And, being now appointed; very probably, by all the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, (as the Apostle himself was) he went as one of the messengers, to carry the collection to Jerusalem. And he either came to Philippi, along with the Apostle; or met him, by appointment, there. In that Roman colony, the Apostle tarried, during the Passover-week; (strengthening and establishing the Christians, in the faith and practice of Christianity:) For he would not offend the Jews, and Jewish Christians, so much, as to travel that week; which they accounted so peculiarly holy. The rest of his company were gone before, to Troas; where they waited for the coming up of the Apostle, and of St. Luke. They were the messengers of the several churches of Macedonia, and Achaia; chosen, by them, to go, along with St. Paul, with the great and charitable collection, which they had raised. For St. Paul would not, of himself, take the charge of so great a sum; that he might give no ground for suspecting that he imbezled any part of it, to his own private use: taking care, not onely to be, but also to appear, honest, in the sight of God and man. The messengers of the churches, for this service, were, Sophater [or Sophater] of Berea, or the Berean messenger. He was a relation of St. Paul's; and, according to the reading of several ancient manuscripts and versions, he was the son of Pyrrbus, or Rufus; that is, very probably, the Rufus, [mentioned Mark xv. 21.] who was son to Simon the Cyrenaean, whom they compelled to bear the cross, after our Lord, as he went up Mount Calvary, to his crucifixion. For, it is highly probable, that Simon, the Cyrenaean, was a Christian; whom they forced to that ungrateful service; and that his sons, Alexander and Rufus, were eminent, and well-known, in the Christian church, when St. Mark wrote his gospel, and spoke of them; which was some years after this time. Of the Thessalonians, there were Aristarchus and Secundus; and Caius, of Derbe; of whom mention has been made already; and Timothy. The Ephesians, or Asiatics, were Tychicus and Trophimus. These, going before, tarried for St. Paul, and St. Luke, at Troas. Silas seemeth to have tarried in

2 Cor. viii. 18, 19. 1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4. 2 Cor. viii. 19, 20, 21. 2 Cor. viii. 19, 20, 21. 2 Cor. viii. 19, 20, 21.
St. Paul raiseth Eutychus from the dead.

in Greece, to take care of the churches there; and, particularly, that of Corinth. After the passover-week, St. Paul and St. Luke left Philippi; and, sailing down the river Strymon, and over part of the Aegan sea, they arrived in five days, at Troas; where they continued seven days. And, upon the first day of the week, the day, on which our Lord arose from the dead; and which the apostles, and primitive christians, did usually observe, by assembling together, for religious worship; and, particularly, for celebrating the Lord's supper:—Upon the first day of the week, I say,) the christians, at Troas, met together, to commemorate the death of Christ, by breaking of bread, and drinking of wine. And St. Paul (who had come thither the monday before, and waited all that time, to assemble, with the christians, on their stated day) did not fail to be present, when they met together. And, then, he discoursed with them, a long time, about the christian doctrine. For, he designed to take his leave of the place, the next day. Being, therefore, very desirous to confirm and establish them; (as not knowing, whether he should ever have another opportunity to speak to them) though the night drew on; he continued his discourse. Nay; when they had lighted the upper room, where the assembly was held, with several lamps, he protracted his discourse till midnight. Among his hearers, there sat, in an open window, a young man, named Eutychus. And, as the apostle continued to speak so very long, he fell into a profound sleep. And, in his sleep, he fell, down to the ground, from the third story; and was killed with the fall. The apostle, who was always ready to proceed, from the most excellent discourses, to the most beneficent actions, broke off his discourse, upon so remarkable an accident. And, going down the stairs, he fell upon the corpse, and embraced the young man; (as the prophet Elijah did, when he raised the widow of Sarepta's son; or as Elisha, upon whom rested a double portion of the spirit of Elijah, did, when he raised the son of the good Shunamite. After the same manner, acted by the same spirit; and, very probably, in imitation of those two antient prophets, St. Paul stretched himself upon Eutychus;) begging of his friends not to grieve for him; for he should presently be restored to life again, as if he had only waked out of a deep sleep. And, accordingly, the apostle did, immediately, and, in a miraculous manner, raise him to life again. And, returning to the upper room, they carried, along with them, the young man, alive, and well. Which was no small matter of joy; especially to his relations. After this accident, and

St. Paul saileth to Miletus.

The assembly composed themselves. And, when the Apostle had taken some refreshment, he began again; and talked with them, about the great doctrines of christianity, till the morning; and then he took his leave of that church.

CHAP. VII. SECT. X.

The Apostle, with his company, went to Miletus; sent for the bishops of Ephesus, and made a fine oration to them. Acts xx. 13, to the end of that chapter.

ST. PAUL being disposed to go by land, walked a-foot to Assos, a city of Æolis, or Myfia; designing (perhaps) to call upon some of the christians, by the way. But his company took ship, and failed to Assos; where the Apostle had ordered them to meet him. And, when they had taken him aboard, they sailed from Assos, to Miletus, the chief city of the island Lesbos; famous for the birth of Pittacus, one of the seven wise men of Greece; Alcyus, the lyric poet; and Sappho, the poetess. The next day, they came over against Chios; the island, which was so celebrated for the Chian wine. And, in another day, they arrived at Samos, an island in the Icarian sea; famous for the birth of Pythagoras, and the residence of Polycrates, the tyrant. After that, they passed by Trogyllium; a promontory of Mycale, a mountain in Ionia, upon the coasts of the proconsular Asia, over against Samos. And, after that, in one day more, they arrived at Miletus; a considerable city in the southern part of Caria, of the Ionians; of which the old philosopher, Thales, was a native. St. Paul, being straitened for time; because he had resolved, if possible, to be at Jerusalem, at the approaching feast of pentecost; as thinking, very probably, to meet with more christians there, at that time, to differ.
An. Chr. 58. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

St. Paul's speech to the bishops of Ephesus.

An. Chrift. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

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Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.

An. Chrif. 

Nero. 4. 

Book III. 

Ch. VII. 

Sect. X. 

Acts xx. 16, &c.
St. Paul's Speech to the Bishops of Ephesus.

that bonds, and other afflictions, await for me. But no prospect of persecution moves me; neither do I account my life itself, (the last, the dearest, comfort upon earth,) of any moment, in comparison of finishing my course with joy, and faithfully discharging the apostolic office, committed to me, by the Lord Jesus; which is the proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation, to all mankind, Acts xx.

upon their repentence, faith, and future obedience. And now, being hold, I know very well, that none of you all, among whom I have travelled these parts, preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face any more. Wherefore I take you to record, this day, that I am pure from the blood of you all. If any of you finally perish, you must acknowledge, that you have been faithfully warned. And, therefore, the blood of your souls will be required at your own hands. For I have not shunned, faithfully, to declare unto you the whole counsel of God. Take care, I beseech you, of your own conduct: that you may bring no disgrace upon chri-
tianity; but may be examples to others, and an honor to your profession. And watch diligently (as I have done) over all the flock, over which the holy spirit hath directed us to constitute you pastors, or bishops: feeding, with the wholesome food of the true gospel-doctrine, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ; which he has purchased with his own blood. This I press the more earnestly upon you; because, from what has already happened in part, as well as from the spirit of prophecy, I know, that, after I have left you, grievous wolves will enter in among you; not sparing the flock, committed to your care. And, even from among your own selves, there will men arise, who will utter perverse things, and broach pernicious errors, to draw away disciples after them. Be you, therefore, the more upon your guard. And remember,

Ver. 28. See vol. I. p. 48,— 68.

* See the readings of several manuscripts, versions, and fathers, mentioned by Dr. Mill. Some of which read, Κύρις, LORD; others, Κύς, Οίκος, LORD and GOD. Some again read Θεός, GOD; and others Χριστός, CHRIST. But it is not very material, which of them we follow. For Jesus (who purchased the church with his own blood) is, by his father, constituted, both Christ, and Lord, or God.

* There is nothing more ordinary, in the ancient greek copies, than the interchange of these three words, Θεός, GOD; Κύρις, LORD; Χριστός, CHRIST; because they are there written, by way of contraction, thus, Θ?Τ, KT, ΧΤ, which gave occasion to the transcribers to put one, frequently, for the other. [F. Simon's critical history of the text of the new testament, part 2. p. 152, 153.]

The best and most antient copies read this text, and the most antient fathers cite it, {The church of the lord.} See Dr. Clarke's commentary upon forty select texts, p. 127.
St. Paul's farewell to the bishops of Ephesus.

An. Christ. " how long I have labored, and what pains I have taken, among you;

Nero. 4. " (too much, to be all lost and ineffectual!) For, for about the

space of three years; reckoning from my first coming to Ephesus,

Book III. " to this my last, and solemn, farewell; I have, (as opportunity

Ch. VII. served) incessantly, night and day, admonished every one of you,

Sec. X. " with tears, to adhere to the true christian doctrine, and to live ho-

ly and exemplary lives. And now, brethren, having labored so

long among you, and warned you so faithfully, I commend you

to God, and to his favor, revealed in the gospel: which gospel (if

carefully attended to) is fully able, of itself, without any mixture

or addition, to build you up, in truth and virtue; and to assure

you, that, at last, you will obtain the inheritance of eternal life,

among all holy and righteous persons. To bring you into the

way to attain that perfect happiness; and to set the ministers

of Christ an example, how they ought to behave, hath been

my great aim, and constant care. For I have coveted no

man's silver, or gold, or apparel." And (holding out both his

hands) he added: " You yourselves know, that these very hands of

mine have often labored, to provide bread for myself, and for my

companions. By my example, and by my doctrine, I have in-

structed you not to be idle; but to labor, and be diligent: that you

may not be suspected of covetousness, or want the necessaries of

life; but, that you may live in credit, and may have something to

bestow upon the sick and indigent. And, as a persuasive argu-

ment, remember that excellent sentence, which was a favorite say-

ing of our Lord's, and frequently in his mouth; It is more bless-

ed to give, than to receive."

When St. Paul had finished his speech, he kneeled down, and

prayed with them all, before they parted. When he had done

praying, they broke out into a flood of tears; (as, indeed, who could

have restrained!) and fell upon the Apostle's neck; hanging about

him, and kissing him, with the utmost concern, and in the most

tender and affectionate manner; sorrowing, chiefly, because he had

assured them, that they should see his face no more. And they accom-

panied him to the ship. And there they saw their last of their fa-

ther in the gospel; who had manifested so parental a concern for

them.
St. Paul sails for Syria.

Chap. VII. Sect. XI.

St. Paul, and his company, sailed by divers places. They came, at last, to Caesarea: where they were entertained, at the house of Philip, the deacon and evangelist. From thence, they went up to Jerusalem.

Acts xxi. 1—16.

Having parted with the bishops of Ephesus, in so tender and reluctance manner; the apostle, and his company, sailed with a prosperous gale to Cos, or Cos; which was famous, among the islands called the Cyclades, for the worship of Asculapius, and the temple of Juno. There, also, Hippocrates, the prince of physicians, and Apelles, the celebrated painter, were borne. The next day, they sailed to the island Rhodes; famous for the worship of the sun, and the huge brazen Colossus, erected there, which was reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world. It was in the shape of a man, an hundred and five feet high; and was surrounded by an hundred of a lesser sort. From thence, they sailed to Pataura, the chief city and port of Lycia. And, finding there a ship bound for Phœnicia, they went aboard. And, sailing within view of the island Cyprus, they passed by it, on the south-side; making directly for Syria. At last, they landed at Tyre; the metropolis of Phœnicia, and the famous mart of the east. For there the ship was to unload. Finding some christians at Tyre, they tarried there seven days. And some of them being prophets; they, by an impulse of the spirit, foresaw the danger, to which St. Paul would be exposed, at Jerusalem; and would, for that reason, have dissuaded him from going thither. But, when God had ordered him to go, he was of too brave a spirit, to decline his duty, upon any prospect, however threatening. At the end, therefore, of seven days, the apostle, and his attendants, set out again;
St. Paul at Cæsarea. Agabus prophesies.

the Tyrian christians, with their wives and children, accompanying them out of the city. And they all kneeled down, and prayed together, upon the sea-shore; according to a common custom of the Jews, in that age. And, when they had taken leave of one another, the Tyrians returned home. And St. Paul, and his company, took ship, and failed to Ptolemais; which was formerly called Aco, or Ace. And, having paid their respects to the few christians, whom they found at Ptolemais, and tarried one day with them, they set out again. But, as they had now finished their voyage by sea, they went, by land, to Cæsarea, the metropolis of Palestine; where Cornelius and his friends had been converted, by St. Peter, as the first-fruits of the devout gentiles. And, in that city, they took up their lodgings with Philip, the evangelist; who had been one of the seven deacons, appointed to take care of the large, charitable fund; while the christians continued together, in such numbers, at Jerusalem. He was the second, upon their being chosen; and, after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, the first of them. This Philip first converted the Samaritans to Christianity. And, after his converting the Ethiopian eunuch, it is very likely that he settled at Cæsarea; and lived and died there. He had now four daughters; who were virgins, and prophetesses. But the celibacy of the clergy, or of any religious persons, was not enjoined, nor thought a duty, in that truly primitive and apostolic age.

St. Paul and his company tarried, for several days, at Cæsarea. And, in the mean time, there came down, to them, the prophet Agabus, from Judea. It was he, who, some years before this, went to Antioch in Syria; and foretold, in an assembly of the christians, the great famine, which had since happened, (as he predicted,) over all the land of Judea. He now, at Cæsarea, prophesied, as plainly and publicly, concerning St. Paul. For, in the presence of several of the christians, he took up the apostle's girdle. And (after a significant, and very common manner, in the eastern countries, of expressing themselves, by actions) he bound his own hands and feet, and said; "Thus saith the holy spirit, so will the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man, to whom this girdle belongs; and will deliver

Ver. 5. See the note on Acts xvi. 13.
Ver. 7. It is called Ascho, Judg. iv. 31. It is now in the possession of the Turks; and by them called Aco, or Acre. In those ridiculous wars, called the holy wars, this town was, for a long time, the theatre of many, fierce, and bitter, contentions between the christians and the infidels. 'Till, at last, the infidels took it, and made it an heap of ruins, as it now is. [See Maundrell's travels, p. 53, &c.]
"deliver him [as they did his great Lord and master,] into the hands of the gentiles." Upon hearing this dreadful prophecy repeated, more expressly, and with additional circumstances; St. Paul's companions joined, with the Christians of Caesarea, in begging of that Apostle, with tears in their eyes, and with the greatest importunity, not to go up to Jerusalem. To which, he, with the bravery and spirit of a martyr, replied: "What mean you thus to weep, and almost break my heart, with the tenderness and concern, which you express for me, upon this occasion? Do not unman me so. For, (though I am anxious for the welfare of the Christian church, in general; and for you, in particular; yet) for my own part, I am ready, not only to be bound, but even to die, for the sake of my great Lord and Master. And, that at Jerusalem, where he himself was crucified; if it shall please him to call me to die a martyr, for Christianiety, in that city." And, when they could not prevail, they importuned him no more; but said, "The will of the Lord be done."

Not many days after, they loaded their carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. And, with them, several of the Christians, from Caesarea; who brought them to the house of one Mnasor, a native of the island Cyprus, that had been a Christian for a considerable time. Probably, he might be one of the disciples, converted before our Lord's crucifixion. That antient disciple had an house, at Jerusalem. And to that, they repaired, for lodging. For, in those days, they had not inns, and such accommodations for strangers and travellers, as we have now. And, at the great festivals, it was a difficult matter to get a convenient lodging, at Jerusalem: as such vast multitudes flocked thither, from all parts.

With his arrival at Jerusalem, at this time, ended St. Paul's third apostolic journey.

St. Paul is kindly received, at Jerusalem.

CHAP. VIII.

St. Paul is accused of preaching false doctrine, by the zealous Jewish Christians, at Jerusalem. In condensation to their prejudices, he takes upon him the Nazarite’s vow. But, before he had finished the days of his purification, he was seized by the Jews, and imprisoned by the Roman tribune; before whom he made an apologie. He was brought before the Sanhedrim; and afterwards sent, under a strong guard, to Caesarea; to prevent his being murdered by the Jews. There he apologized, for himself, and for the Christian religion, before King Agrippa; but was confined, in that city, for above two years. Upon appealing to Caesar, Festus determined to send him to Rome. Acts xxii. 17,—xxvi. 32.

Sect. I.

St. Paul, and the messengers of the Macedonian and Achaian churches, were kindly received, at Jerusalem. He informs all the elders, in that city, of the conversion of the idolatrous Gentiles. The zealous Jewish Christians accuse St. Paul. He maketh all law-ful condescensions, in order to remove their prejudices; and, particularly, takes upon him the Nazarite’s vow. The Apostle of the Gentiles vindicated, in so doing. Acts xxii. 17,—26.

St. Paul, and his company, being arrived at Jerusalem, the Christians there received them, with pleasure. And not the least so, because of the considerable sum of money, which they had brought, for the use of their poor. The day after their arrival, they all went unto James, the only Apostle then at Jerusalem. And all the elders,
He discloses the conversion of idolatrous gentiles.

elders, in that city, were likewise present. And, after the APOSTLE An.Christ. of the gentiles had saluted them, and paid them all proper respect; he then gave a particular account of what successfull God had given him, among the gentiles. They had long been acquainted with the conversion of the devout gentiles. But now it was, that they first took him to mean the idolatrous gentiles. Upon this information, Acts xxii. therefore, they gave glory to the LORd JESUS; who had extended his mercy so far, beyond what they ever expected.

I cannot here forbear observing, how wisely the providence of God, and the conduct of St. PAUL, concurred, a second time, to bring over the jewiSh christians, to entertain favorable sentiments of their gentile brethren. For, when the devout gentiles were taken into the christian church, the minds of the jewiSh christians were a little soured. But, upon the prophet Agabus his foretelling an approaching famine, the profelyted gentile converts, at Antioch in Syria, made a generous collection, for the use of the poor christians in Judea: Which was as likely, as any thing, to create a favorable opinion of them, among such as received the benefit of it. St. PAUL was one of the persons, by whose hands, that charity was sent, from Antioch, to Jerusalem. And, now again, when the great APOSTLE of the gentiles came to that city, with a very large sum of money; which he had collected, among the christian churches, that consisted chiefly of converts from among the idolatrous gentiles; and which was design ed for the use of the poor, jewiSh, christians, in Jerusalem; he took this favorable opportunity, when their minds were sweetened with such an extraordinary kindness, to acquaint all the christian elders, there, with the conversion of the idolatrous gentiles:— that grand discovery, which he had formerly communicated, onely to JAMES, PETER, and JOHN; the three of the greatest repute among the APOSTLES of the circumcision; and unto them privately, and under the seal of the greatest secrecy; left the zealeous among the judaizers, at Jerusalem, should have got acquainted with it, and thereupon done all, they could, to frustrate his labors. It is very likely, that he now reckoned the gentile christians in less danger of being sub verted. And, possibly, the thing itself could not have been easily concealed, much longer, from the elders of the christian church, at Jerusalem. But, notwithstanding St. PAUL took such an agreeable occasion, of discovering that grand event; yet it seems highly probable, to me, that it put them the more upon pressing him, to clear himself of an aspersion, which his enemies had cast upon him, and which had spread, among all the christians, in Jerusalem. “ You see,
In condescension to the Jewish Christians,

An. Christ. "See, brother, Paul, (said they) how many myriads of Jews have imbraced Christianity. And they all continue zealous observers of the law of Moses. Now, such a scandal hath been thrown upon you; as, that you teach all the Jewish Christians, in gentile countries, to apostatize from the law; and assert, that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor observe the rites and customs, which Moses enjoined. What, therefore, can be done, to clear you? For the Christians of Jerusalem, in general, have heard of this charge against you. And they will certainly come together, as soon as they understand that you are in the city. And your coming cannot be long concealed. Let us advise you to make use of the following expedient, in order to cut off all grounds for clamor and uneasiness.—We have four men, who are under the Nazarite's vow. Do you take them, and be purified with them. And, after that, let the proper offerings and sacrifices be provided, at your cost; that, when the days of purification are ended, their heads may be shaven, and the usual offerings made, for all of you. And then we will inform our brethren, of what you have done; in order to set you right in their opinion; and that they may conclude, that it is an aspersion, which hath been cast upon you. For, as you yourself walk orderly, and observe the rituals of the Jewish law; they will hardly suppose that you would teach all Jewish Christians, in gentile countries, to apostatize from that law.

"As to the Christian converts, from among the devout Gentiles, or proselytes of the gate; [For, of the conversion of idolatrous Gentiles, we never heard any thing, 'till now. But, as to the proselyted Gentile converts;] you remember, that we, in a full and unanimous assembly of Apostles, elders, and brethren, did, some time ago, conclude it to be the mind and will of God, and that the Holy Spirit had plainly signified, that there was no necessity for them to observe the whole law of Moses, in order to their being accepted as Christians. And, accordingly, we wrote a letter; wherein we declared..."
St. Paul performs the Nazarite's vow.

• clared to them, the liberty, which they have in Christ Jesus. An.Christ

- Onely putting them in mind of their obligations, to continue to abstain from these four things, from which the law of Moses requires all proselytes of the gate to abstain; namely, from things of fear to idols; from blood; from what is strangled; and from fornication, or all manner of venereal uncleanness.

- St. Paul, the great, the good, (who readily became all things, to all men; and condescended to the prejudices and infirmities of the weakest Christians, as far as he could do it with a good conscience,) submitted to comply with their proposal. And the next day, taking the four men, he began to purify himself, along with them; entering into the temple, and publicly declaring, that he would observe the separation of a Nazarite, and continue it for seven days. At the end of which days of purification, he would bring an offering, for himself, and the other four, who joined with him; according to what was appointed in the law of Moses.

As this part of the sacred history is thought to be attended with some difficulties; it may be proper to say something, either to remove, or alleviate, them. In the first place: I think it highly probable, from the Jewish Christians, in general, continuing to circumcise their children, and to observe the ceremonies of the law of Moses; and from St. James, and the elders at Jerusalem, putting St. Paul, upon this method of clearing himself, of the charge laid against him:

- From these things, I say, it seems to follow, that the Apostles of the circumcision had not, as yet, a distinct knowledge, or full conviction, of the freedom of the Jewish Christians, from the ceremonial law. As to St. Peter's vision, [Acts x. 12, &c.] I have said enough already. As, likewise, concerning his calling circumcision, and the burthensome service of the Jewish law, "a yoke; which neither their fathers, nor they, were able to bear." For, however we, who have the whole gospel before us, may understand such expressions; the Apostles of the circumcision seem to have extended them, only to the Christians, who had been devout gentiles; and to have had no clear notion of the Jewish converts being absolved from the observation of the law of Moses. For, that they should account it an intolerable yoke, upon the neck of the Jewish chritians; and yet never intimate that they were discharged from it, if they themselves had had a clear knowledge, and full conviction, of it's being abolished; is (I think) by no means to be supposed. The Apostles of the circumcision were so far prejudiced, in favor of the law, and of it's duration; that, for a long time, THEY were not able to comprehend, or receive, such a discovery.
St. Paul's character vindicated.

And much less were the other Jewish Christians, in Judea, able to bear it. Our Lord, therefore, who knew their integrity, bore with their prejudices; and instilled truth into their minds, no faster than they could receive it. For, (not to mention how much the clear and full discovery of this, all at once, would have shocked the Apostles of the circumcision, themselves) to have sent them to the Jews, with an open declaration, that the ceremonial law was abolished, would have been to have crossed the very design of sending them: to have bespoke an aversion to their doctrine; to have stopt the ears of the Jews, and to have turned their hearts from them. It was, indeed, abolished, de jure, from the death of Christ, and the erecting the gospel kingdom. But God took this wise method, gradually to acquaint them with it. Instead of revealing it, clearly, fully, and all at once, to the Apostles of the circumcision; he revealed it, after some years, to St. Paul, the renowned Apostle of the Gentiles. And the knowledge thereof could not fail of coming to the other Apostles, and their converts, when it should be seasonable. This showeth us, why those Jewish Christians continued so tenacious of the ceremonial law; and why we may find much clearer intimations of its being abolished, in St. Paul's epistles, than in the speeches, or epistles, of the other Apostles.

In the second place, I would say something to vindicate St. Paul's character. For, some have thought him culpable, for making this condescension; though the Jewish Christians would have thought him highly culpable, if he had not done so. So difficult a thing is it, to please mankind!—In order to clear up this part of the character of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, it must be observed, that, though the ceremonial law was, de jure, abolished, by the death of Christ; yet as, de facto, the Jewish Christians could not, immediately, get over their prejudices, God in mercy bore with them. And not only discovered the abolishing of the law gradually; but, even after that, left it indifferent, or lawful, for them, (as long as their prejudices remained) to conform to the rites and customs, which Moses had delivered unto them. [See Rom. xiv. 5; 14; 23.] Nay, further; it was, likewise, lawful, for such Jewish Christians, as were convinced of their own liberty, to comply, in some cases, with the ceremonial law. For instance, where there was a prospect of gaining disciples, among the Jews; or of confirming such of them, in Christianity, as did already profess it. Thus St. Paul circumcised Timothy, (as hath been observed above) to take away all offence from the Jews, and Jewish Christians, about Lystra. For, they all knew that
that his mother was a Jewess. And his condescension, in the present case, was not a mean compliance; but highly becoming the most excellent character, and an instance of great goodness. For, what could be more so, than to abridge himself of his own liberty, for his neighbor's good? And, though he knew, and might have insisted upon, his own freedom from any such obligations; yet he would not, for fear of offending the weak and scrupulous; for whom the Lord Jesus condescended even to die. Had he, indeed, by such compliances, declared, that he still thought the ceremonial law in full force and obligation; that might justly have been objected to him, as criminal. But, when he evidently did it, in condescension to the prejudiced and scrupulous; it was greatly to his praise. It was a denying himself, for the good of the public; and seeking earnestly, (as our blessed Lord did) not to please himself; but his neighbors, for their benefit and edification. That this was his view, appeared plainly, from many passages in his Epistles. [1 Cor. vi. 12.]

"All things (all sorts of meats, whether clean or unclean, according to the law of Moses) are lawful for me; but all are not expedient;"

And, [1 Cor. x. 23, 24.] he repeteth the same thing; namely, that "all things (all sorts of wholesome food) were lawful; but all were not expedient. And, that every Christian ought not to seek his own good only; but the good of others also." But the place, which is most expressive, and full, to this purpose; and which may serve, as a key, to all the texts and instances of this kind, is, 1 Cor. ix. 19,—23. where St. Paul, speaking of his own conduct, faith, that, "though he was free from such peculiar obligations, he had made condescensions, both to Jews and Gentiles, as far as it was lawful; that he might bring over, to Christianity, as many of them, as he could; or confirm such, as had embraced the gospel." And, surely, it is almost needless to observe, that the Apostle speaks of this his behavior, (not as unlawful, or criminal; mean, or unworthy the best and most excellent character; but) as the most excellent and praise-worthy, and what would end in a most glorious reward.

I do not suppose that St. Paul did observe the ceremonial law, in Gentile countries; where there were no Jews, nor Jewish Christians, who would have been offended at his using his Christian liberty. But, to such of the Jews, and Jewish Christians, as appeared to be sincere, he made very great condescensions; that he might gain them to, or confirm them in, the Christian religion. As to the present instance: It was at the earnest request of St. James, and of the Christian elders, at Jerusalem, that he now purged himself; joined with the four Jewish
St. Paul's generous and benevolent spirit,

An. Christ. 59.
Nero.

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Acts xxiv.

The apostle's generosity and benevolence towards the Christians who were under the Nazarite's vow; and consented, not only to offer the usual sacrifices, when the days of their separation were ended; but even to be at the whole charge of providing the sacrifices, and other usual oblations. And, "why did he do this?"

"Why! it is evident, he did it to avoid giving offence to the weak, and zealous, Jewish Christians, who were, as yet, strict in their observance of the ceremonial law; and who would have been in danger, either of throwing off their Christianity, if St. Paul had not complied; or of disowning him, and the Gentile Christians, who were his converts." As the charge against him stood, it was actually false. For, St. Paul had not taught all the Jewish Christians, in Gentile countries, that the ceremonial law was abolished. In such of his discourses, at the Jewish synagogues, as are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, he doeth not appear to have said any thing about it. Most of the Jews, among whom he preached, would not have borne such a discovery. And that excellent Apostle was too wise and benevolent, to bespeak their aversion to Christianity, and frustrate the great design of his life and labors. The case seemeth to me to have stood thus:—Though he doeth not appear to have taught any such thing, immediately and directly, to any of the Jewish converts, out of Judea; yet, in some of his Epistles to the Gentile Churches, he had introduced a Jew, or Jewish Christian, objecting to his doctrine; and, in answering such difficulties and objections, had dropt some hints, concerning Christ's abolishing of the ceremonial law. This, coming to the ears of some of the Jewish converts, (most probably, from their assembling, in the same time and place, with the Gentile Christians, and having his Epistles publicly read in their Churches) alarmed them. And, very likely, they communicated it to others; till it spread among the Churches; and, at last, reached Jerusalem; and occasioned the accusation, which we are here considering. However; they had alleged more than the Apostle was really chargeable with. For there were many Jewish Christians, out of Judea, to whom he had never hinted any such thing; either in his preaching, or by writing Epistles to them. He might, therefore, very justly clear himself of that accusation, For he was not guilty; if that had been a crime; as the Jewish Christians, at Jerusalem, accounted it a very great crime. And, if we consider the imprudence of such a thing, it would have been culpable; and attended with bad consequences. Insisting upon his own liberty, and declaring, openly, and all at once, that all Jewish Christians, were entirely free from
towards the zealous Jewish Christians.

From all obligation to observe the ceremonial law, might have destroyed them, for whom the Son of God condescended to lay down his life. And, certainly, that would have been a very great crime! For these, and like reasons, though St. Paul knew, by immediate revelation, that the ceremonial law was abolished, by the death of Christ; yet he had not, openly, and everywhere, published that revelation. For such reasons, he did not, in so many words, say, to the zealous Jewish Christians, at Jerusalem, "that the ceremonial law was abolished; and, that what he then did, was by way of condescension to the weak and scrupulous." No! that would have been to have defeated the very design of his doing it; and would, very likely, have been attended with all the bad effects of his lying under the imputation, or not making that compliance at all. He openly declared, once, to an Apostle of the circumcision, [Gal. ii. 15, &c.] and frequently to Jewish, as well as Gentile, Christians, that "the depending upon the observation of the law of Moses, for justification, was to destroy the gospel, and to render it of none effect." [Rom. iii. 20; 28. and iv. 14, &c. and v. 1. and x. 3, 4. Gal. iii. 11, &c. 18.]

And, by his Epistles to Gentile Christians, which were read publicly, in their churches; before both Jewish, and Gentile, converts; as well as by his general conduct; he gave the inquisitive, and well-disposed, a key to open his whole character, and to show that this particular compliance, was only by way of condescension. To have been more explicit, at this time, would have given his enemies too great an handle; and left the weak, and scrupulous, under invincible prejudices against him. In such a situation, his conduct was highly becoming his own great wisdom; and the extraordinary illumination, which he had received from heaven.

The sum of what hath been said, (in order to vindicate the Apostle's character, in this particular,) comes to this. "He had not taught all the Jewish Christians, in Gentile countries, to forfake the law of Moses. Nay; he doeth not appear to have taught it, as yet, to any of them, directly and immediately. That he took upon him the vow of a Nazarite, because it was an indiff erent thing; or lawful for him to comply with the deep-rooted prejudices of the Jewish Christians. That, if he had not complied, at this time, and in the present circumstances, the Christian of the Jewish converts would have been in danger; or, at least, their charity for, and union with, the Gentile Churches, which he had planted. And, that if he had gone about to explain him-
The Asin jews incensed against St. Paul.

An.Christ. self, immediately, and at large, the consequences would, probably,
Nero. 5. have been as bad.

Book III.
Ch.VIII.
Sect. II.
Acts xxii. 27, 28.

CHAP. VIII. SECT. II.

The Asin jews, spying St. Paul, in the second court of the temple, stir up the people against him; who apprehend and beat him. The roman tribune rescues him. His speech to the people, from the tower of Antonia. They, after some time, interrupt him with their clamor. Lysias, the tribune, was going to examine him, by torture; but desisted, when he understood that he was a free roman. Acts xxii. 27,—xxii. 29.

WHEN the seven days, which were set apart for his purification, were about to be accomplished; some of the jews, who were come, from Asia propria, to celebrate the feast of pentecost, at Jerusalem, spied the apostle, in the second court of the temple. They had seen him, before, at Ephesus; and had been active, in opposeing him there. And now, seeing him again at Jerusalem, they put the people immediately in an uproar. And, laying hands upon St. Paul, they cried out, "Men of Israel, help us! Here is the very man, who goeth about, among the nations, exciting mankind, against the people of the jews; and teaching them things contrary to the law of Moses, and contrary to the honor and sanctity of this holy place, the temple. Nay; and he hath even brought gentiles into the court of the Israelites; and, in doing, hath been accessory to the pollution of this sacred place."

For,

Ver. 28. The prodigious veneration, which the jews had for the law, may be seen, in Josephus, de bell. jud. l. 2. c. 12. § 2. See p. 75, 76. of this second volume.

How careful, the jews were, to preserve the purity of the temple, vid. Philo. de legat. p. 1025. E. and the note on the essay, concerning the abolishing of the ceremonial law, annexed to Titus, p. 66. first edition; p. 458, 459. second edition.

And,
They beat him almost to death.

For, a little before that, they had seen Tropimus, a gentile Christian, from Ephesus, walking the streets of Jerusalem, along with the Apostle. And they supposed that he had brought him into the second court of the temple, called, the court of the Israelites, or of the women. Into which, if any gentile entered, according to both Josephus and Philo, it was present death. This accusation, though false, put all the city in a commotion; and brought a vast concourse of people together; who seized upon St. Paul, in order to kill him. And, therefore, they drew him out of that court of the Israelites, lest it should have been defiled with his blood; and they hurried him into the court of the gentiles, which was not accounted so holy. And, immediately, the gates of the temple were shut. Then they fell upon him, with what the Jews used to call, the rebel's beating. Which was, the people's punishing such as they apprehended, had rebelled against their law; and that, without any judicial process. Their manner of beating them, was, with staves, stones, whips; or any thing, that they could lay their hands on, first. And they frequently beat them without measure; and so unmercifully, that several have died under their hands. [Some have thought, that the Apostle alluded to this beating, 2 Cor. xi. 23, when he saith, he had received stripes above measure. But he could not, in that expression, refer to this instance; because, that epistle was written, long before this happened.] John Hyrcanus, high-priest and prince of the Jews, built the castle, which was called baris; that is, a palace, or royal castle, on a steep rock; fifty cubits high, without the outward square, on the north-west corner of the temple; but, upon the same mountain, and joining to the said square. This was called the palace of the Aminoneans, in Jerusalem; as long as they reigned there. In that castle, the sacred robes of the high-priest were laid up, when they were not in use. When Herod the great came to be king of Judaea, he rebuilt the castle, and made it a very strong fortres; lining, or caseing over, the high rock, on which it stood, with polished, white marble, so as to make it inaccessible from the subjacent valley; and, building the castle itself so high, as to command...
St. Paul rescued by the Roman tribune.

An. Christ. mand the temple, and see what was done in the two outer courts of that sacred place; that he might send down his soldiers, in case of any tumult. And, when he had made these alterations, he called it Antonia; in honor of his great friend, Mark Antony. When the Romans, afterwards, reduced Judea, from a kingdom, to a province, they also kept a strong garrison, in the same place; particularly, at the time of the solemn festivals, when the Jews came, in such vast multitudes, to the temple. And a great tumult being now made about the Apostle; probably, some of the centinels, who kept watch on the south-east turret of the castle Antonia, spied it; and gave notice to the Roman tribune, (who was captain of the fortresse, and had a thousand soldiers under him,) that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Immediately, upon this notice, the tribune took centurions, with the hundred soldiers, whom they, each of them, commanded; and ran down the stairs, which led from the south-east turret of the castle, into the outer cloysters of the temple; and, from thence, into the court of the gentiles, where the mutiny was. Upon seeing the tribune, attended with such a number of armed men, they left off beating the innocent Apostle. And then Lyfas, the tribune himself, took him into his custody, and fulfilled Agabus his prophecy. For, he ordered him to be bound with two chains; as concluding that he was some notorious malefactor. But, when he inquired "who he was, and what was his crime?" he could get no satisfactory account, from that enraged multitude. For some of them answered him one thing; and others, another. And, when he found, that, in such a tumult, he could have no certain account of his crime; he ordered the soldiers to conduct him into the castle of Antonia; up the same pair of stairs, through which they came down. And, when they had brought the Apostle to the bottom of the stairs, there was such a vast crowd of people, pressing them on every side, that the soldiers were forced to take him up, and carry him in their arms. For the multitude followed, in a furious manner, crying out; "Away with him, away with him, to the death, which he so well deserveth." And, when he had got almost to the top of the stairs, and was going to be conducted into the castle, to the place where he was to be confined; St. Paul spoke, in Greek, to the tribune, and said; "Will you give me leave to say a word, or two, to you?" Lyfas, (apprehending it to have been the impostor, mentioned already, whom Felix had opposed, and put to flight) answered: "What, then!"
St. Paul's speech, from the tower of Antonia.

"Then! can you speak Greek? Are not you that Egyptian, who, some time ago, made a disturbance in this country? And, under the pretence of being a mighty prophet, led out, into the wilderness, four thousand of the sicarii?" To which, St. Paul replied, "No! I am not an Egyptian, but a Jew; who was born at Tarsus, the metropolis of Cilicia; a city by no means despisable, if you consider either its grandeur, antiquity, or fame for the liberal arts and sciences. And my present request to you, is, that you would permit me to speak to this vast concourse of people."

When the tribune had given him leave; the Apostle stood at the top of the stairs, and beckoned with his hand, to the people, for audience. And, when a profound silence was made; he lifted up his voice, in the Hebrew tongue, and addressed himself, to the people, in the following manner: "My brethren and fathers, attend carefully to my apologie, which I am now going to make before you." And, when they heard that he spoke in Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic; which was the language, that was the vulgar tongue, and the most esteemed at Jerusalem; and not in Greek, or like an Helenistic Jew, of whom they had lesser favorable sentiments; much less, a Gentile; they were more careful to continue in deep silence. During which, the Apostle proceeded to speak, to this effect:

St. Paul's Speech to the people of the Jews, as he stood upon the stairs, which led, from the cloisters, in the temple, up to the tower of Antonia.

When the Apostle, by beginning in the Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic, language, had fixed the attention of the people, he proceeded to say: "If you would know, how, from a zealous Jew, I became so zealous a promoter of the Christian religion, take the account as follows. I am really descended from the race of the Jews; and was borne in Tarsus, the chief city of Cilicia. But I came, in my younger days, thence; and was educated, in this city, Jerusalem; where I sat, as a scholar, at the feet of Rabbi Gamaliel; who was, as you all know, of the most strict and popular sect of the Jews; that is, a Pharisee. And, by him, I was instructed in the religion of our ancestors; being exceedingly zealous, not only for the law of Moses; but, also, well acquainted with, and strictly tenacious of, the traditions of the elders; as you, in general, are, at this day. And I persecuted this sect; that is, the Christians, even to death;"
St. Paul's speech, from the tower of Antonia.

An Chrifi. death; apprehending, binding, and casting into prison, such as
Nero. 5. professed christianity, whether men or women; as Caiaphas, who
Book III. was then high-priest, could testify; and, likewife, the whole fan-
Ch. VIII. bedrim. For, from them I received letters, to the jews at Damascus,
Sect. Il. when I went thither, purely with a design, to bring all the
Acts xxii. christians, that I could meet with, in chains, to Jerusalem; in or-
4, &c. der to their being punished, as blasphemers of the law of Moses. But
it came to passe, that, as I was upon my journey, and not far from
the city Damascus; about the middle of the day, all on a sudden,
a great light from heaven shone round about me. Upon which, I
fell to the ground, with reverence, and astonishment. And, as I
lay prostrate, I heard a voice, saying unto me, in the hebrew
tongue; Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me? To which I answer-
ed: Who art thou, lord; that I should persecute thee? He
replied: I am Jesus of Nazareth; and, in persecuting my disci-
iples, thou persecutest me. They also, who were with me, saw
the glorious light; and were struck with terror and astonishment.
But they did not understand any thing, of what the voice spoke to
me. However; I myself (being acquainted with the hebrew lan-
guage, and distinctly hearing what was said) understood it all, ve-
ry well; and proceeded to inquire, What shall I do, lord? To
which, the lord answered: Arise, and go into Damascus. And
there, every thing shall be told thee, which is appointed for thee to,
at present? When I arose from the ground, and had opened mine
eyes, I immediately found, that the excessive splendor of the cloud
of glory had so dazzled me, as to take away my sight. Some of
the company, therefore, leading me by the hand, I went into Damas-
cus. And there, one Ananias, (a strict observer of the law of
Moses; and one, that had a good character among all the jews,
who lived at Damascus) after three days, came unto me, as direct-
ed by a vision from heaven; and, putting his hands upon mine
eyes, he said, Brother Saul, receive your sight. And, that very
moment, my sight was restored. After which, he said: The
god of our renowned and pious ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and
Jacob; the same god, whom the jews have worshipped, from age
to age, and whom we christians worship; even that god of our
forefathers, hath chosen you: that you should know his sacred
will; and see that innocent and righteous person, the messiah; and
learn his doctrine, from his own mouth. For you are to be his
witness, unto the world, of the things, which you have already
seen, and heard; as well as of the things, which you are hereafter
to see, and hear. And now, why should you delay one moment longer? Arise, and be baptized: thereby washing away your former sins, and devoting yourself to a life of purity, such as the Lord Jesus requireth; whose name you are to invoke, as well as obey his other commands. According to Ananias his preadiction, it came to passe, that, after some years, when I returned to Jerusalem, and was praying, in the second court of the temple, I was in an extasie; in which, the Lord Jesus, who is the Messiah, evidently appeared in person to me; declaring, by his own mouth, the doctrine, which I was to preach; and giving me the following commission: Make haste, (said he) and depart from Jerusalem; do not attempt to preach the gospel, among the jews in this place. For they will look upon thee as an apostate; and, under such inveterate prejudices, they will never receive thy testimony, concerning me, or my doctrine. I answered; Lord, it seemeth to me, that I am much more likely to do good, among the jews, in this city, than any where else. For, they can never think me an hypocrite, nor scruple my testimony; because they cannot reasonably doubt of my having had sufficient evidence, before I made so great an alteration in my conduct. For they know very well, how I imprisoned the christians, and scourged them in many synagogues. And the jews, in Jerusalem particularly, can remember, that, when the blood of thy holy martyr, Stephen, was poured out, I was present; testifying my approbation, and even keeping the upper garments of the false witnesses, who stoned him. But, after all, that I could allege, for the expediency of my preaching, among the jews; and of the aversion, which I had, to go to persons of other nations; the Lord said again, Depart hence. For I know, very well, how little thy success would be, among the jews; and how much thou wilt spread the gospel, among the gentiles. And, therefore, I order thee to go to the gentiles, in distant nations, and preach the gospel among them. The jews were very fond of persuading the gentiles, to be circumcised, and so to become proselytes of righteousness. But they understood the apostle (as he meant) that he was to go to the gentiles, and receive them into the church of God, equally with the jews; without requiring them to be circumcised, and to become subject to the law of Moses. And, therefore, though they had thus far patiently heard the apostle’s story, and apologie for himself, and for christianity; yet, as soon as ever he mentioned his commission to go and preach to the gentiles, they could contain themselves no longer; but broke out into the greatest rage imaginable; lift-
The rage of the Jews against the Apostle.

An.Christ. 59. the apostle. up their voices, and crying out aloud, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! For, it is not fit that he should live a moment longer." When they made this fresh clamor; and some of them pulled off their clothes, as ready, and prepared, to stone him to death; and others threw dust into the air, to express the highest rage and indignation against St. Paul; the tribune, Lyfias, suspected him to be some notorious criminal. And, therefore, he ordered him to be carried into the tower of Antonia; that there, according to the Roman custom, he might be examined by torture; in order to extort a confession, from him, of the crime, and of the people's extreme indignation against him. One of their ways of examining by torture, was, by binding the person to a pillar, and severely scourging him.

When the soldiers had stripped the innocent Apostle, and were extending his arms to the utmost stretch, that they might bind him, with thongs, upon the block, or short pillar, in order to scourge him, in a terrible and cruel manner, 'till he should become his own accuser; he said to the centurion, who was appointed to attend the torture; "Doeth the Roman law permit you, in this manner, to bind a freeman of Rome; and to extort from him a condemnation of himself, by scourging him with rods, before he hath had a legal trial, and a judicial sentence is past upon him?" Upon that information, the centurion, immediately, went to the tribune, and bade him "take heed what he did. For his prisoner was a free Roman." Then the tribune himself came to the Apostle, and said: "Tell me, sincerely, are you a freeman of Rome?" "Yes, said he; that I certainly am." The tribune (wondering how a man, that made no greater a figure, came by his freedom) answered again: "My freedom cost me a great sum of money; how came you by yours?" The Apostle replied: "I am the son of a freeman, and so came I by my freedom." The tribune, being persuaded that he spoke the truth; and that he was a free Roman; ordered such as were going to extort a confession from him, by scourging him, to unbind him, and desist. Nor was he himself without some dread, of being called to an account, by his superiors, for binding, and attempting to scourge, a freeman of Rome, contrary to the Roman law.

CHAP.

Ver. 24. That this was customary among the Romans, about this time, see Sueton. in Aug. c. 19. Tacit. Annal. 1. 15. c. 56, 57. See also some instances among the Jews; Joseph. Antiq. 1. 16. c. 10. § 2, 5.

Ver. 25. See Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part 1. book 1. chap. 10.

Ver. 28. See Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part 1. chap. 10. § 6, 7.
CHAP. VIII. SECT. III.

The apostle brought before the sanhedrim. His treatment and behavior there. Upon his declaring himself for the resurrection from the dead, the pharisees and sadducees fell into a dispute among themselves.

The tribune rescued the apostle from them. Acts. xxii. 30,—xxiii. 10.

The tribune, (still desirous to know, what the Jews had to lay to the apostle's charge) the next day, commanded him to be brought, from the place of his confinement, where (very probably) he was chained to a soldier. And, ordering the chief-priests and the whole sanhedrim, the great council of the Jewish nation, to assemble, he brought St.Paul down, and set him before them. Actsxxii.

Dr. Lightfoot supposeth that the sanhedrim had, for some years, before this, resided at Japhna, nigh Joppa; but that they were now at Jerusalem, upon the account of it's being pentecost, one of the greatest festivals of the Jewish nation. But, to me, they seem to have resided at Jerusalem. For they were there, when Festus came to that city; and went down, from thence, to Cesarea, to accuse St. Paul.

The tribune might think it highly proper to bring this affair before the sanhedrim, both to oblige the Jews, and as it was a controversy about their religion; of which, it is likely, he understood very little. The present Jewish high-priest was Ananias, the son of Nebedæus; who, by his station, was the head of the sanhedrim. It has been related above, that he succeeded Joseph, the son of Caim; and had been, in chains, to Rome, before this, to give an account, to Claudius Caesar, of his behavior, in the quarrel, which happened between the Jews and Samaritans, during the procuratorship of Cumanus. I suppose, he was acquitted, at the intercession of Agrippa the younger.

Ver. 30. *Joseph. Antiq. 1. 20. c. 5, § 2, & c. 6. § 2.  bSee p. 75; 77. of this 2d. vol.
240  St. Paul's treatment and behavior.

An. Christ. younger; and so returned to Jerusalem, and still enjoyed the dignity of the high-priesthood.

When the apostle was brought before that great council of the nation, he looked earnestly upon them, to see if he knew any of their faces. For, when he was a scholar, at the feet of Gamaliel, he had known most of them. And, probably, if he had not embraced christianity, he might, in time, have arrived to that dignity himself. When he had taken a view of them, for some time, he began his apology thus: "Brethren; I can appeal to God, the searcher of all hearts, that, notwithstanding the grievous things, which have been alleged against me, I have acted without hypocrisy, in the main habit of my life; and have lived with a good conscience, in the sight of God, unto this day."—[that is, When he was a jew, he, out of conscience, acted as a jew. Nay; even when he persecuted the christians, he acted according to conscience; though it was an erroneous conscience. And, in turning christian, and promoting the spread of the gospel, with such zeal, he acted according to conscience; and that not an erroneous conscience, but a conscience well-informed, and rightly guided and directed.] Ananias, the high-priest, being full of prejudice against him, and the gospel-doctrine, condemned this speech, as too boasting and arrogant. And ordered some of the apparitors, who stood by the apostle, to smite him on the mouth; for his taking upon him to glory so much in himself. Though it was, in reality, a well-grounded and just defence. But St. Paul could not have wondered at such cruel and unrighteous treatment, if he had considered, that so had the false prophet, Zedekiah, dealt with the true prophet, Micaiah. So had the high-priest, Pashur, smote the prophet Jeremiah. And, what is more, in like manner had the wicked jews struck our Lord; when he behaved with the greatest modesty and innocence. This treatment, however, exasperated the apostle. Some think, that he was looking another way, and did not see who it was that gave such orders. Others think that, as the high priest had not on his peculiar vestments, the apostle did not know him: especially, when the high-priesthood was bought and sold so commonly; and the romans made such frequent

Ver. 1. See on 1 Tim. i. 13. The reasonableness of the christians religion, p. III. &Episcopius on 1 John iii. 9. That phrase, [a good conscience,] occurs, 1 Tim. i. 5; 19. and 1 Pet. iii. 16. where it signifies [a conscience enlightened by the gospel; as well as followed in life and action." And it ought to be remembered, that St. Paul is here apologizing for his own conduct, since he turned christian.

Ver. 2. 1 Kings xxii. 24. 1 Jer. xx. 2. 1 John xviii. 22.
Before the Jewish Sanhedrin.

quent changes in that office. Which-ever be the true solution; the Apostle knew not that it was the high-priest, who gave that order. But, being provoked at such cruel and malicious treatment; he, in a quick and passionate manner, replied, "God shall smite thee, thou hypocrite! who, like a whitened wall, puttest on a fair outside, whatever there be within. Thou pretendest to sit here, and judge me, according to the law; and yet commandest me to be struck on the mouth, contrary to the law; which faith, "Thou shalt do no unrighteousness in judgment;—but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor." Upon which, they, who stood by, said: "What! dost thou revile God's high-priest?" The Apostle, hearing this, immediately recalled his words; and made an apology, saying: "Indeed, brethren, I have been so long from Jerusalem, and so much a stranger to the changes, which have been made, in that sacred office, that I did not know that it was the high-priest. Such an answer, to one in so high a place of dignity, must be owned to be unbecoming. For it is written, Thou shalt not revile the gods; nor speak evil of the rulers of thy people."

St. Paul still continued to look about him. And, upon recollecting himself, and taking a careful view of the Sanhedrin, he knew several of them. And, perceiving that one part of them were Pharisees, and the other Sadducees; he happily gave a turn to their unanimous proceedings against him, by crying out, as he stood in the open court, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee myself; and the son of a Pharisee. It is for my belief, and expectation, of the resurrection from the dead, (among other important articles) that I am now standing to be judged." When he had said this, there arose a contention between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And the Sanhedrin was divided. For the Sadducees held, that "there will be no resurrection from the dead from

Ver. 3. Lev. xix. 15.
Ver. 5. Various have been the interpretations of this place. I think we ought to follow the plane and literal sense of the words. For, why might not the Apostle mistake, as well as another man? Though he was infallible, as to his knowledge of the Christian doctrine; yet he was not so, in all his words and actions; in common life, or upon other occasions.

Ver. 6. The Apostle here refers, particularly, to the resurrection of Jesus; and, by him, of all mankind. This, all the Jews, long before, knew to be the Christian doctrine: and, therefore, here was no fraud, nor artful gloss, to curry favor with the Pharisees; but only an appeal to their prevailing doctrine; as a point, in which he agreed with them; and, as what greatly favored the Christian doctrine, which he preached, and for which he suffered.
The contention of the pharisees and sadducees.

Christian: "from the dead; nor did they believe the existence of angels, or spirits." Whereas; the pharisees held all these articles; and so far agreed with the Christian doctrine.

Book III. St. Paul's speech revived the old dispute between them. And there was a great noise and clamor; each contending, that what they held, was the only true doctrine. At last; some of the learned men among the pharisees stood up, and argued in favor of the apostle. And (alluding, very probably, to the visions and revelations, which he had mentioned, in his late speech to the people) they said: "As for our parts, upon considering the matter, we find no great fault with this man; whose doctrine you accuse, with so much vehemence. But, if a spirit, or an angel, [the existence of which we hold; though you sadder deny that there is any such thing. But, if a spirit, or an angel,] hath appeared, and revealed any thing to him, as possibly they may; what he faith, ought carefully to be considered. And we should not condemn him, too rashly; lest we be found to fight against God."

At last; the dissention ran so high, that the tribune was afraid they would have pulled St. Paul to pieces between them. And, therefore, he ordered a company of soldiers to go into the council-chamber, and take him, by force, from the midst of them; and bring him safe back, into the tower of Antonia, again.

Ver. 9. 1 Gamaliel was now dead. [See Dr. Prideaux, his connexion, &c. vol. 2. p. 529.] Otherwise, one would have suspected that he had made this speech. It being so very like the speech, which he is recorded to have made. [Acts. v. 39.] Party-spirit now carried the pharisees, to say the same things, concerning Christianity; which policy, and the national expectations, led Gamaliel to say, in the place above cited.
Some Jews conspire against the Apostle's life.

CHAP. VIII. SECT. IV.

The Lord Jesus appeareth, in a vision, to Paul; comforts him, under his present confinement; and telleth him, that he must go to Rome, to preach the gospel there. The forty conspirators against his life are disappointed; and Paul sent to Cæsarea. Acts xxiii. 11, to the end of that chapter.

The night after St. Paul had been before the sanhedrim, the Lord Jesus (who used to dispatch an angel, upon inferior occasions, and to inferior persons; and who, after his ascension, appeared, very rarely, to any, but to Apostles only:—The Lord Jesus, I say, the night after the Apostle had been before the sanhedrim) appeared to him in a vision, and said: "Bear up with cheerfulness and fortitude. For I will be thy protection; and do assure thee, that thou shalt not lose thy life, here. But, as thou hast bravely bore testimony to me, and my doctrine, in Jerusalem, the metropolis of Judea; thou shalt also testify of me, at Rome itself; the seat of empire, and metropolis of the world!" This might be one principal reason, why he afterwards appealed to Caesar, when he was in so much danger of his life, among the malicious Jews. After such a vision, he had the greatest reason to be satisfied, that no enemy could prevail against him, there. However; they did not desist from attempting it. For, early the next morning, above forty of the Jews entered into a conspiracy, against the life of that holy and excellent man; binding themselves under a curse, if they eat or drank any thing, till they had killed Paul. After they had agreed among themselves, they went to the chief priests and elders, to acquaint them; saying: "We have entered into an oath, and bound ourselves under a solemn curse, that we will taste nothing, till we have slain Paul. We, therefore, desire you to intimate it, to the tribune, as your own request, and the request of the whole sanhedrim, that Paul may be brought down, to-morrow, from the castle of Antonia, to the hall where the sanhedrim meets; as if you were
Lyfias sends the apostle to Cæsarea.

An.Christ. "were going to have him examined more narrowly. And we, as
Nero. 5. "soon as ever he cometh out of the castle, and before he cometh nigh
Book III. "you, are resolved, and ready, to kill him." [For they thought,
Ch. VIII. that, by killing the disciples of Jesus, they would do God great
Sect. IV. service.] This conspiracy was not carried on, so secretly, but
Acts the aposta/e's sister's son got notice of it; who went, immediately; and
told his uncle of the danger that he was in. Upon which, the A-
postle (like a man of sense and business) was undaunted; and
composed enough to take proper measures for his own safety. And
would not neglect the most likely means; notwithstanding Christ
had, in a vision, assured him, that he should escape, from Jerusalem,
with his life. He called to one of the centurions of the garrison,
and desired him to introduce that young man to the tribune, as
one, who had a matter of some importance to communicate. The
centurion, accordingly, introduced him; acquainting Lyfias, that it
was at the request of the prisoner, Paul; who said, that the young
man had something of moment to impart unto him. Lyfias, who,
in this whole affair, acted like a man of great wisdom and integrity,
took the young man by the hand, and conducted him to a private
place, where they could not be over-heard. And then he asked him,
"What he wanted with him?" The young man informed him, of
the conspiracy against the life of his prisoner; and added; "They
have agreed to petition you, to bring him down, to-morrow, to
their sanhedrim; under a pretence, that they want to examine him
more exactly. But do not you comply with their request. For
there lie in wait, for him, above forty men; who have bound
themselves under a curse, that they will not eat, nor drink, any
thing, till they have killed Paul. And they are, even now,
ready to execute their wicked designs; and are in expectation of a
promise from you, that he shall appear again, before the san-
hedrim." The tribune charged the young man not to tell any body,
that he had made this discovery: and so dismissed him. For he was
unwilling needlessly to irritate the factious Jews. And yet he was ac-
countable for the life of his prisoner; especially after such an infor-
mation. Moreover; he might, possibly, be still under some un-
easie apprehensions; because he had ordered a free Roman to be bound,
and examined by torture.

When the young man was departed, Lyfias immediately called for
two centurions; and ordered them to make ready the two hundred
foot soldiers, under their command. And he farther gave orders,
for seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen, to set out, along
with
The letter wrote to Felix the governor.

with the two companies of foot, about nine a-clock in the evening; and to provide an horse, or some other beast of burthen, for Paul to ride upon, to Caesarea. And all this strength, and secrecy of travelling, was designed either to elude the conspirators; or to resist them, if there was occasion: that they might conduct him safe to Caesarea; and deliver him into the hands of Felix, the governor. And Acts he wrote a letter, and sent by them; which was to this effect: xxiii. 23.

"Claudius Lyfias sendeth all proper respect, and salutation, to the most excellent governor, Felix. The occasion of my present writing, is this. The prisoner, whom I send along with this letter, was apprehended, by the Jews; and was in danger of his life, among them; till I came, with my soldiers, and rescued him. Since which, I have been informed, that he is a free Roman. And, when I was desirous to know, what they had to lay to his charge, I brought him before their sanhedrim. But I could not, from all that they alleged, perceive that he was guilty of any breach of the Roman law. They charged him, indeed, with the breach of their laws, as to some rites and opinions of their own; but they could prove nothing against him, deserving death, or so much as imprisonment. However; being informed that they had conspired his death; to prevent their executing their purpose, I have immediately sent him away to you. And I will order his accusers to come; that they may (according to the Roman law) allege, face to face, before you, what they have to say against him. Adieu."

Then the soldiers, according to Lyfias's order, took Paul; and conducted him, by night, to Antipatris. It had formerly been called Capbar Salama. But Herod the great rebuilt it; and called it Antipatris, from the name of his father, Antipater. The next day, they thought the apostle pretty much out of danger. And, therefore, the two companies of soldiers returned to Jerusalem, to the tower of Antonia; but the horsemen went on, and conducted Paul to Caesarea. And, delivering the letter to Felix; they, along with it, presented the prisoner. When the governor had read the letter, he asked, "Of what province he was?" And, being told that he was of Cilicia; "I will hear you (said he) what you have to say, when your accusers are come." And, in the mean while, he ordered him to be kept, in custody, in the praetorium, or judgement-ball; built by Herod the great, when he rebuilt, and enlarged, Caesarea.

CHAP.


Ver. 31. * See 1 Maccab. vii. 31. or (according to Reland) capbarsaba. See Reland's palæstina sacra, p. 455; 570.
Some of the sanhedrim appear against St. Paul, before Felix, at Cæsarea. Tertullus his accusation. The apostle’s defence. Felix remains undetermined.

Acts xxiv. 1,—23.

We have already given the character of Felix; who (though he cleared the country of some impostors and robbers) was guilty of a great deal of male-administration; had barbarously and ungratefully murthered Jonathan, the high-priest; and now lived in an adulterous commerce with Drusilla. By whom he had a son, named Agrippa; who, dureing the reign of Titus Vespasian, was, in the prime of his youth, buried, together with his wife, under an eruption of Vesuvius, the famous vulcano, or burning mountain.—By these observations, taken from other historians, it will easily appear, how just an account St. Luke hath given us, of Felix his whole behavior towards the apostle.

Five days after St. Paul’s arrival at Cæsarea, the high priest, Ananias, went down thither, in person, from Jerusalem; together with some other of the sanhedrim; taking, along with them, one Tertullus, an advocate, or roman orator; who understood the roman language, and the forms of address, and who was to lay St. Paul’s crimes before the governor, Felix. Upon the apostle’s being brought into the court, Tertullus set himself to accuse him, with great vehemence; beginning his speech, with some flattering complements to the governor, and ending it, with false accusations of St. Paul, the prisoner. "Seeing that, under you, we enjoy much peace and tranquillity; and, by your prudence, many things have been rectified, and many great and illustrious undertakings have been
and made his defence, before Felix.

"been happily accomplished, unto this nation: We, with great " gratefull accept of such favours, most excellent Felix! at all times; " and in all places. I could easily inlarge upon your prudence, and " other virtues; and upon the blessings of your wife government. " But, for fear of giveing you uneasiness, and trespassing upon your " time and patience, I will procede directly to the matter in hand; " and I hope that you, according to your known goodnesse and hu- " manity, and with your usual candor, will hear me, whilest I " briefly lay the crimes of the prisoner before you. We have found " this man to be a most pestilent fellow; and one, who has raised " seditions and tumults, among all the Jews, throughout the roman " empire. For he is a ring-leader of the heretie of the nazarenes. " And he lately made an attempt to profane the holy temple, at Jeru- " salem; by bringing an uncircumcized gentile into the court of the Is- " raelites. Upon these, and such like, accounts, we apprehended " him; designing to have judged him according to our law; that " is, the Jewish law b. But the tribune, Lyfias, came; and, by an " armed force, with great violence, took him out of our hands; or- " dering his accusers to appear before you. And we do not doubt, " Sir, but that, upon examination, you will find him guilty of every " thing, which we have laid to his charge." When Tertullus had " done speaking, the high-priest and elders, from the sanbedrim, con- " firmed the account; assureing Felix, " that that was the truth of the " case."

By the roman law, both parties were to be heard, before sentence " was past. When, therefore, the governor had, by nodding, given " the signal, for Paul to speak; though he had not one friend in the " court, yet, in an undaunted and composed manner, he spake as fol- " lows. " Seeing I know that you (Sir) have been, for several years, " a governor over this province; and, consequently, must be ac- " quainted with the humors, interests, sects, and divisions of it; I do " the more cheerfully make my apology, before you; in anfwer to " the crimes now laid to my charge. For you must needs have heard " of christianity; and understand more of the Jewish laws, and of " their

Ver. 6. b Tertullus glossed over a tumultuous attempt upon St. Paul's life, with the plausible pretence of their designing to judge him according to their law. And he calls Lyfias his just care of the life of a man, ready to be tore in pieces, by a mob, [a taking him, with great violence, out of their hands.] Not to mention, that the very introduction to his speech, was a flattering an unjust and tyrannical governor, who had, indeed, destroyed a few robbers and impostors; but was, in reality, himself, a public evil. And, take him in his whole character, he deferved no such complements.
St. Paul’s apology before Felix:


24.8 St. Paul’s apology before Felix: their prophecies and expectations, than Lyons, who sent me hither, it seems to do. And you may easily have sufficient information, that it is now only twelve days, since I went up to Jerusalem, to worship God there; to which, as a Jew, I have a right, as well as any of my accusers. But, though I went to worship, in the temple; yet they never found me disputing there, with any man. No! nor making any tumult, among the people, in any of their synagogues, or in the city Jerusalem. And, in one word, they are not able to prove what they have now alleged against me.

But, as to their charging me with being an heretic, and a Nazarene; this I freely confess unto you, that, according to the way, which they call heresy, so worship I the same God, which my forefathers worshiped; and which the Jews continue to worship: firmly believing all things, that are written, both in the law of Moses, and in the prophets; and expecting, that, in due time, there will be a full accomplishment of whatsoever is there predicted; (except what has been accomplished already:)—particularly, such things as concern the coming of the Messiah, and of his kingdom. And, I trust in God, that there will be a resurrection from the dead, both of the good, and of the wicked. Which is nothing but what the Jews, in general, profess to expect. But, as I have such a firm expectation of the resurrection of the just, and tremble at the thoughts of rising among the wicked; I make it the principal care, and study, of my life, to preserve my conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards man. After many years absence, I came, lately, to Jerusalem; to bring alms and charity, to some of the poor of my own nation; as well as to make oblations, at the temple. And, though some of the Jews of Asia pro-pria found me purifying myself, in the second court of the temple, after the manner of a Nazarite; yet I had not brought any uncircumcised Gentile into that court; nor was I attended with a multitude of Jews; neither did I any thing, towards making a tumult among the people. Those Aslan Jews, who apprehended me, and brought me into all this trouble, ought to have been here; and to have accused me, face to face; if they had had any thing to allege.

Ver. 18. If the APOSTLE had disturbed other people, in their religious worship, whether Jews or Gentiles;—invaded their civil rights;—or made any tumult, sedition, or insurrection;—the Roman law would have condemned him. But, as there were already several sects among the Jews; the Christians might (as a new sect) differ from them all; and yet remain under the protection of the Roman law. [See Dr. Lardner’s credibility, &c. part i. p. 250, second edition. p. 423, third edition.]
He is made prisoner at large, by Felix.

"allege against me. But it is a plain evidence of my being innocent, and that they had acted illegally; when they, who first apprehended and accused me, have not appeared against me. But, as they have thought fit to decline coming before you; let the persons, who appear against me, declare, honestly, and with integrity, what crimes they have found in me. Unless they account it a crime, that (whilest I stood before the sanhedrim) I declared aloud my belief of the resurrection of the dead. And, for that, and other such important doctrines, I am now called to an account."

Thus Felix gave both sides an hearing. But, being willing to inform himself farther, concerning the Christian religion; and desirous to know what new light the tribune could yet give him, as to the facts; he deferred the determination, to another opportunity: telling them, that, "when Lyfias came down to Cæsarea, he would inquire of him, and endeavor to know the case, more fully." And he ordered a centurion, or the captain of an hundred soldiers, to take Paul into his custody; but to keep him as a prisoner at large. For he bade him let him have as much liberty as he could, without suffering him to escape; and charged him not to hinder any of the Christians, or of his other friends, from coming to him, and assisting him, as much as they pleased.

While Paul was at Cæsarea, at this time, there happened a dreadful quarrel, between the Jews and the Syrians of Cæsarea, about their title to the rights and privileges of that city. The Jews pleading, that they ought to have the preference; because it was built by their king, namely, Herod the great. And the Gentiles claimed it for their city; because it had formerly been called Straton's tower. And then no Jew had any settlement in it. Besides; it had heathen temples and statues in it; which the Jews would never permit, in one of their cities. From words, they came to blows. And, though some of them were taken up, and punished; yet the rest did not desist, but rather more fiercely maintained the quarrel. At length, the Jews, having the better in a combat, Felix, coming into the market-place, required them to withdraw peaceably;

Ver. 21. When St. Paul saith, here, that they found no avis to signify, in him, when he stood before the sanhedrim; he refers only to the main accusation; [namely, his preaching Christianity, and, particularly, Christ's resurrection from the dead.] He seems to have no reference to his answer to the high-priest; which happened merely as an incidental thing. [See chap. xxiii. 1, &c.] and was not avis a crime, cognizable by the Roman law.
St. Paul preaches before Felix and Drusilla.

They threatened the Romans severely, if they did not. When they disregarded that order, he sent in his soldiers among them, who slew several upon the spot; and, afterwards, plundered their houses. And, when that did not entirely quell them, he sent some of the leading men, on both sides, to Rome; to give an account of that sedition, before Nero, the emperor, himself.


CHAP. VIII. SECT. VI.

The apostle, during his confinement at Caesarea, preaches the gospel, before Felix and Drusilla. After two years, Felix was turned out of the government; but left St. Paul in custody. Acts xxiv, 24, to the end of that chapter.

Felix, and his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess, and with whom he lived in such an adulterous commerce, had gone from Caesarea; and had been absent, for some time. But, after their return to the city, they took it into their heads, one day, during the apostle's confinement, at Caesarea, to send for him; that they might hear him give an account of the Christian religion; which then made so great a noise in the world; and which had spread so far and wide, by his preaching, more particularly. And St. Paul (who knew the character, as well as quality, of his hearers) discoursed before them, concerning the necessity of justice and temperance, or chastity; and enforced his doctrine, by the powerful and tremendous argument of a judgement to come:—doctrines, which his excellence had not been used to! and which awakened his conscience, so dreadfully, as to make him tremble, and fall into a sudden and great disorder, before his prisoner: so that he could not bear it, nor suffer the apostle to proceed.—"Leave off your discourse now, (said he) and go your way, for the present. When I have a more convenient opportunity,

Ver. 25. This was St. Paul's preaching Christ; or the faith of Christ.

[See ver. 24.]
Felix deposed; Porcius Festus succeeds him: 
externity, I will send for you again, and hear you farther.” But An.Christ. 
Nero. 6. 

There is no intimation of Drusilla’s discovering any remorse. It 
has been conjectured, “that she confided in her Jewish privileges; sect. V. 
and expected to be saved, as a daughter of Abraham; notwithstanding 
Acts 
ing the immorality and wickedness of her life.” And, consider- 

As to Felix, he did, indeed, send for Paul; and frequently 

1 For, as he had mentioned his bringing alms to the Jews, and obla 
tions; Felix might think, that that charity was not all distributed. 
2 Or, as St. Paul was at the head of so numerous a sect, as the 

large sum, to procure his liberty. But the Apostle, not being 

used to give bribes, continued in bonds, for two years. For, though 
a Roman citizen might not be bound with thongs, by way of punish 
ment, or in order to be scourged; yet he might be chained to a 
soldier, and kept in custody, upon just suspicions, or when credible 
accusations were brought against him. Though St. Paul was, 
indeed, detained unjustly. 

After the Apostle had been two years in custody, Felix was 
turned out of the government; and was succeeded by Porcius Festus. 
But Felix had behaved himself in so unjust and arbitrary a manner, 

during his administration, that he was afraid the Jews would ac 
cuse him to Nero. In order, therefore, to appease and gratifie them, 
he left this friendless, good man, still in custody: (just as Pilate 
behaved, when he delivered up our Lord to be crucified.) But 
his base treatment of the Apostle did not prevent what he feared. 
For some of the leading men, among the Jews, (who relented Felix 
his punishing them, in a manner, which they accounted cruel and 
unjust; upon occasion of the late quarrel, between them and the 
gentiles of Caesarea) posted, after him, to Rome; and laid such things 
to his charge, as that they would have prevailed with the emperor to 

A quarrel among the Jewish priests.

An. Chri. 60. Nero. 6.

_Book_ III. _Ch. _VIII. _Sect. _VII. _Acts_ xxv. 1.

The people, deputed both from the Jews and Gentiles of Caesarea, came to Rome, according to Josephus; the Jewish ambassadors were likely to have succeeded, and gained their point; had not the ambassadors of the Gentiles bribed Burrus, who had been Nero's tutor, and was then his Greek secretary. And, by his influence, he procured letters from the emperor, to abolish the rights and privileges of the Jews, in the city of Caesarea; which they had, till then, enjoyed in common with the Gentiles. This exasperated the Caesarean Jews, so much, that they would never be quiet; till their factions ended in that war, which so dreadfully destroyed the Jewish nation.

That Pallas was in favor with Nero, in the sixth year of the reign of that emperor; see bishop Pearson's _Annals_, p. 17, &c.

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**CHAP. VIII. SECT. VII.**

Some of the Sanhedrim went down to Caesarea, to accuse St. Paul, before Festus. When Festus would have sent him back to Jerusalem, he appealed to Caesar.

*Lxxv. 1, — 12.*

Caesarea was the place, where the Roman presidents usually resided. And, when Festus came to the province, in order to take the government upon him; after three days, he went up, from Caesarea, to Jerusalem; where the chief-priests, and the leading men among the Jews, (whom time and consideration had not softened) still retained their malice against the Apostle. And, possibly, the more so; as they had, hitherto, been so frequently disappointed. They, therefore, applied to the new governor, and inveighed bitterly.


*Ver. 2.* The ancient manuscripts and versions, of greatest authority, read αὐτοῖς. [See Dr. Mill.]
The sicarii increase in number.

eterly against the excellent man; begging it, as a favor, of Festus, upon his accession, that he would send Paul, to Jerusalem, under the pretence of having him tried there. But they, in reality, designed to procure ruffians; who should lie in wait for him, and murder him, upon the road.

It may seem strange to us, at the first view, that the Jews should dare to raise such frequent tumults, and commit murders, upon whom they please; when there was a Roman president, and such a number of Roman soldiers, among them. But St. Luke appeareth evidently to have known the state of affairs, in Judea, about this time. And Josephus hath given us several instances, and observations, which will abundantly confirm what St. Luke hath said. For, about this time, king Agrippa gave the high-priesthood to Ithmael, the son of Phabus; (who succeeded that Jonathan, whom Felix had gotten assassinated.)—And soon after, the chief-priests began to quarrel with the inferior priests. The leading men, on both sides, gathering a company of desperate and profligate fellows. They came, from reproaches, to blows; and threw stones at one another: raising such tumults, that one would have thought, there had been no magistrate, to preserve the peace of the city. Nay; the chief-priests proceeded to that height of cruelty and injustice, as to send their servants to the barns, [or fore-houses,] to take away the tithes, which belonged to the inferior priests. And they so far ingrossed all to themselves, that some of the inferior priests perished, through hunger and want.

The sicarii also, who sprang up in the days of Felix, were much increased in strength and number, when Festus came to the province; so that the land of Judea, in general, was harrassed by them. For, while the robbers began to appear again, and to burn and plunder many of the villages; the sicarii appeared in the city, and committed incredible slaughters; especially at the festivals. Nor did they always do mischief, secretly, and with their private daggers; but they also would, sometimes, imitate the robbers; and break into the villages, where they supposed their enemies lived; setting them on fire; and carrying away their goods, as plunder.

Can any one, who carefully and impartially considereth these things, doubt of the justnesse of St. Luke's account, when he represents the Jews, as designing to procure men to lie in wait, and murder Paul?
murder St. Paul; upon the road, between Caesarea and Jerusalem? No! the forty conspirators, who had entered into a combination, to murder him, at Jerusalem; and the secret design, which was now laid, to assassinate him, upon the road, if Festus would have sent him to Jerusalem, again; are exactly agreeable to the character of the Jews, and the state of Judea, at this time; as they are represented, by Josephus, a Jewish historian; who was, himself, one of their priests; and was now above twenty years old. So that he was personally acquainted with the state of the nation; and was too fond of laying things in their favor, to have given us such a representation; if the facts had not been too flagrant, and too notorious, to have been concealed.

Though the chief priests, and leading men of Jerusalem, beged it as a favor, that Paul might be sent back, to them, from Caesarea; Festus refused to gratifie them. Possibly, he might have had some information of their former designs; and of the reason why Lysias sent the Apostle, with such strength and secrecy, to Caesarea. But, whether he did, or did not, suspect their designs; upon the life of his prisoner, he answered: "As Paul is in custody, at Caesarea; and I myself design, shortly, to return thither; it would be much better for such of you, as are his accusers, and can go with convenience, to go down along with me, and appear against him, at Caesarea; if he hath actually been guilty of any breach of the Roman law, for which he deserves punishment." [So much more just and merciful were the Roman governors, than the Jews, of that age; who were fallen into an amazing degeneracy, and filling up the measure of their iniquity, 'till at last they became ripe for vengeance!] When Festus had tarried, about ten days, at Jerusalem, he returned to Caesarea; and several of the leading men of the Jews, of Jerusalem, along with him. The day after their arrival, he (as willing to gratifie them, by dispatching the affair) summoned a court. And, when he had seated himself upon the tribunal, and the Jerusalem Jews were standing round about him, he commanded the Apostle to be brought before him. As soon as he appeared at the bar, his old enemies began, with great malice and virulence, to accuse him; laying many and aggravated crimes to his charge. But they could not prove what they alleged against him. And so he told them, when the governor allowed him, in his turn, to make his defence: "Whatever you may allege, (said he,) I am guilty of no crime, against the Jews, or against the temple, or against Caesar, the Roman emperor." Upon this, Festus, the governor, (who was unwilling to
The apostle appeals to Cæsar.

He appealed to Jerusalem, without his own consent; and yet willing to oblige the Jews, as much as he lawfully could: asked Paul: "Seeing you know that you are innocent; will you consent to go up to Jerusalem; and there be tried, before me, concerning the things, which the Jews lay to your charge?" The apostle knew his own rights and privileges, as a free Roman; and was too well apprised of the treachery and malice of the Jews, to consent to any such thing; and therefore answered: "I am now standing before Cæsar's tribunal, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong; as you yourself must know very well. If I have, indeed, been guilty of any crime; let me be fairly tried, and punished for it. And, if I be found guilty of any capital crime; I refuse not to satisfy the law, with my death. But, if there be no truth in their accusations, as I am well assured there is none; no man can lawfully deliver me into their hands, so as to gratify them, with my death. I appeal unto Cæsar."—For those, who had the freedom of the city of Rome, had the privilege of appealing to the emperor, before sentence was past upon them; if they apprehended that justice would not, otherwise, be done them. And, after such an appeal, they were to be reserved to be judged by the emperor himself.

St. Paul, indeed, doeth not appear to have absolutely appealed to Cæsar; but only conditionally; that is, rather than be sent to Jerusalem, again, (as Festus had proposed) he claimed his privilege, and insisted upon being heard, before Cæsar. And, because the appeal was only conditional; Festus confered with his own Roman council.

Ver. 10. Gratius quoteth the following words, from Ulpian; l. i. D. de officio procuratoris Cæsaris. "Quæ acta gestaque sunt a procuratore Cæsaris, sic abs a come probantur, atque si a Cæsare geruntur. Those things, which are acted, and done, by Cæsar's procurator, are so approved of him, as if they had been done by Cæsar himself." So that, when St. Paul was standing before Festus, the procurator of that province; he might, very justly, be said to be standing before Cæsar's tribunal.

Ver. 11. "Ante sententiam appellari potest, in criminali negotio; si [scil. judex] contra leges hoc faciat. Before the sentence be past, in criminal cases, they may appeal to Cæsar; if the judge act contrary to the law." L. ante D. de appellacionibus recipiendis. [vid. Grat. in loc.] "Lege Julianâ de republicâ condemnatori, qui aliquâ potestate praeditus; eis remotum ad imperatorem appellatorum, necarit, necarit jussedit, torserit, verberavit, in publica vincula duci jussedit." By the Julian law, any person in power is guilty of open violence, or injustice; if, when a Roman citizen hath appealed to the emperor, he should kill him, or command him to be killed, torture, beat, or command him to be thrown into a common jail. Pauli Recept. Sentent. l. 5. tit. 26. Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel-biography, part 1. p. 539, 541. third edition.
Agrippa and Bernice; their character.

An. Chr. c.s, what he had best to do. The result of which consultation, was, that he declared unto the Apostle; "As you have appealed unto Cæsar, unto Cæsar you shall go." For he was afraid to condemn a person so innocent; and yet very desirous to rid his hands of an affair, about which, the Jews were so very troublesome; and in which he was willing to gratify them so far, as not to acquit the Apostle, without farther examination; though he could not legally condemn him.


CHAP. VIII. SECT. VIII.

King Agrippa and Bernice went to visit Festus. He acquaints them with St. Paul's case. The king being desirous to hear him, the Apostle is brought from the prison; and made such an excellent defence, before them, that he gained the good will of that grand audience; and almost converted king Agrippa to Christianity. Acts xxv. 13,—xxvi. 32.

I suppose the reader is already acquainted with the character of king Agrippa the younger; that was son to Herod Agrippa, whose tragical death is related, Acts xiith. He was in profession a Jew, and had the power of the temple, and the sacred treasury; and could likewise dispose of the high-priesthood, as he thought proper. As to Bernice, his sister: she was the eldest daughter (A Herod Agrippa; and had been contracted in her infancy, by Claudius Cæsar, to Marc, the son of Alexander Lysimachus, the alabarch. But, he dying, before the marriage was consummated, her father married her to his own brother, Herod, king of Chalcis; though that was contrary

contrary to the law of Moses. After his death, she went and lived with her brother Agrippa; with whom she was suspected of an incestuous commerce. To wipe off that aspersion, she endeavored to marry again; offering herself to Polemon, king of Cilicia, upon a condition that he would become a proselyte of righteousness to the Jewish religion. Polemon, who had more regard to the riches, than to a lady of such a character, consented to be circumcised, and actually married her. But Bernice did not continue long with her husband; which occasioned his casting off the Jewish religion. And, notwithstanding the scandal, which she had formerly lain under, she went and lived where she pleased: not only continuing in the good graces of her brother Agrippa; but, afterwards, insinuating herself so far into the affections of Titus Vespasian, as to occasion much discourse. For she was a lady of great beauty, and very generous and liberal. Nay; she had even the prospect of being empress; had not the murmurs of the people of Rome prevented it.

This Agrippa the younger, and his sister Bernice, went down to Caesarea, to congratulate Festus, upon his accession to the government of that province. And, when they had been there some days, Festus, among other discourse, acquainted the king with the case of the apostle. "There is (said he) a man left in custody, by Felix; concerning whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief-priests and elders of the Jews were very importunate, with me, to pass sentence upon him. To whom I answered, It is not the custom..."

Rich chrysolites of the rock she takes up there;
 huge Agate vases, and old China ware.
 Then Bernice's ring her finger proves,
 More precious made by her incestuous lover.
 And infamously dear; a brother's bribe,
 Ev'n God's anointed, and of Judah's tribe:
 Where barefoot they approach the sacred shrine,
 And think it only sin to feed on swine.

The ring, that he here mentions, was of great value; and was given, by this Agrippa, to his sister Bernice. She wore it publicly; and thereby made their incestuous loves more talked of.

Tacit. hist. I. 2. c. 2, & 8t.
Sueton. in Tit. c. 7. Dio x Xiphilin. I. 66. p. 752. alias 753.
St. Paul is brought before king Agrippa.

An. Christ. " of the Romans to gratifie any with another man's destruction;
Nero. 6. especially, before the person accused have his accusers face to
Book III. face, and liberty to make his own defence; that he may clear
Ch. VIII. himself of the crime, if he can. When, therefore, his accu-
Sec. VIII. sers were come, from Jerusalem, to this city, I was willing to dis-
Acts xxv. patch the affair. And, the very next day, I was in judgment;
16, &c. and commanded the man to be brought before me. His accusers
were, indeed, very vehement. But they did not so much as al-
lege any rebellion, fraud, murther, or sedition, against him;
nor any such crimes, as I supposed they would have laid to his
charge. But they put some questions to him, concerning their
own religion; and about one Jesus, (I think they called him,) the
who was dead. But Paul confidently affirmed that he was risen
again; and that he is still alive. And, because these were such
controversies, as I could not tell what to say to; and was doubt-
ful, whether they came properly under my cognizance; or whe-
ther such religious disputes among the Jews should not rather be re-
tered to the Sanhedrim; I asked the prisoner, if he was willing
to go to Jerusalem; and, there, be judged, concerning these
things? But, he appealed to our August emperor, and insisted
upon his being heard before him. I, therefore, ordered him to
be kept in custody, till I should have an opportunity to send
him to Caesar.

King Agrippa, had, no doubt, frequently heard of Christ, and
his disciples; and remembered, very probably, his father's putting
the Apostle James to death; and of the design, which he had,
also, upon the life of Peter. And (though Festus was come late-
ly into that country, and knew little of their opinions and customs;
yet the king) understood the Jewish doctrines, disputes, and expec-
tations; and had heard frequent reports of the spreading of Chris-
tianity; notwithstanding his father, and the Jews in general, had in-
deavored to crush it. Nay; it is not unlikely, but that he might
be acquainted with the character of St. Paul himself. For these,
or

Ver. 16. * Cic. in Verr. 1. 4. c. 40, 41. & 1. 5. c. 23 ; 109. See Dr. Lardner's
credibility, &c. part i. book i. chap. 10. § 8.

Ver. 19. " See Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel history, as quoted in the note on
Acts xvii. 22.

* From this, as well as many other places, in the Acts of the Apostles, it is
evident, that St. Luke hath, generally, given us no more than the substance of the
speeches. For there is nothing of this, related in the place, where he mentions what
pallied, when the Apostle made his first apology, before the governor Festus.
or like reasons;—as *Herod Antipas* desired to see our Lord, of *An.Christ.* whom he had heard so much; it is no wonder that *Agrippa* had the curiosity to see, and hear, the *great Apostle of the gentiles*. Accordingly; upon the information, which *Festus* had given him; *king Nera. 6.* *Agrippa* defied it, as a favor, that he might be permitted to hear him. To which, *Festus* readily replied: "Well, to-morrow you shall hear him." The next day, *Agrippa*, with his sister *Bernice*, xxv. 22, came to the *pretorium*, or *judgement-hall*, with a numerous and splendid retinue; making a most pompous and magnificent appearance. And, along with them, there came the *tribunes*, and other *roman officers*; and the principal persons of the city *Caesarea*. And, when they were seated; *Festus* gave orders that *Paul* should be brought. Who came presently, in his humble garb, and (as it should seem) with his chains on. But, his inward integrity was more honorable, and of greater excellence, than all their external pomp and grandeur. When the prisoner appeared, *Festus* addressed himself to the audience, and said: "King *Agrippa*; and all you, who are here present; look upon this man! For this is the remarkable person, against whom, the body of the *jews*, both at *Jerusalem*, and here in *Caesarea*, have interceded with me; desiring that I would put him to death; and crying out, with great vehemence, that he ought not to live any longer. But I declare, that, though I have examined him, I have not found that he hath done any thing, to deserve his being put to death. And, besides, as he hath appealed to *Caesar*; I am determined to send him to *Rome*, as soon as I have an opportunity. But having, as yet, no certain proof of his being guilty of any crime against the *roman law*; I do not know, very well, what to write unto my *sovereign lord*. I have, therefore, brought him out, before this company; and especially before you, *king Agrippa*; that, by a fresh examination of the affair, before a person of such skill, both in the *jewish* and *roman laws*, I may the better know how to lay the accusation before the *emperor*. For, to me, it seems very absurd, to send a prisoner, without signifying the crimes, which are alleged against him."—*Festus* knew very well the account, which *Felix* had left behind him; and the accusations of the leading men, among the *jews*, both at *Jerusalem* and *Caesarea*. Yet he was at a losse, what to allege against the *Apostle*; because the *romans* had then no *laws* against the *christians*. They were, fo

*Ver. 23.* *See the second dissertation, annexed to the paraphrase and notes on Philemon*; second edition.
St. PAUL'S SPEECH before king Agrippa, Bernice, Festus, the roman tribunes, and the leading men of the city Cæsarea.

Then Agrippa, turning to the APOSTLE, said, “You have leave to speak for yourself.” Upon which, he stretched forth his hand to the people, that they might keep silence; and then said: “I think it no small advantage to me, and my righteous cause, O king Agrippa, that I have this day an opportunity to speak for myself, before a person of so much understanding and humanity; concerning all the crimes, which the jews lay to my charge; especially, seeing I know you to be so well acquainted with all the sects, among the jews; and with their several opinions, ritual observations, customs, prophecies, and expectations. Wherefore, I desire you to hear me with patience and candor. I came to Jerusalem, in my youth; and was educated, in my own nation, at the feet of Gamaliel. And how I behaved there, the jews, in general, know very well; who have, indeed, known me from the beginning of my appearance in the world, and can testify (if they please) that, according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived a pharisee. And now, I am called in question, for my hope in that great promise of a resurrection to eternal life, which god made unto our fathers: In the faith and hope of which promise’s being accomplished, in due season, the twelve tribes of Israel.

Ver. 3. or vσνδινησσω, [knowing,] is the reading, in some of the ancient manuscripts and versions, mentioned by Dr. Mill; which reading is followed, in our common English version. However; several learned men have thought it an addition to the text; for which there is no occasion. What seems to have led some of the transcribers to have inferred such a word, was, that σαν and vννων are of different cases. But, for a genitive case absolute, the Attics put the accusative absolute, without regarding what went before, or followed after.
and the principal men of the city Caesarea.

"Israel\(^k\) intensely serve God, night and day.—And yet, for regard—An. Christ. 60.

"ing this promise, O king Agrippa, and hoping for it's being ac-

"complified, I am accused, by the Jews; as if I was the worst of

"malefactors. They, indeed, expect a temporal Messiah. But I Book III. Ch. VIII.

"look upon Jesus of Nazareth to be the very person, described by Sec. VIII.

"the prophets. And hold, that, as a most convincing proof of Acts

"his being the Messiah; he, on the third day, rose again from the dead. What! do you deem it a thing incredible, that a God of

"infinite power should raise the dead to life again? Or was it un-

"becoming the divine wisdom, to raise so extraordinary a person,

"as Jesus of Nazareth? Concerning this last, you, perhaps, will

"hesitate. Nay; I must own, that I once did think it my duty,

"to do many things, in opposition to the name, or doctrine, of

"that sacred person. Which I also did, even at Jerusalem. And

"several of the Christians, his followers, I shut up in prison; have-

"ing received, from the chief-priests, power and authority, for that

"very purpose. And, when some of them were put to death, I

"freely gave my voice against them; joining with their bitterest

"enemies, and heartily approving of their being cut off. I fre-

"quently punished others of them, in several of the Synagogues of

"the Jews. And, by my severity to them, I compelled them to

"blaspheme Jesus, and speak evil of his doctrine. Nay; being

"outrageously mad against them, I persecuted them, beyond the

"borders of Judea, and into distant and strange cities.

"You will, doubtless, be apt to inquire, how I came so very

"much to alter my sentiments? But the reasons were strong;

"and the evidences such as I dared not to resist. For, as I was go-

"ing to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief-

"priests, to apprehend the Christians, and carry as many of them,

"as I could find there, in chains, to Jerusalem: about the middle

"of the day, O king! as I was almost entering the city, I saw

"a light, which came down from heaven, and surrounded me and

"my company. A light, which far exceeded the splendor of the

"sun, even in his meridian brightness! So awful was the appear-

"ance, that we all fell prostrate. And I, alone, heard a voice,

"speak-

Ver. 7. Great numbers of the ten tribes returned, with the two tribes of Judah

and Benjamin, from the Babylonish captivity. [Ezra vi. 16, 17. and viii. 35. Luke

ii. 36.] And many of them, who did not return to the land of Canaan, did, never-

theless, entertain hopes of the coming of the Messiah; and of a resurrection, and

future state of happiness.

That great numbers of the 12 tribes were still in being, see the history before the

paraphrase and notes on St. James, p. 14, &c.
St. Paul's speech before king Agrippa; &c.


Book III. Ch. VIII. Sect. VIII. Acts xxvi. 14, &c.

speaking unto me, in the Hebrew tongue, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me; who am induced with such power, as will, if thou continuest to resist it, in the end, prove thy ruine? For it is, in effect, like kicking against spikes." Upon that, I inquired, "Who art thou, Lord! that I should be charged with persecuting thee?" To which, the Lord replied: "I am JESUS of Nazareth; whom thou persecutest, with so much zeal and fury.

"For persecuting of my disciples, is, in effect, to persecute me. However; arise, and stand upon thy feet. For I have made this glorious appearance, unto thee; on purpose to constitute thee a minister, and a witness, both of the things, which thou hast now seen; and of the things, about which I will, hereafter, appear unto thee. And, as I employ thee, I will protect and deliver thee; both from the people of the Jews, unto whom I now send thee; and from the Gentiles, unto whom I will hereafter send thee: — to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness unto light; and, from idolatry, and subjection to Satan, unto the living and true God; that, upon conforming to the Christian revelation, they may receive a full remission of all their past sins; and, at last, obtain the inheritance of eternal life, a-

Ver. 17. 1 Beza mentions two manuscripts, and Dr. Mill adds the Syriac version, which read τῶν Ἰουδαίων [of the Jews] after λαοὺς [the people.] But, [by the people], in the new testament, is, commonly, meant the Jews. That, therefore, seems to be the true interpretation, though not the true reading.

m Instead of ἔμειναι, I now send thee; some of the most antient and best manuscripts and versions, mentioned by Dr. Mill, leave out ἔμειναι [now] and others read ἐσώθης, I will send thee: intimating that St. Paul is here giving an account of Christ's glorious appearance to him, at his conversion to Christianity, when his apostleship to the Gentile world was a future and distant event.

Some have thought, "that St. Paul received his commission, to go and preach, directly, to the idolatrous Gentiles, when he was converted to the Christian faith, on the road to Damascus." But, if he then received a commission to go, directly, to preach to the idolatrous Gentiles; it seems strange that there should be no clear proof that he did so. That he should then receive his whole commission, in general terms, which were to be explained, afterwards, and gradually, is exactly agreeable to our Lord's giving the other Apostles, their commission, Matt. x. 1, &c. For there are several things, in that commission, relating to their second expedition; which commenced after the death of our Lord, and the effusion of the spirit. For instance, what is said, Matt. x. 18, &c. And yet, the commission is introduced, as if it had related to their first expedition only; namely, that which took place, before our Lord's death, when they went to the Jews, in the land of Israel; and to them alone. Matt. x. 5, 6, 7. [Compare Matt. xxviii. 19. and Mark xvi. 15. with Acts x. 1, &c.] This, together with the various reading, mentioned above, may induce us to think that, on the road to Damascus, St. Paul might receive his commission at large. And that the particulars of it were opened afterwards, and at different times and places.
Festus chargeth St. Paul with madneffe.

"mong such as are purified, by the same gospel method." After I An. Chr. 60.
"had received all these evidences of the resurrection of Jesus from Nero. 6.
"the dead, and of his present state of glory; and was fully con-
"vinced that he was the promised Messiah; O king Agrippa, I was Book III.
"not disobedient to the directions, which I had received from the Ch. VIII.
"heavenly glory: but immediately embraced the christian faith, Acts
"myself; and preached it, as soon as I had opportunity, unto xxvi. 18.
"others: —First unto the Jews at Damascus, and Arabia; then
"in Jerusalem, and through the whole country of Judea; and,
"after that, to the gentiles: admonishing them to repent, and turn
"unto God; practicing things becoming such a profession of re-
"pentance. These are my crimes! these the reasons, why the Jews
"apprehended me, in the temple; and attempted, in a tumultuous
"manner, with their own hands, to take away my life! Since that,
"ruffians have laid in wait, to assassinate me. And such, indeed,
"has been the opposition, which I have met with, that it is, through
"the extraordinary favor and protection of God, that I am alive, at
"this day; to witneffe, both to persons of the lowest degree, and
"to persons of dignity and distinction, (such as those, before whom
"I now stand!) that the Messiah, spoken of by Daniel, was to suffer,
"and that he should be the first, who should rise again from the
dead, never to die any more. And, that he should be a light to
"inlighten the gentiles, as well as the people of Israel.

When St. Paul had proceeded so far, in his apology, Festus, who
had been, but a little while, the procurator of that province, and
who was very much unacquainted with the Jewish and christian
religion, cried out; "Certainly, Paul, you are beside yourself!
"Your over-much learning hath turned your head, and brought on
"this unaccountable madness." To which the Apostle replied,
"with the utmost decency and justness; "I am not mad, most excel-
"lent Festus! For what I speak is true, and proceeds from a found
"mind. It is only your unacquaintedness with the sacred write-
ings of the Jews, and with what hath lately been done, towards
"planting Christianity in the world, which makes these things appear
"so strange and unaccountable to you. They appear in a very dif-
"ferent light to the king, who very well understandeth such things;
"and before whom I, therefore, speak with the more freedom and
"planeness. For I am satisfied he must have heard of these
"things, once and again; because they have been made no secret
"of, nor were they transacted in a corner; but exposed to the pub-

Agrippa is almost persuaded to be a christian.

An. Chrift. 60.
Nero. 6.

"Give me leave to ask you: Do not you believe the predictions of the prophets? But, why do I ask such a question? I know that you are a professed Jew, and am fully persuaded that you do believe the predictions of the prophets. Neither do I doubt of your capacity, to discern how exactly they are accomplished, in Jesus of Nazareth." Upon which, Agrippa said unto Paul: "You almost persuade me to be a christian." The apostle replied, in the most benevolent and engaging manner, and with great affection and earnestness: "Would to God, that not only you, O king; but also, all, that now hear me, were not only almost, but altogether such as I am; except the misery and disgrace of these chains." And, when he had said thus, the king rose up, and his sister Bernice, and all the company. But, the leading persons were so affected with his apology, that they all agreed, he had done nothing to deserve death, or so much as imprisonment. And king Agrippa, in particular, (who was well acquainted with both the Jewish and Roman laws; and knew what was criminal, and what not) declared it, to Festus, as his opinion, that he ought to have been released, immediately; if he had not appealed to Caesar. For, after an appeal to Caesar, the judge, from whom he appealed, could no more absolve, than condemn, him. The whole affair was, after that, to be referred to the cognizance, and determination, of the emperor.

Ver. 29. "When I consider this apostle as appearing, either before the witty Athenians, or before a Roman court of judicature, in the presence of their great men and ladies; I see how handsomely he accommodateth himself to the apprehensions, and temper, of those politer people, &c." Lord Shaftsbury's characteristics, vol. J. p. 30.

St. Paul is thought to have had his chain now wrapt about his own arm; and that he was not chained to a soldier, whilst he stood before this grand and numerous audience. [See the second dissertation, annexed to the paraphrase and notes on Phil.]
Some farther account of the reign of Nero; and of the affairs of the Jews.

Seneca and Burrus conspired together, and de vested Agrippina, the mother of the emperor Nero, of the power, which she had used, in so arbitrary and insolent a manner. [Dio, p. 689, &c.] And, when they had got the power into their own hands, they generally made a good use of it. Though, in some instances, they are branded by the antient historians. And, particularly, Seneca is blamed; from whom, a better behavior, and a more just and mer ciful administration, might have been expected; as he made so great pretences to moral philosophy, and has so frequently recommended justice and beneficence. As for Nero, he did not much trouble his head, about the affairs of government; but lived an idle, voluptuous life. In which, Seneca and Burrus did not interrupt him; in hopes he would leave affairs to their management, when he had so many sensual gratifications. But they did not duly consider, what a corruption of manners is occasioned by voluptuousness; and how dangerous it might one day prove, not only to themselves, but to the whole roman empire. Nor were there wanting persons, among the companions of his pleasures, who incited him to despise the conduct of his two prime ministers; and to account it glorious, for so great an emperor as he was, to be under no controul.

We cannot draw his picture at full length, because his whole reign doeth not come within the compasse of this period. But, it may give the reader some idea of him, to say that his debauchery gradually increased; and led him into many and great extravagances. And his extravagance occasioned his oppressing the people, with new and heavy taxes; and his taking away the estates of many rich persons, and the lives also of some of them.

Agrippina, being incensed at her being thrown down, on a sudden, from the vast power, which she had so long injured, threatened to depose her son Nero, whom she had raised to the empire; and ex alt Britannicus, in his stead. Upon which, Nero took off the un - Vol. II. L I happy
Nero's cruelty.

An. Chrift. 60. Nero's cruelty, by a strong dose of poison: pretending, indeed, that he died of the falling sicknese; (to which he had been subject;) but the marks of the poison were too evident, to admit of such a pretence.

Ch. IX. Acts xxvi. 32. The leudnesse, debauchery, and extravagance, of this young tyrant, made him much more resemble Caligula, than Augustus. And he now, indeed, began to form himself upon the model of Caligula. His chief favorite was Otho; a man of an infamous character, and of a disposition very like that of his master. To Otho, he gave Poppæa Sabina to wife. But the emperor was in love with her, and lived in as great familiarity with her, as Otho himself. There was an irreconcileable quarrel between Poppæa and Agrrippina; which ended, at last, in Agrrippina's destruction. For, after various attempts to poison her; and to murther her, by several other methods; Nero sent Anicetus, the captain of a ship, with two of his sailors, to put his mother to death. As soon as they entered the chamber, she guessed what they were come about. And, uncovering herself, she bade them "strike the womb, that had brought forth Nero." Upon which, one of them stunned her, by striking her, on the head, with a club. And the other two, drawing their swords, killed her with many wounds. When Nero heard that his mother was dead, he could not believe it, till he went to the place himself. And there, viewing her naked body, all over, very deliberately, he said: "I profess, I did not know that my mother was so handsome a woman." After that, he gave money among the guards, that they might be willing to obey him, in all his cruel and unjust orders; and accused his mother of many and great crimes; and, particularly, of conspiring against his life. In which, he said, she was discovered. And, therefore, as he gave it out, she had laid violent hands upon herself. And such was then the degeneracy of the romans, that they congratulated him, upon the death of his mother; as if it had been some mighty and glorious victory. But his own conscience was filled with the utmost horror. And, for a long time, he phantastied that his mother's ghost was continually haunting him. However; he added the murther of his aunt, to that of his mother; though she was guilty of no crime, but express'd the greatest tenderness and affection for him. And, after her death, he suppressed her will, and seized upon her estate. He had often attempted to strangle his wife, Oflavia. In which he could not succeed. He, therefore, publicly divorced her. The people resenting it, that he treated her so cruelly, by whose means he had been advanced to the imperial
The affairs of the Jews, at this time.

Imperial dignity; and, chargeing him with ingratitude, he banished An. Christ. her, and afterwards put her to death; under a pretence of her frequent adulteries, of which she was entirely innocent. After he had divorced Oclavia, he took Poppaea, from Otbo, and married her. But the rage of lust, cruelty, and extravagance, to which he at last arrived; and the miserable death, by which he ended his days, after he had reigned above thirteen years; do not come within the compass of the present history. He is, generally, thought to have exceeded Caligula; and to have been so great a monster of vice and cruelty, that his name is become a proverb, for the worst of tyrants.

We learn from Josephus, that the affairs of the Jews, about this time, were as follow. The Sicarii had committed many cruel and illegal actions, in Jerusalem, and the neighboring country; being deluded by an impostor, who promised them deliverance, and an end of all their troubles, if they would follow him into the desert. But Festus sent out soldiers, against them; who slew both the impostor, and his deluded followers. This was a farther accomplishment of our Saviour's prediction, concerning the false prophets, who would appear, about this time.

King Agrippa had an house at Jerusalem, which joined to the portico of the tower of Antonia. That house he raised to a considerable height. By which mean, he had not only a fine prospect of the city, but could, from his dining-room, see all over the courts of the temple; that is, the court of the priests, where the sacrifices were offered, as well as the two outer courts. In this prospect, the king took great delight. But the leading men, among the Jews, at Jerusalem, highly resented it, as an impious thing. For they reckoned it unlawful, for any, but the priests, to see what was done in the innermost court. They, therefore, ran up a high wall, at the extremity of the west-side of the inner court of the temple; whereby they not only obstructed the king's view, from his dining-room; but also the prospect from the western porticoes, where the Romans used to keep guard, during the festivals, to prevent any disturbance in, or about, the courts of the temple. King Agrippa highly resented their building such a wall. And Festus, yet more: commanding them to pull it down again. But they desired he would give them leave to send ambassadors, to lay the matter before Nero. For they intimated, "that death was preferable to the seeing any part of the temple pulled down." Festus, so far,
Their zeal for the temple.

Book III. Ch. IX. Acts xxvi. 32.

Their zeal for the temple. Upon which, they sent ten leading men to Nero; and, along with them, Icmael the high-priest, and Helcias, the keeper of the sacred treasury. When they came to Rome, they made interest with Poppaea, the wife of Nero. And, by her means, not only obtained pardon for what they had done; but, that the wall, which they had built, should remain. The ten principal men, whom the Jews had sent, upon that affair, were dismissed. But Icmael and Helcias were kept, as hostages for the good behavior of the Jews. Upon which, king Agrippa gave the high-priesthood to Joseph, surnamed Cabi; son of Simon, who had formerly joyed that dignity.

Festus, the procurator of Judæa, died. And Nero appointed Albinus to succeed him. About the same time, king Agrippa deposed Joseph; and made Ananias, the son of Ananus, high-priest, in his stead. He was a sadderet, and a fierce and cruel man; as that sect were commonly reputed to be. And, though the Jews had not the power in their own hands; he called a council of judges, from among the Jews; and did many illegal things, before Albinus arrived in the province. Which greatly exasperated Albinus, and made Agrippa to depose him; after he had been high-priest, only for three months. And that dignity was bestowed upon Jesus, the son of Damnaeus. But, when Albinus came to Jerusalem, Ananias made his peace with him, by giving him large presents. And so the matter was dropt, and his illegal proceedings no farther inquired into. Albinus, upon his arrival, endeavors to settle the province, as well as he could; particularly, by destroying a great number of the sicarii. Ananias, the son of Nebedaus, who had been high-priest, was a powerful man. And, by bribing Albinus, and the present high-priest, arrived to yet greater wealth and power. For he had a set of wicked servants, who would join themselves to some of the most abandoned and desperate men; and go and plunder the barns of the inferior priests of their tithes; and beat such as opposed them. The other chief-priests, and their servants, did the like; when they saw that they might do it, with impunity. By which means, several of the inferior priests perished with hunger. The sicarii entered the city, by night, upon the approach of an high festival, and took alive Eleazar's secretary. He was the son of Ananus, the high-priest. And Eleazar, his master, was captain of the temple. When the sicarii had made him their prisoner, they would not release him; 'till Albinus had been prevailed upon, to release ten of the sicarii, whom he had in custody. After which, the
The dismal prediction of Jesus, son of Ananus.

The sicarii were perpetually attempting to take some persons of consequence; that they might change them for some of their own fraternity.

About this time, there came to Jerusalem, out of the country, a poor man, called Jesus, the son of Ananus. And, though the city was now in profound peace, and abounded with plenty; he, at the feast of tabernacles, went up to the temple, and began to cry out, suddenly, "A voice from the east. A voice from the west. A voice from the four winds. A voice against Jerusalem, and the temple. A voice against bridegrooms and brides. A voice against all the people!" After which, he went, about every street of the city, crying out, in that manner, night and day. Some of the leading men among the jews took it ill, that he should utter such dreadful bodeings. They, therefore, laid hold of him, and beat him with many stripes. Whilest he said nothing, in his own defence, nor blamed those, who scourged him; but went on, repeateing the same dismal words, as before. Upon which, the principal men, among the jews, suspecting that the man was inspired, carried him before Albinus, the roman procurator; who ordered him to be lashed, 'till his bones were bare. During which, he neither begged for mercy, nor shed any tears; but, at every stroke, cried, as loud as he could, and with a melancholy voice, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" Albinus asked him, "Who he was? and whence he came? and why he said such things?" But he would answer him nothing. He onely continued lamenting the city; 'till Albinus dismissed him, as thinking him mad. To the breaking out of the war, he never went to any of the citizens, neither was he seen talking to any body; but continued to repeate the same lamentation, "Woe, woe to Jerusalem!" He never spoke against any particular person; though he was daily beat, and abused. Neither did he speak well of such as gave him his food; but onely repeeted the dire preage. He was obsered to be loudest at the festivals. And, though he held it for seven years and five months, he was neither hoarse nor weary. Nor did he desist, 'till he saw his predictions begun to be accomplished, by the siege of Jerusalem. For, after the romans had incompassed the city, he went upon the walls, and cried out, again, with a loud voice; "Woe, woe to the city, and the temple, and the people!" And at last he added, "Woe, also, to myself!" Which words were scarce uttered, before a stone, thrown from one of the roman engines, fell upon him, and put an end to his
St. Paul's fourth apostolic journey.

An. Chri. his life. [See Josephus, concerning the Jewish war, book 6. chap. 5. Nero. ch. 3, 4.]

If Josephus his account may be depended upon; (And, indeed, one can hardly suspect that he would falsifie, in a thing, that was so public, and well known. And, supposing the account true;)

his observations, concerning his being sent, as a prophet, or extraordinary messenger, from God, seem to be very just, and well-grounded. And it was, no doubt, a signal and loud warning of the approaching war; which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the temple; and the most amazing desolation of a wicked people, that ever was heard of.

CHAP. X.

St. Paul sets out upon his fourth apostolic journey: sails for Rome; takes the island Crete, in his way; is shipwreck'd, and cast upon the island Melita. When he arrived at Rome, he was confined there, in his own hired house, for two years. From thence, he wrote several epistles; received frequent messages, from distant places; and sent messages to several of the churches. Acts xxvii and xxviii.

SECT. I.

The Apostle sails by several places: is shipwreck'd, and cast upon the island Melita. Acts xxvii. 1, to the end of that chapter.

St. Paul was not permitted to take Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, in his way, before he set out upon this fourth apostolic journey; as he had done, in the beginning of his three former journeys: because he was now a prisoner, and under the control of others; and sent to Rome, at their charge, and according to their order.
The apostle sent, by sea, to Rome.

order. And, when Felix had determined, in consequence of St. An.Christ. Paul's appealing to Caesar, to send him; by sea, to Italy; he delivered the apostle, and several other prisoners; who were, likewise, to be sent to Rome, to be heard, before the emperor; to the care of a centurion, or Roman captain, with his hundred soldiers. See Ch. X. Book III. The captain's name was Julius; who was (very probably) a freedman of the Julian, or Cæsarean, family. For freedmen had, commonly, the names of their masters, who gave them their freedom. He was centurion of a cohort, belonging to the legion called Augustus his legion. And, going on board a ship, which belonged to Adramyttium, one of the ports of Myus, they set out, from Caesarea; intending to sail by the coasts of Asia Minor. Along with the apostle, there went St. Luke, the author of one of the four gospels, and of the acts of the apostles. And Aristarchus, the Macedonian, from the city of Thessalonica. He had gone, as one of the messengers of the churches, to carry the charitable collection, to Jerusalem. It is likely that he had followed St. Paul, from Jerusalem, to Caesarea; and now determined to accompany him, when he found that he was to be sent to Rome. And, sailing along the coasts of Palestine, they came, the next day, to Sidon; which was a famous city, and mart town, of Phenicia. There the captain, Julius, treated St. Paul with great humanity; freely permitting him to visit the Christians, or any other friends; and to receive any favor, which they pleased to show him. Looseing from Sidon, they sailed on the north-side of Cyprus; coasting it along, by the island, because the wind was against them. But, afterwards, sailing farther from the coast, over the sea, which washed Cilicia, St. Paul's native country; and Pamphilia, the adjacent region; they landed at Myra, (or Limyra,) a city of Lycia. And the centurion, finding there a ship, which came from Alexandria in Egypt; and which was carrying corn, and other goods, into Italy; he agreed with the master of the vessel, to take him, and all the company, aboard; and carry them into Italy. And, putting to sea, they sailed slowly, several:

Ver. 1. *Adramyttium* is expressed in the vulgar, syriac, and arabic, versions; and seemeth to have been the original reading. For Felix could not determine to send Luke and Aristarchus, St. Paul's companions, thither. They were not his prisoners.

Ver. 2. The vulgate reads, *μάνης σώον *μίνις, &c. Perseverant nobiscum Aristarchus; [Aristarchus continuing with us:] intimating, that the other messengers of the churches, which came, with St. Paul and St. Luke, to Jerusalem, did not continue with them.

Ver. 5. *Τῇ περιπλανώμενον* &c.
St. Paul advises to winter in the fair havens.

Several days. And, when they were scarce come over against Cnidos, a city and promontory of Doris, in the peninsula of Caria; the wind being westerly, and not suffering them to steer a straight course, they failed, under the island Crete, which is now called Candie, over against the city and promontory of Salmone. And having just past that, they came into a port of Crete; which was then (and is to this day) called the Fair havens. Not far from which, was, the city Lasea, or Alafsa. 

St. Luke hath said nothing of St. Paul’s preaching, in Crete, at this time. But, possibly, he might preach there. For (as we have had frequent occasion to observe) there are several instances of the Apostle’s preaching at a place, upon his first coming thither. And yet St. Luke, because of his designed brevity, hath thought fit to pass it over in silence. However; the Apostle doeth not seem to have had an opportunity to make many converts, in the island, at this time. For, though the captain, Julius, was a person of singular humanity, and gave him as much liberty as he could; yet the Fair havens, and the city Alafsa, were all the places, that he could now go to; because their stay here was but short.

Having spent so long a time, in sailing so little a way, and the season of the year rendering sailing very hazardous; St. Paul advised them to winter at the Fair havens. For the fast was now over; that is, the yearly fast of atonement, for the sins of the people of Israel, mentioned in many places of the old testament. In two or three of which places, it is ordered to be kept on the tenth day of the seventh month; five days before the feast of tabernacles. Now, the feast of tabernacles began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month; that month, which the jews called Tifri, and which answers to part of September and part of October, in our way of dividing the months. This Jewish fast, therefore, fell about the twenty-fifth of September. And, as it was now past, for some time, the nights were growing long and dark, and the heavens cloudy; the Michaelmas flows were coming down upon the Mediterranean sea; and the stormy months of autumn and winter advancing. But, though the Apostle’s advice was so reasonable; and founded upon a prophecy, that, if they did put to sea again, it would be to the hazard,

Ver. 8. *See the Alexandrian, and one more, manuscript, in Dr. Mill; and Grosius on this place.

Ver. 9. *Lev. xvi. 29, &c. and xxiii. 27, &c. Numb. xxix. 7, &c. It is called a Sabbath, [Lev. xvi. 31. and xxiii. 32. and perhaps, also, I sa. lviii. 3; 13.] because they were to abstain from all manner of work that day; as on the weekly Sabbath.
A great storm ariseth.

hazard, not only of the loading and the ship, but even of their lives, also; yet Julian depended more upon the judgment of the pilot, and the master of the ship, than upon any thing which the Apostle could say. And, as the Fair havens was an inconvenient port to winter in, as being but poorly defended against winds and storms; the majority were for leaving it, and trying if they could not get to Phænix, (another port in Crete,) that they might winter there. For it was a much more safe and convenient harbor; being made in the form of an half moon; looking towards the south-west, and north-west; whereby it kept off the stormy winds, on every side; and secured the ships, which rode at anchor there.

And, while the south-wind blew softly, they supposed that they could compass their design. And, accordingly, they made an attempt; coasting the island Crete, as far as they could. But they had not long been out of the harbor of the Fair havens, before a very stormy and tempestuous wind, called [Euro-aquilo], or a north-east wind, arose against them; and carried them out to sea.

And, when the ship was carried violently along, and not able to bear up, against such a great storm; they even committed her to the winds and waves. And, running under a little island, called Clauda, they had much ado to hoist the boat, out of the sea, into the ship. And, when they had, with some difficulty, secured the boat, they used what helps they could, to strengthen and defend the ship; undergirding it with ropes, to prevent it's splitting; and fortifying it, as much as they were able, against the violent storm. And, fearing lest they should have been driven upon the syrtes, or quick-sands, on the coasts of Africa; they struck sail and then let the ship drive. And, when they were exceedingly tossed about, in the storm; the billows swelling, and the seas roaring; the next day, the sailors threw the goods overboard, to lighten the ship. And, on the third day, all hands were busy, in casting over-board the very tackling of the ship. And when neither sun, moon, nor stars appeared, for several days; and the waves ran high, and the winds were strong and violent; they began utterly to despair, even of their lives. And, when they had neglected their meals for a long time, St. Paul went, and stood in the midst of them, and said:

Ver. 14. * See the note upon the history before the paraphrase and notes on Titus, p. 13. and what is said in the errata, annexed to 2 Timothy, p. 144. first edition, p. 400. 2d edition.

Ver. 16. * It is, otherwise, called Gaudus, or Cauda. [See Dr. Mill.]

Ver. 20. * Miss tertioms [nor the moon] is added in the syrian version. [See Dr. Mill.]
The apostle foretells that none should be lost.

And it came to pass, about the fourteenth night, while the ship was tossed, up and down, in the Adriatic sea; about the middle of the night, the sailors suspected that they were drawing near some land. And, when they had sounded, with line and plummet, they found the water about twenty fathoms deep. And, having gone a little farther, they sounded again; and found it only fifteen fathoms. And, when, by that, it evidently appeared, that they were drawing near some shore, they were afraid, lest they should have run upon the rocks, or shelves, which commonly abound nigh the coasts of islands. They, therefore, cast four anchors out of the stern; wishing earnestly that it were day, that they might see the shore. In the mean time, the sailors attempted to make their escape, out of the ship; and let down the boat, into the sea, under a pretense of casting anchors, at a greater distance, out of the fore-part of the ship; but, in reality, to make off with the boat, and save their own lives. St. Paul perceiving their design, said, to the centurion and soldiers; "Unless these sailors continue in the ship, to manage and make the best of it, the rest cannot escape with their lives." Upon which, the soldiers cut the ropes, by which the boat hung. And so it dropt into the sea, before any of the sailors had got into it. Just before break of day, the apostle beged of them all to take some refreshment; saying, "You have had no set meals, and have eat very little! for these fourteen days. Let me, therefore, advise you, for your health's sake, to eat something. And, for your incouragement, I can assure you, that
St. Paul, with his company, are shipwreck'd.

"that none of you shall lose so much as an hair of your heads." An. Chr. 69.

Then he took bread, and cheerfully gave thanks to God, in the presence of the whole company. And, having broken the bread, he proceeded to eat. Upon which, they all revived; and began to hope well, and to take some refreshment, along with the Apostle. All the persons aboard the ship, were no less than two hundred and seventy six. And, being well refreshed, they threw over-board their wheat, and other provisions; that the ship might be light, and able to sail near the shore. When it was day, they looked earnestly to descry the land. But they could, none of them, tell what country they were upon the coasts of. However; they discovered a creek, with a proper shore to land at: and they resolved, if possible, to thrust the ship in there. Weighing, therefore, their anchors, they committed the ship to the waves. Their ships, in those days, had commonly two rudders, or steerages; one on each side; which were fastened to the ship, by bands or chains. Perhaps, those rudders had been fastened, when they permitted the vessel to drive before the wind. And they might, now, think it proper to loose them, in order to steer the ship into the creek. For that reason, it has been supposed, that they loosed the rudder-bands. And, hoisting up the sail, which was in the fore-part of the ship, they made towards the shore. And, falling upon a cliff, where two currents of the sea met, they ran the ship a-ground. And, while the fore-part stuck fast, and remained immoveable, the hinder-part was broken, and shattered, by the violence of the waves. Then the soldiers advised that the prisoners should be killed; lest any of them should swim to shore, and so escape out of their hands, and they remain accountable for them. But the centurion, who had the charge of the prisoners, was willing to save the apostle's life. He, therefore, hindered their cruel purpose; and ordered, that such of the prisoners, as could swim, should throw themselves first into the sea, that they might not hinder the others, in shifting for themselves; but be ready, on the shore, to assist as many as they could. And the rest, some upon planks, and others upon pieces

Ver. 41. k St. Paul faith, 2 Cor. xi. 25. "A day and a night, I have been in the deep." But this shipwreck cannot be there referred to. For that epistle was written long before this time.

Ver. 43. 1 God, at the request of St. Paul, saved the whole company from being drowned. And, for his sake, Julius, the centurion, took care that the prisoners were saved from being murthered. All this ought to be ascribed to the overruling providence, and mercy, of God.
They all said, three months, in Melita. St. Paul
shook off a viper, which bit his hand, without receiving any harm. He miraculously healed the father of Publius; and many other sick persons. The Melitese were, in return, very kind to them. Acts xxviii. i,— ii.

BEING all come safe ashore, they found that the island was called Melita. There were two islands of that name; but this was what lay between Africa and Sicily. It is a small island, being about twelve miles broad, and twenty long, and sixty distant from Sicily, to the south. It took its name from the abundance of honey found therein. For meli, in Greek, signifies honey. It, also, yields a great deal of cotton. And, though the soil is but three feet deep, above the solid rock, it is very fruitful. It is now called Malta. And the place, where they were driven ashore, is, at this time, shewn to travellers; and goes by the name of St. Paul’s shore, or haven. St. Paul’s shipwreck has, in later ages, occasioned, also, a superstitious regard to this island. In consequence of which, it was given, in the year of our Lord, 1530, by the emperor, Charles the 5th, to the knights of St. John, in Jerusalem, when they had been expelled, from Rhodes, by the Turks. They are one thousand in number, of whom 500 always reside in the island, and are called Hospitallers, knights-templars, or knights of Malta.

The Melitese, though reckoned, by the Greeks and Romans, a barbarous and unpolished people, treated them with great and uncommon

Ver. 1. * See Dr. Doddridge.
Ver. 2. * The antients looked upon islanders in general, as rough-browm and unpolished; for want of a more free and common conversation with the rest of mankind.
mon humanity, after their shipwreck; receiving them all with an hearty welcome, and making a large fire, to warm and dry them; after they had been so much plunged in the sea; and because the season was wet and cold. Among the rest, St. Paul was active; and put, upon the fire, some faggots of wood, which he himself had gathered; and, when they grew hot, out-leapt a viper, and fastened upon his hand. The natives saw, by his chains, that he was a prisoner. And, when they observed this accident befall him, they discovered the same censorious spirit, which is yet too common in the world; namely, to look upon the afflictions of others to be punishments, and tokens of the divine displeasure:—saying, one to another, "Without doubt, this man is a murderer, or some notorious malefactor. For, though he hath escaped from shipwreck; yet justice pursueth him, and will not suffer him to live": but hath singled him out, and referred him to a more exemplary punishment; appointing this viper as the executioner of divine vengeance." But the Apostle shook off that venomous and fierce creature, into the fire, without receiving any, the least, harm. [This was exactly agreeable to what our Lord had promised his disciples should do.] However, the Meliteans watched him narrowly; expecting to see him swell, and be inflamed with the poison; or to fall down dead, suddenly. But, when they had watched him, a long time; and saw that he had received no harm, from that serpent, whose bite they knew to be mortal; they ran into the other extreme, and thought as much too highly of him, now, as they had unjustly censured him before. For, instead of a murderer, they concluded he must needs be a god, in human shape; or else he could not have resisted the force of that poison.

Not far from the place, where they had been shipwreck'd, was the seat of the chief man of the island; whose name was Publius; and who governed the island, under the proconsul of Sicily. He sent

And the Greeks, in particular, looked upon all nations, except their own, as barbarous. [See Rom. i. 14.] Just as the Jews contemned men of other nations, and called them gentiles, upon the account of their religion.

Ver. 4. * See Amos v. 19.

Ver. 5. * See Mark xvi. 18. Luke x. 19. and compare, with this, the miracles of Moses, recorded Exod. iv. 2,—5. and vii. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 6. * The Lystrians would have worshiped St. Paul, as a god; and, afterwards, stoned him, as a blasphemer, and the worst of men. [Acts xiv. 11,—19.] So soon do unthinking persons run from one extreme to another; and so little account is to be had of the warmth of affections, where it is not grounded upon reason and conviction!
sent for them, to his house; and, for three days, entertained them, in a kind and friendly manner. It happened that Publius his father kept his bed, at that time. For he labored under both a fever, and a bloody flux. To him, therefore, the apostle went in, and prayed over him. And then, laying his hands upon him, (as our Lord had done, in working several of his miraculous cures; and as he had ordered his disciples, the apostles to do; when they miraculously healed diseases)—In conformity to Christ's example, and in obedience to his command, Paul, I say, laid his hands upon the father of Publius, and healed him, immediately and perfectly.

When this miraculous cure was noised abroad, several other persons, in the island, who labored under sickness and other bodily disorders, either came, or were brought; and St. Paul perfectly and miraculously cured them all. In a grateful return for which favor, the people of the island showed the apostle and his company no small respect; treating them generously, while they staid there; and furnishing them plentifully, at their departure, with such provisions, as they should most want, in their voyage.

After three months, they met with another Alexandrian ship, which had wintered in the island, and was bound for Italy. It was called Gemini, or the twins, Caflor and Pollux; from their images being ingraven on the fore-part of the ship; that is, "the pictures of two young men, cloathed in white tunics and purple upper garments: and riding on two, beautiful, white horses; with, each of them, a javelin in his hand; and, by their side, half an egg and a star." When they appeared together, (as the heathens fabled, they sometimes did,) they were looked upon, as two deities; which were propitious to sailors. That, very likely, was the reason why both their images were ingraven on this ship. And, perhaps, most of them, who sailed in company with the apostle, might look upon it, as a good omen, that they sailed under such a protection; and might promise themselves a more prosperous voyage, in this ship, than they had met with, in the ship, which brought them from Crete. As, indeed, they had. But it was owing to the protection of a superior deity, even the one true God, whose providence is constantly over all his works.

Ver. 8. "See Mark xvi. 18."
They sailed from Melita to Sicily. From thence, to Rhegium, in Italy. After that, to Puteoli; from whence they went, by land, to Rome. Some christians met them, at Appii Forum; and others, at Tres Tabernae. Acts xxviii. 12,—15.

Loosening from Melita, they sailed to Syracuse, the metropolis of Christ. the island Sicily, on the eastern coast. It is said to have been twenty-two miles round, and to have equalled Carthage in its riches. It was not far from mount Etna; and was famous for an excellent haven. There, they tarried three days; either detained by the winds, or for the sake of repairs, victualling, or traffic. From Syracuse, they fetched a compass; and sailed, on the eastern coast of Sicily, to the town of Rhegium. It was a town, which lay upon the coasts of Italy, nigh the straits of Sicily, over against Messana, which stood in the island. The greek word, Rhegium, signifies a breach. And the antients so named this place, because they supposed that, formerly, Sicily had been joined to Italy; 'till it was broken off, about this town, by an earthquake, or inundation. When they had tarried, one day, at Rhegium, the wind shifted to the south. By which mean, they sailed along the coast of Italy; and arrived, the next day, at Puteoli; a city of Campania, nigh the city Naples. Strabo faith, it was a very great mart town, where there was an harbor for ships, made by art and labor.

So much had the gospel spread, before St. Paul's arriveal; that here, as well as at Rome, they found some christians. I suppose, it's being a trading city conduced to it's having christianness, more early than some other places.

The christians at Puteoli beged of the apostle to make some stay among them. To which, Julius, the centurion, with great benignity, consented. And they tarried, there, seven days. From thence,
thence, they went, by land, to Rome. The christians at Rome, who seem to have been pretty numerous, had heard a great deal of the famous apostle of the Gentiles. And had, some time ago, received a long and excellent epistle from him. And now, having notice of his approach, they were overjoyed at the hopes of seeing, and conversing with, him. And, to show him all the respect in their power, they went out to meet him. Some of them, as far as Ap- pii Forum, a town in the Appian way, between Rome and Campania; at the distance of fifty-one miles from Rome. Others went to the place called Tres Taberna, or the Three Taverns; which also lay upon the Appian way, and was about thirty miles from Rome. The sight of them, and the prospect of travelling with them, to that great city, revived the heart of the apostle. Upon which, he gave thanks to God; who had permitted him, with so much pleasure, to see their faces. And, though he came, with his chains on, and as a prisoner; and was, now, in the near prospect of appearing before Caesar. Yet, when he beheld the christians of Rome, his own afflictions vanished; and he was animated with fresh vigor and fortitude; as perceiving that he was like to have some friends, during his confinement, in that imperial city; and that there were hopes of christianity's flourishing there.

Ver. 15.  b Vid. Anton. in itinerar. & Tull. ep. ad Attic. l. 2. epist. 10; 13.

CHAP. X.  SECT. IV.

The apostle at Rome. He preaches to the Jews there.

When several of them refuse to embrace christianity, he declared his resolution to preach to the Gentiles of that city. Acts xxviiii. 16,—29.

When they came to Rome, the centurion, Julius, delivered up his charge of the prisoners, to Burrus Afranius, who was then captain of the prætorian band. There was, now, only one
St. Paul sends to the Jews, to come to him.

One captain of the guards. But, Burrus dying, the next year, there were two appointed. He committed the other prisoners to a more close confinement. But the Apostle was suffered to take an house, and live private, as a prisoner at large; having only one soldier to watch him, who was chained to him, by a long chain, which was fastened to the Apostle's right arm, and to the soldier's left. Such a favorable, and easy, confinement must have proceeded, partly from the kind representation, which Julius, the centurion, who had brought him from Caesarea, had made, in his behalf. But still more, very probably, from Fosius his letter to the emperor; who could declare that Paul was not guilty of the breach of any part of the Roman law. Though it is not impossible, but that it might be, in part, owing to Burrus his singular goodness and humanity.

Where-ever the Apostle came, he generally went first to the synagogue, and attempted the conversion of the Jews. But, as he was now under confinement, he either could not go to the synagogue; or might think it improper to go, and preach in so public a place. Four days after his arrival, therefore, he sent for the chief of the Jews, at Rome, to come to his house. They came, at his request. Upon which, he said to them: "Brethren, though I have done nothing detrimental to the people of the Jews, or contrary to the rites and institutions, which Moses delivered to our fathers; yet the Jews apprehended me, at Jerusalem; and caused me to be laid in chains; by the Romans. Who, when they had examined the case, and would have released me; as not guilty of any crime, much less of any capital crime; the Jews, who should have been my best friends, spoke against it. This compelled me to appeal to Caesar. Not that I design to accuse mine own nation to the emperor. No! I have still a very great tenderness and concern for them. But I must vindicate myself. And I was, in the first place, desirous to talk with, and convince, you. You know the national expectation, concerning the coming of the Messiah, about this time; and cannot be ignorant of the prophecies, upon which that expectation is grounded. Neither will you deny the doctrine of..."
The APOSTLE makes several converts, at Rome.

A resurrection from the dead. And why should you, then, refuse to believe the resurrection of JESUS of Nazareth; and to acknowledge him to be the messiah? For, he hath given such evidence of these things, as is sufficient to satisfy all well-disposed inquirers. As to my belief of such articles, there is no occasion for any other testimony, than my present confinement. For, because of my faith in that great promise, made to Israel, I am bound with this chain.” The Jews replied: “We have not received any letters, from any of our brethren in Judea, about you; nor heard any thing, about your case, in particular. Neither have any of the Jews, who came from thence, reported any evil of you. But, as you profess yourself a Christian, we should be glad to hear you explain yourself, and give us your opinion. Though we would first let you know, that this sect, called Christians, are a people, who are generally spoken against; both by the Jews and Gentiles; at Rome, and every where else.”

Thus ended the conversation, the first time, between the Apostle, and the leading men of the Jews, at Rome. But they fixed upon a day, when they were to come again, and hear him give a more particular account of the Christian doctrine, and of the evidences of it.

When the day came, several more of the Jews went to the Apostle’s house. To whom he explained himself more fully; bearing his testimony, that the kingdom of God, which was to be erected under the Messiah, was already come; and pointing out the exact accomplishment of the antient prophecies, recorded in the old testament, by Jesus and his religion; and showing them, evidently, that, from his life, doctrine, miracles, resurrection, ascension, and pouring out of the Spirit, he must be the promised and long-expected Messiah. And so intent was he upon convinceing them, that he discoursed with them, about such subjects, from morning till

Ver. 22. *Justin Martyr hath assigned one of the chief reasons, why the Christians labored, so universally, under the popular odium. “For the Jews not onely cursed them in their synagogues, and did all they could to raise the hatred and enmity of mankind against them; but they sent out chosen men, from Jerusalem, to acquaint the world, and more especially the Jews, every where, that the new sect, which arose from Jesus of Galilee, was an atheistical and wicked sect: to be avoided, and detested, by all mankind.” [Vid. Dialog. cum Trypho. edit. Thirl. p. 170, 171. Paris. edit. 1636. p. 234, 235. & Thirl. p. 368, 369. Paris. 1739. Vid. etiam, Tertull. ad Nat. 1. 1. c. 14. Origen. contra Cellum, 1. 6. p. 293, 294. edit. Spencer. Euseb. hist. eccles. 1. 4. c. 18. & Grot. in Mat. xxvii. 63.] The Jews spoke against Jesus himself: and, afterwards, against his apostles. But it is not easy to fix the exact time, when those chosen men were sent out, by them.
Some of the jews believe; but others refuse.

till evening. Upon which, some were convinced, and imbraced Christianity; but others rejected it, notwithstanding all that he had alleged.

When the jews thus differed among themselves, the assembly broke up; after st. paul had concluded, with a close reproof to the unbelieving and disobedient, in the words of the prophet Isaiah; as Acts our lord had done, upon a like occasion; "Go to the people of Israel; and, in my name, (faith god to the prophet,) declare, "that, hearing, you will hear, and will not understand; and, though you might see, yet you will not perceive; because your hearts are hardened, through grosse and sinful prejudices; and your ears refuse to hear, and your eyes to see. For you wilfully close them; lest you should see such truths, as you will not comply with; though it is the onely way to peace, and acceptance with god." To this purpose, spoke the antient prophet. And how aptly do his words agree to many of you, who now hear me?

But, as you refuse the messiah, now he is come; and reject the truth and purity, together with the privileges, of his kingdom of righteousness; I tell you plainly, (in order to provoke you to jealousy,) that this salvation of god, through Jesus Christ, must be offered unto the gentiles of this city. And many of them will hear and obey; though you despise it."

Thus the body of the jews, at Rome, acted like the body of that nation, in other places; and went away, with their sinful and inverteate prejudices. * Though it is said, that the apostle’s discourse occasioned them to have several disputes among themselves. But, very likely, without any remarkable effect. For it doeth not appear, that any more of them imbraced Christianity, at Rome.

Ver. 28. * See the reading of some of the most antient and best mss. in Dr. Mill: τινος τω σωτήρας, this salvation.
The apostle makes several converts, at Rome:

CHAP. X.  SECT. V.

The apostle makes several converts to Christianity, at Rome. An account of his companions, or fellow-laborers, there.

During this his ease confinement, at Rome, St. Paul went on to preach the gospel. And he wanted not some remarkable success. For he had the skill to make both his chains, and his liberty, to turn to the interest of Christianity. Nothing could discourage him; his whole heart was engaged in the work; and he turned almost every thing, that befell him, to the advancement of the gospel. Among others, he converted Onesimus, at Rome. He was a servant to Philemon, who was a Christian, a person of distinction, at Colosse; and (as some think) a convert of St. Paul's.

The apostle's being confined, for so peculiar a reason, as his zeal and diligence to spread Christianity, made the gospel to be the more inquired into. Some were excited, out of curiosity; and others, out of a more virtuous disposition of mind, to search into a doctrine, so different from the common opinions; and which then made such a noise in the world. Both in the court, the camp, and the city of Rome, Christianity was the frequent subject of their conversation. So that several of the guards, or praetorian soldiers; and some of Nero's household, or domestic servants, as well as several of the city, actually imbraced the Christian faith. By all accounts, both from friends and enemies, the Christians, at Rome, amounted to a considerable number. Long before St. Paul came to Rome, and even in the days of Claudius Caesar, (if Suetonius his account be just,) the Christians were considerable enough, to be taken notice of, by the emperor. Though, I think, that could be, only, as the Romans accounted them, a sect of the Jews: especially, if

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a See Philemon, ver. 10. and the history prefixed to the paraphrase and notes on the epistle to Philemon.

b Phil. i. 13.—Ἐν δὲ τῷ πρατορίῳ καὶ τοῖς λαυτοῖς παῖσι [in the palace, or praetorium, and in all other places.]

c Phil. iv. 22.

d See the two last notes: Sueton. in vit. Claud. c. 25. & in vit. Nero. c. 16. & Tacit. Annal. l. 15. c. 44.
Especially among the idolatrous gentiles.

if we compare what is said, by Suetonius, with Acts xviii. 2, which is commonly thought to refer to the same thing. With the death of Claudius, the decree, which banished the jews and the christians, from Rome, died also. Upon which, they returned to that imperial city. And, as no more decrees were made, hitherto, against them; either by the emperor, or the senate; it is highly probable that their numbers increased. The salutations, in the conclusion of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, are a plane confirmation of this.

As there was already such a foundation laid, and St. Paul now came thither, in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ;—he not only imparted spiritual gifts, to those who were converted before his coming; and, by his discourses, as well as by his miracles, confirmed them in their most holy faith: but he had the unspeakable satisfaction of converting many more, and greatly augmenting the christian church, at Rome. It hath been already taken notice of, that he converted some of the jews. But the great harvest, in that city, was chiefly among the idolatrous gentiles.

St. Paul's labor and diligence was the principal cause of the spreading of christianity, at Rome. But that was not all. For, when they saw his zeal and success, though he was in chains; several other of the christians took courage, from his example; and were, likewise, active in propagating christianity. Some of them did it, out of a true concern for the advancement of the christian religion. But others, and more particularly the judaizers, did it, out of strife, and a spirit of opposition; that St. Paul might be the more closely confined, or punished some other way.

The evangelists, who were St. Paul's faithful assistants, or fellow-laborers at Rome, were, (1.) St. Luke; who (as we have mentioned above) came with him, from Caesarea, to Rome. In two of the epistles, written during his confinement, the apostle sends salutations from him. (2.) Ariasarchus, the Macedonian; who also, came, along with the apostle, from Caesarea, to Rome. It doeth not appear, that he was carried, as a prisoner: but he seems to have gone voluntarily to Rome; and to have been there apprehended, and confined, for his zeale and activity, in preaching the gospel, in that city. Perhaps, the factious judaizers, who preached Christ out of contention, hoping thereby to add affliction to the apostle's bonds, were the occasion of Ariasarchus his confinement;

* Rom. i. 11. and xv. 29.  f Col. iv. 14. Philemon, ver. 24.  g Col. iv. 10.
* Phil. i. 16.
St. Paul's assistants, at Rome.


(3.) Timothy; who was a peculiar favorite with St. Paul. He went, with the apostle, to Jerusalem, with the charitable collection. But it doeth not appear, that he came along with him, to Rome. I suppose he first went to visit other churches; and, afterwards, followed the apostle to that imperial city. We find his name, joined with the apostle's, in the beginning of three of his epistles, written from Rome, during the apostle's confinement, there, at this time. St. Paul designed to send him to Philippi, to visit that church. And, very likely, he did so; though we have no particular account that he did. (4.) Tychicus. What hath been said of Timothy, was, in a great measure, his case. For he was one of the messengers of the churches of Asia, sent, with their charitable collection, to Jerusalem; and, very likely, he went, from thence, to visit some of the Christian churches of St. Paul's planting, before he followed that apostle, to the great, imperial, city. Him did the apostle send, from Rome, to Laodicea, and Colosse; to acquaint the christians of those cities, with his circumstances; and to know how things went among them: that is, whether they continued steadfast in the true Christian doctrine; against the attempts of the judaizers, and the malice of persecutors and wicked men. And, along with him, went Onesimus, in order to return to his master, Philemon; whom he had robbed, and from whom he had run away, some time ago. (5.) John Mark, nephew to Barnabas, was with the apostle, at Rome, during this, his first confinement, in that city. It was he, about whom Paul and Barnabas had differed, so much, as to part company. But we see, here, that St. Paul and St. Mark were perfectly reconciled again; and acted in concert, in promoting the gospel. For this was many years after that difference and separation. What I have said, of the two former, seems to have been true of him; namely, that he did not go, with the apostle; but followed him, to Rome. If they had been in company, during the voyage, St. Luke would scarce have taken notice, only of Aristarchus his being with them. [Acts xxvii. 2.] And the reading of the Vulgate, taken notice of, in that place, if genuine, will be a farther confirmation thereof. (6.) Epaphroditus came, from Philippi, with a present, from the church, there, to St. Paul, in his confinement. And, to the apostle's great grief, he
St. Paul's assistants, at Rome.

he fell sick, at Rome; and had like to have died. But it pleased An. Chr. God that he recovered; and, after some time, returned to Philippi. Nero. 8. again.

(7.) Epaphras went, from Colosse, to the apostle, at Rome. (8.) Jesus, called Justus; who, perhaps, went, from Jerusalem, to Rome. However; he was, there, with the apostle; and was one of the Jewish Christians; whence ever he came. (9. and lastly.) Demas. This was xxviii.

he, who, afterwards, forsook the apostle: when, during his second confinement, at Rome, he was called to make an apology; and to answer for his life, before the emperor, Nero; or his prefect, Helius Caesarinus. I do not suppose that he forsook the Christian religion, when he forsook the apostle; or that his love to the present world was covetousness; but a timorous spirit, and an inordinate love of life. He was afraid to die a martyr for Christianity, along with the apostle; or to go where there was any danger of persecution. And, therefore, he not only forsook St. Paul, when none of the Christians dared to stand by him, or to appear with him; and when he was delivered, with great difficulty, as out of the mouth of a ravenous lion—but he went, to Thessalonica, where there was less danger, and less occasion for him. Though the apostle would have had him stay with him, or gone elsewhere.

These were the persons, who were with St. Paul, whilst he lived, in his ease confinement, at Rome; and who, most of them, assisted him, as evangelists; in watering, and cultivating Christianity, in several of the churches, where he had planted it.

*Phil. ii. 25,—30.  6 Col. iv. 12.  Col. iv. 11.  2 Tim. iv. 10.*
St. Paul now wrote four epistles, from Rome.

CHAP. X. SECT. VI.

DURING this, his first confinement, at Rome, St. Paul wrote four of his epistles. The order, in which he wrote them, considered.

During this, his first imprisonment, at Rome, the Apostle of the gentiles wrote four of his epistles. That he wrote what we commonly call his epistle to the Ephesians, when he was confined, appears evidently, from his own words. [Eph. iii. 1. and vi. 20.] And the same observation holds, as to his epistle to the Colossians. [Col. iv. 18.] So, likewise, as to the epistle to Philemon. [ver. 9, 10.] And, lastly, as to his epistle to the Philippians, [Philipp. i. 7; 13; 16.] That they were written, at Rome, appears also, from several expressions. For he mentions the spreading of christianity, in the praetorium, and in Nero's household. [See Phil. i. 13. and iv. 22. And, [from Col. iv. 14. Philem. ver. 23, 24.] it appears, that St. Luke, who went with him, from Cesarea, to Rome, was then with him; and others were imprisoned along with him. Which they do not appear to have been, in any other city, but that of Rome.

That St. Paul was, some years, after this, confined, a second time, at Rome, seemeth to me very evident. And that the epistle to the Philippians was written, during his first confinement, there, is as evident, from Phil. ii. 24. For, when he wrote that epistle, he had a prospect of being set at liberty. Whereas; when he was confined, the second time, in that imperial city, he expresseth no hope of his enlargement. But, on the contrary, faith, that "he was ready to be offered up, [or his blood ready to be poured out, as a libation;] and the time of his dissolution was at hand," [2 Tim. iv. 6, &c.] And, what hath been said, of the epistle to the Philippians, may be justly applied to the other three epistles, which we are now considering. For [Philem. ver. 22.] he desired a lodging might be provided for him, at Colosse; because he hoped, shortly, to be set at liberty. And the other two epistles, namely, that to the Ephesians, or Laodiceans; and that to the Colossians; were written, about the same time, and sent by the same hands. [Compare Philem. ver. 10. with Eph. vi. 21, 22. and Col. iv. 7, 8, 9.]
The order, in which he wrote his four epistles.

The order, in which these four epistles were written, comes next to be considered. For, though they were written, much about the same time, and from the same place; yet there are some transient and oblique hints, from whence we may collect the order, in which the apostle wrote them. For instance; the epistle to the Ephesians, or Laodiceans, must have been written before the epistle to the Colossians; because St. Paul orders the Colossians to get that epistle, and read it in their church. [Col. iv. 16.] For it would have been a very unusual way of speaking, to refer them to an epistle, which was not yet written. I own he might, possibly, refer them to what he was designing to write. But that is not so agreeable to common language. And we have no reason for making that supposition. The epistle, therefore, to the Laodiceans, which is commonly called the epistle to the Ephesians, I look upon, to have been written, the first of the four. In the second place; I reckon him to have written the epistle to the Colossians; while the form, matter, and the very expressions, of that other epistle, seem to have been fresh upon his mind. So that Dr. Mill hath, very justly and beautifully, called them twin epistles. And Mr. Locke hath observed, that "they do so perfectly correspond, that one cannot be mistaken in thinking them very fit to give light to one another." They were not only written, about the same time; but sent by the same hand. And were, both of them, to be read, in the two churches, to which they were originally directed, or sent.

I suppose it will not be wondered, that I place Philemon the third in order. For, that it was written after the two, already mentioned, seems highly probable; from his expressing his hopes of being shortly released. [Philem. ver. 22.] Whereas; we find no such intimations; either in the epistle to the Laodiceans, or in that to the Colossians. But, that it should be placed next to them, seems as proper; because it was sent, at the same time, and by the same hands. [See Philem. ver. 10. Eph. vi. 21, 22. and Col. iv. 7, 8, 9.] And, that the epistle to the Philippians was written the last, may appear from chap. i. 25. and ii. 24. For, when he wrote it, he was in expectation of his being shortly set at liberty.

These hints are the best guides, that I have met with, towards settling the order, in which these four epistles were written.
CHAP. X.  SECT. VII.

What is commonly called the epistle to the Ephesians, was, most probably, the epistle from Laodicea, mentioned Col. iv. 16.

The two things, which we are here to shew, are, I. That this was not an epistle to the Ephesians; And II. That it was, most probably, the epistle from Laodicea, mentioned Col. iv. 16.

Which was, perhaps, a sort of general epistle, to such gentile christians, more especially of Asia, of whose conversion the apostle had heard, but he had not visited them. And it seems not to have been directed to any particular church; (like that to the Colossians;) though the original, or first copy, was sent to Laodicea; and intended more immediately for their use. But the apostle's design was, that other churches, also, should have copies of this epistle, for their own, and the general, benefit.

That it was not an epistle to the Ephesians, seems very likely, if we consider, (1.) That Basil the great, in his second book against Eunomius, did not read the words [v Eφισσα, in Ephes., ver. 1.] upon the faith of some more antient fathers, and of some old mss. According to that reading, the epistle was directed, not to the Ephesians; but to christians at large; that is, "To the saints, and to them that were faithful in Christ Jesus." And, if Ephes., was not mentioned, in the first verse; there is nothing like it, to be found, in the rest of the epistle. (2.) St. Paul never refers to his having been, among the persons, to whom he wrote this epistle. Whereas; it was an usual thing, with him, to make such references,
shown to be the epistle from Laodicea.

ces; as appears, from all the epistles, which were unquestionably written to the churches of his own planting. We find, that he had been at Ephesus, twice, before this; and that he had resided there, for almost three years. There he conferred the holy spirit, upon twelve, who had been John the baptist's disciples. There, he taught christianity, in the jews' synagogue, for three months; and, after wards, in the school of Tyrannus, for about two years. So that all the inhabitants of the proconsular Asia heard the christian doctrine, both jews and gentiles. There, he worked uncommon miracles, for the handkerchiefs, or aprons, which he had touched, cured diseased persons, at a distance; when applied to their bodies.

There, the exorcists jews were remarkably baffled; when they attempted to cast out demons, in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached. Which was a great honor to the apostle, and to the christian religion. For the story quickly spread, through all the city. At Ephesus, some of St. Paul's converts burnt their magical books, which were valued at fifty thousand pieces of silver. And, from that city, he was driven away, by the riot, raised by Demetrius, and his company of silversmiths. And, when he himself was thus forced away, from Ephesus, and went into Macedonia, he left his beloved Timothy, there, to ordain the elders of that church to be bishops and deacons. And, accordingly, we find, [Acts xx. 17, and 28, compared] that he calls such of their elders, as met him, at Miletus, bishops; and intimateth, that the holy spirit had constituted them such; that is, that they were pointed out, for that office, by the spirit of prophecie.—Can St. Paul, after all these things, be supposed to write an epistle to them; and yet to take no notice of any one of these particulars; nor make the most distant and oblique reference to them?—No! not so much as to salute any of his friends and acquaintance, at Ephesus; where he had several very affectionate friends?—View the epistles to the churches of his own planting; and see whether any other such instance can be found, among them all. At Philippi, the church was settled with fixed officers, before he wrote. And, therefore, he directs his epistle, not only to the christians in general, there; but to the bishops and deacons. But there is no such thing here. Though the church of Ephesus had evidently such officers, before the writing of this epistle. And I may add, that Timothy was with St. Paul, at the value of this money, on Acts xix. 19.
St. Paul did not write to the Ephesians.

An. Chrift. 83.
Nero. 9.

Whereas, Timothy's name is not mentioned, in the introduction to this epistle; though it is found, in the beginning of the epistle to the Colossians, and of that to Philemon; which were both sent, along with this epistle. I suppose, therefore, that Timothy was unknown to most, or all, of the churches, to whom this epistle was written.

And, therefore, he joined not with the Apostle, in the writing of it. (3.) It is remarkable, that the very style, and manner, of this epistle is exceedingly like that of the epistle to the Colossians; which was, confessedly, written to a church, that had never seen the Apostle. [Col. ii. 1.] For [Eph. i. 15. and Col. i. 4.] he intimateth, that he had [only] heard of their faith in Christ, and of their love to all the christians. It is true, he uses the same expressions, in writing to Philemon. [ver. 5.] But, it is not certain, that he himself had converted Philemon, immediately. And, if he did it, by any of his assistants; the argument remains in its full force. Again, he not only mentioneth his bearing of their faith in Christ; but, [Eph. iii. 1. 2.] he speaks, as if he was dubious, whether they had ever heard of his being the apostle of the gentiles.

Or, at the most, they had only heard of that; and of the extraordinary revelations, which he had received from heaven: particularly, concerning the grand mystery of calling in the gentiles, (such as they, in general, seem to have been,) without any subjection to the law of Moses. And, verses 3, 4. he intimateth, that, if they had never heard of these things before, they might understand them, from the brief hints, which he had given them, in this epistle. Is this like St. Paul's style to the churches of his own planting? Could the Ephesians question, whether he was the apostle of the gentiles? Or be ignorant of his understanding the mystery of God's calling the gentiles into the christian church? Or could a few lines, or even a larger epistle than this, have given them so clear a knowledge of St. Paul's illumination; as their hearing him preach a thousand times? For, had he not been among them, for about the space of three years; warning every one of them, night and day, with tears? Doeth not he himself declare, that he had kept back nothing, which could be profitable for them; but had taught them publicly, and from house to house? And, what one thing was there, which he more frequently insisted upon, in the gentile churches, than that of their being equally accepted with the jewish converts; and that without any subjection to the law of
The epistle, from Laodicea, mentioned Col. iv. 16.

of Moses? His first epistle to Timothy, though directed only to that
vangelist, when he resided at Ephesus, doth, nevertheless, plainly
appear to have been written with a view to the church there; and
is full of this subject. As, indeed, most of St. Paul's epistles are.
Besides; St. Paul praiseth and commendeth the christians, to
whom he wrote this epistle; and never once reproveth them.
Whereas; if we look into the two epistles to Timothy, we shall find,
that the christians, at Ephesus, deserved reproof; and could not be
universally commended. I am sensible that the expressions, from
which I have here argued, have been interpreted in a different sense;
and so, as to make them suit the christian church, at Ephesus. But
they do not appear, to me, fairly to admit of such an interpretation.
For, why should we give them one turn, in the epistle to
the Colossians; and another, in this epistle? Unless it be, to serve
an hypothesis? And an hypothesis, which, from the arguments alleged,
appeareth to me to be not well-grounded?

As, therefore, there is so much reason to suspect that this epistle
was not written, originally, to the Ephesians; let us proceed,
II. To inquire, "What evidence there is, that it was the epistle
from Laodicea, mentioned, Col. iv. 16?" And,

First. It is plain, from St. Paul's own words, [Col. ii. 1.] that
he had never seen the christians, at Laodicea. All the expressions,
therefore, from which we have argued, that it could not be ori-
ginally written to the church at Ephesus, (a church, which he him-
sely had planted, and with whom he had so long resided,) will per-
factly well agree with the circumstances of the Laodiceans; though
they were utterly inconsistent with those of the Ephesians. But this
alone will not prove that it was written to Laodicea, rather than to
any other church, where the apostle had never been. Whereas;

Secondly. If we carefully consider St. Paul's direction, Col. iv.
16. we shall be inclined to fix upon Laodicea, in particular; as the
place, to which he first sent this epistle. The direction to the Co-
lossians runs thus: "When you have read the epistle, [which I have
sent to you,] take care that it be read, in the church of the Lao-
diceans; and that you, also, read the epistle from Laodicea:"
Τὴν ἐκ Λαοδίεσις. This last sentence hath had four interpretations.
(i.) Some have conjectured, that, "by [the epistle from Laodicea,]
the apostle meant the first epistle to Timothy; which he himself
had written, from Laodicea, to Timothy, who was then at Ephesus."
But, that the apostle could not have written any epistle, before this,
from Laodicea, is evident; in that he faith, "The Laodiceans had
never
The epistle, from Laodicea, mentioned Col. iv. 16.

An. Chr. "never yet seen his face." [Col. ii. 1.] (2.) Others have phantesied, that, "by [the epistle from Laodicea,] the apostle meant an e,
pistle, which the church of Laodicea had written to him." But
this appears very unlikely. For the apostle put the two epistles
on a level with one another; and ordered that they should be both
read, publicly, in both the churches. We find, indeed, that St.
Paul, in some of his epistles, doeth refer to what he himself had
said in others; and that he gave orders for their being publicly read,
in the churches. And St. Peter, likewise, mentions the epistles of
his beloved brother Paul, with great respect; and sets them on a le-
vel with his own. But, where do we find, that an epistle, written,
by a christian church, to an apostle, was ever set upon a level
with an epistle, written by an apostle himself? The christians, at
Corinth, wrote a letter, to St. Paul, in which they desired a solu-
tion of many difficulties. But we find no order, from the apo-
stle, that their epistle should be read publicly, in any of the cbris-
tian churches. Nor can any instance of that nature be produ-
ced. Besides, what weight and authority could an epistle, written,
by a neighboring church, have had, among the christians, at Colosse?
Or, what light and instruction could they have received, from those,
who had been brought over to christianity, as late as themselves;
and who knew no more, very probably, of the gospel-doctrine, than
they did? (3.) Some, again, have understood "that expression,
[the epistle from Laodicea] of an epistle written, by St. Paul, which
was lost, in the early ages of the christian church." And the pa-
pists have, thereupon, been ready to triumph; as if it plainly fol-
lowed, from thence, "that the church had the power to decree what
should be canonical scripture; and to throw out, or take in, what
they thought proper." Others, to supply that great lose, have
produced an epistle, composed of scraps, and incoherent sentences,
taken out of St. Paul's genuine epistles. But the impostor hath dis-
covered himself, by his awkward forgery. Not to mention, that
the spurious epistle wants the attestation of the most early fathers.
(4, and lastly,) That expression, [the epistle from Laodicea] hath,
by others, been interpreted to signify, "that, which is commonly
called the epistle to the Ephesians; which St. Paul is reckoned to
have written, originally, to the christians at Laodicea. And, from
thence, the Colossians were to get it; and to read it, in their church;
as well as to communicate their epistle to them." And this is the
interpretation, which seems to me, to give the onely natural and ge-
quien sense of the words.—Tychicus, I suppose, did, according to
The epistle, from Laodicea, mentioned Col. iv. 16.

The apostle's order, go first to Colosse; where (after some time) he left Onesimus, and the letter to the Colossians. Then he went on to Laodicea, and delivered the apostle's letter to them; ordering them to get it transcribed, before the messengers, from the church of Colosse, came, who were to bring them a copy of the apostle's letter; and to carry back a copy of the other, from Laodicea. And hence it was, that the apostle called it [the epistle from Laodicea.]

A third argument, which may incline us to think that this was the epistle from Laodicea, mentioned Col. iv. 16. is, not only, that they were sent, at the same time, and by the same person; but the remarkable similitude, which there is, between the two epistles: They plainly appear to have been twin-epistles; conceived, and brought forth, almost at the same time. So that, while the form, matter, sense, and expressions, of the epistle to the Colossians, were fresh in the apostle's mind, he sat down and wrote the other epistle. And it was with great propriety, that he gave orders for the reading of both the epistles, in both the churches. (1.) As there is such an uncommon similitude between them. So that the reading the second would, in either church, confirm what they had already read in the first. And, (2.) As the epistle to Laodicea contains several of the same things, in a more diffused, but more sublime, style. And there are, likewise, some things added, which are not in the epistle to the Colossians. On the contrary, many of the same things, which are said in so elevated and sublime a manner, in the epistle to the Laodiceans, are said in a more plain and simple style, in the epistle to the Colossians. And, it likewise containeth some cautions of moment, which are not mentioned in the other epistle: Such as "the warning them against the worship of angels, and the "jewish distinction of meats and drinks, and some voluntary mor-"tifications of the body, which are reckoned to have been more "peculiar to the sect of the Essenes; some of whom are said to "have lived in those parts of Asia minor." Where the two epistles treated of the same subject, they were like a comment upon each other. And, where they treated of different subjects, the one of them might instruct them, in such things, as were not contained in the other.

Fourthly. Marcion, who flourished in the beginning of the second century, and who lived at Sinope, in Phrygia, which was in Asia minor, as well as Laodicea, affirmed, "that that, which we commonly call the epistle to the Ephesians, was actually an epistle to the
The epistle, from Laodicea, mentioned Col. iv. 16.

An. Christ. 63.
Nero. 9.
Book III.
Ch. X.
Eccl. VII.
Acts xxviii. 29.

Laodiceans: Most probably, he had heard so, from such as knew the fact, and could inform him; or rather, had seen some of the manuscripts, which gave it that title.

It is true, Marcion was a noted heretic; and the testimony of such a person is not easily credited. Indeed, if calling this the epistle to the Laodiceans, had any way favored his peculiar tenets, I think there would have been some reason to suspect his testimony, and to have been jealous of its being a wilful misrepresentation: because I find that all parties have been too guilty of that horrible wickedness, which hath been often called by the soft name of pious frauds. But (as Dr. Mill well observeth) there is nothing of heretical pravity, in this assertion of Marcion; whatever his other sentiments were. And, I confess, I can see no reason why his word should not be taken, in a matter of fact; and where he could have no temptation to falsify.

How it came to have the title, of the epistle to the Ephesians; which it seems to have had, very early: or how the words [ἐν Ἐφεσῳ, in Ephesus] got into the first verse, cannot now be determined, with any certainty. Perhaps, through the violent persecutions, which the christians underwent, in the second century, the copies might grow scarce. And the beginning of the manuscripts, from which they afterwards took many of the copies, about Rome, might be defective; and be supplied by the transcribers, in the best manner they could. Or St. Paul might order Tychicus to deliver a copy of that epistle, to the church at Ephesus, as he returned from Laodicea, in his way to Rome again. And they (as ambitious of being reckoned among the christians, whom the apostle accounted faithful; or out of a vain glorious desire of having it thought, that the apostle had written such a long and noble epistle to them) might, possibly, intitle it the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians. From whence, others might venture to insert the words, [ἐν Ἐφεσῳ, in Ephesus], in the first verse. Not that I think this change of the title was made, by St. Paul's order; supposing he did direct Tychicus to carry a copy of it to Ephesus. For he knew, very well, that the main tenor of the epistle, and several particulars in it, could not agree to that title. But the weaker, and more zealous christians, at Ephesus, might not attend to that. And, therefore, venture upon such an alteration.

The epistle to the Laodiceans.

It is certain, that considerable facts, in profane history, have been misrepresented; concerning which, we cannot, now, give so probable an account, of the first occasion of the mistake, or forgery. By these, therefore, or some such, means, the alteration might be made. And, when Marcion (who had lived more out of the way, during the violent persecutions) brought them a more correct copy, to Rome, it is probable enough, that such, as disliked his other sentiments; and would have nothing to do with him, or his party; might disregard his testimony; and rather be more tenacious of calling it The epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, through their zealous opposition to so notorious an heretic.

[Concerning this subject, the reader may see more, in the letter to the author, at the end of this second volume; and in the third volume, or appendix, No. V.]

CHAP. X. SECT. VIII.

The History and synopsis of St. Paul's epistle to the Laodiceans; which is commonly called the epistle to the Ephesians.

HAVING heard that there were christian churches, planted, at Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colossae, and other places; St. Paul wrote this letter; the original copy of which he sent to Laodicea; but designed that it should be transcribed, for the use of other churches. And he wrote it, onely in his own name; because Timothy (perhaps) was not known to the christians, to whom he wrote. There were multitudes of Jews, and judaizing christians, in Asia minor. And, therefore, he not onely begineth the epistle, with asserting his apostolic character, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, &c. to such christians, as are faithful, and retain the purity of the gospel; but he wrote the whole of it, chiefly with a view to preserve them, in the pure, unmixed, christian doctrine; against all the arts and delusions of judaizing opposers; who (as he was afraid) would be apt, now he was in confinement, to take that opportunity to unsettle the minds of the gentile converts, by attempting to bring them into subjection to the law of Moses.
The epistle to the Laodiceans.

It is observable, that the style of this epistle is more rapturous, and sublime, than that of many others. So elevated was the Apostle, in considering the goodness of God, which was manifested, in taking such a number of gentiles into the church, under the gospel-dispensation!

Nero. 9. "After his usual benediction, of wishing them all happiness, from God, and from the Lord Jesus Christ; he proceeds to praise God, for his great goodness, manifested in his calling the gentiles into his church, under the gospel. Though it was nothing, but what he had designed, for many ages; even before the giving of the law of Moses. And the end of his choosing the gentiles, to be his people, under the gospel, was, that they should live holy lives; in expectation of pardon and acceptance with God, through Jesus Christ. This mystery, of God's calling the uncircumcised gentiles into the Christian church, and adding them to the Jews converts, was revealed to the Apostle, more clearly, than ever it had been to the ancient prophets. And all the difference, was, that the Jews had the first offers; and the gentiles, the last.

The Laodiceans, and other gentiles, in that neighborhood, whom he had never seen, had embraced the Christian faith. And the Apostle acquaints them that he had, during his present confinement, heard of their conversion to Christanity, and of their love to all the Christians. For which he praised God; as well as prayed earnestly, that they might increase in the knowledge of the Christian doctrine; and of the love, which God had manifested, to the converts, from among the idolatrous gentiles, through Jesus Christ; who is constituted the head of the church; which is made up of all believers, wherever dispersed; whether they were formerly Jews or gentiles.

Ch. II. The Apostle comparis the conversion of the idolatrous gentiles to the raising of the dead. For they had been dead in sin, and were now raised to holiness of life, by Jesus Christ; by whom, if they persevered in holiness, they would finally be exalted to perfect glory and happiness. But, he let them know, that they, by their former conduct, had by no means merited such a favor. No! it proceeded wholly from the free grace, and unmerited goodness, of God; in which he had surprised them, by his kindness, when their works deserved other sort of treatment. But, as he had sent the gospel among them, according to his ancient purpose; he expected that they should forsake their wicked courses, and live virtuously; always remembering God's gracious treatment of them, who had now broke down the partition-wall, of the ceremonial law, which formerly separated between the Jews and gentiles; and had united them into one church, or spiritual building. And all this was effected, not by an observation of the law of Moses, but by the death of Christ; by which, he had abolished that former dispensation, and introduced a better. And into this last dispensation he had taken the gentiles, who, as a part of this spiritual temple, are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being
being the chief corner-stone, which unites and supports the whole building.

As, therefore, God had accepted the gentiles, into his church, and as his people, equally with the Jewish converts, the apostle of the gentiles now writes, to these new converts, as part of his care; and doubted not but they would regard what he said, if they had heard of his being the apostle of the gentiles, and of the abundant revelations, which he had received; (though, if they had not heard of them, they might, in part, collect his knowledge of the christian doctrine, from what he had already said, in this epistle;) particularly, concerning the mystery of God's calling in the uncircumcised and idolatrous gentiles, without any subjection to the law of Moses; which was first, and most clearly, revealed to St. Paul;—who, as he had once persecuted the church, looked upon himself as the least of all christians, and one that deserved no such favor. Notwithstanding which, God, in great goodness, did communicate this knowledge to him; that he might manifest it to mankind. He was, indeed, under confinement, for preaching that very doctrine. But his suffering was a proof of his sincerity: and the gentile christians had reason to glory in it. However; confined as he was, he prayed that the God and Father of all would confirm them, in the true doctrine, and in the practice, of christianity; that they might share in the privileges and blessings of the people of God.

The idolatrous gentiles were very ignorant and wicked. And, therefore, there was great occasion for the apostle to preside such, as had been lately converted, from among them, to live as became the gospel, in humility, patience, and charity. They were to consider, that all christians were like the members of one and the same body, animated by one and the same spirit; believing in one God, and one Lord Jesus Christ, from whom they derived their spiritual gifts; who first died, and then rose again, and ascended into heaven. And the spiritual gifts, which he communicated to men, soon after his ascension, were such as qualified some to be apostles; others, to be prophets; some, evangelists; others, pastors and teachers; with a view to instruct mankind in the christian doctrine, and to gather a complete and well-formed church, from among both Jews and gentiles. If this church be compared to the human body, Christ is the head, and his disciples the members, who are firmly united, with various joints and ligaments, to him, and to one another; and are to grow up, to perfection, by their union with him. But they could never maintain this union with Christ; unless they forsook those vices, which the other gentiles persisted in, while they wandered after idols, and refused to receive and obey the gospel. If the christians, to whom he wrote, had had a full account of the nature of christianity, he intimates that they would clearly see the necessity of changing their course of life; and of abstaining from lying, malice, theft, and idleness; obscene discourse, violent and railing speeches, and all passion and bitterness of spirit: and of practiseing the contrary virtues, both towards...
The epistle to the Laodiceans.

Towards their neighbors, and in their own more private conduct. For this was what became the children of God.

So important a matter did St. Paul reckon it, that Christians should live pious, and virtuous lives, that he repeats the injunctions again; recommending mutual love among Christians; from the love, which Christ had manifested to them all. But (as the idolatrous Gentiles were so much addicted to uncleanness, and thought some species of it not criminal;) he again acquaints the Christians, that all uncleanness is highly criminal; and that even obscene conversation was unbecoming such as had embraced the gospel: That all such as indulged themselves in sensual and bodily lusts, must not expect to inherit the kingdom of God; but would, certainly, fall under the divine displeasure. And that such crimes would be more aggravated in Christians, because of their superior knowledge.

Nay; he intimates, that the ignorant world was guilty of them, to such a degree, as a Christian would blush to speak of. Instead of drinking to excess, and entertaining one another with wanton songs, he recommended it to such of them, as had the gifts of the spirit, to entertain one another, with singing psalms, and hymns, and songs of the spirit; accompanied with the melody of the heart, which was most acceptable to God.

Christianity altered nothing, in their civil rights, or social duties. And therefore, be ordered Christian wives to be in subjection to their own husbands, as the church is subject to Christ. On the other hand, Christian husbands are obliged to love their own wives; as Christ hath also, loved his church. For which, he condescended to lay down his life; and which he purifieth; that it may be, at the last, perfect, glorious, and happy. Christian children are to obey their parents. For so the law of Moses required; and so doeth Christianity, and the law of nature require. And Christian parents should, on the other hand, deal tenderly and affectionately with their children; and be more careful than others, to give them a pious and virtuous education. Christian slaves (for such their servants were, commonly, in those days) continued under obligations to serve their own masters, faithfully and conscientiously; as depending upon it, that they, who behaved well, would, at the last day, be rewarded by Christ; whether they have been slaves, or free-men. And Christian masters were bound to treat their slaves with tenderness and humanity: as remembering that they had a master, in heaven; to whom they were accountable, and with whom there will be no respecting of persons. And, all these duties, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, were obliged to perform, since their embracing the gospel;—whether the persons, to whom they owed them, were Christians, or no.

Considering the temptations, which the late converts to Christianity would meet with, while they lived among their old acquaintance and beaten neighbors; he recommendeth watchfulness and prayer, under the figure of Christian armor; which was able to defend them, at all points.
St. Paul now writeth to the Colossians.

And then he begs that they would pray for all christians; and for him particularly, who was now in confinement: that he might have resolution on still to promote christianity, notwithstanding his present discouraging circumstances. He leteth them know, that he had sent Tychicus, to acquaint them with his affairs; and to learn how things went among them. And, after a general salutation of all the christians, he concluded, with a view peculiarly to the fierce opposition, and corrupt doctrines, of the judaizers; May the divine favor be with all them, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption! Amen!

CHAP. X. SECT. IX.

The History and synopsis of St. Paul's epistle to the Colossians.

Colosse was a populous, wealthy, and large, city of Phrygia major, built upon the river Lycus; and equally distant from Laodicea, on one side, and Hierapolis on the other. There was a christian church planted; but, by whom, doeth not now appear. That St. Paul did not plant it, is, I think, unquestionable; [from chap. ii. 1.] where he faith, that "neither the Colossians, nor Laodiceans, had then seen his face in the flesh." Though I think it highly probable, that some of St. Paul's converts had planted a christian church, at Colosse, as well as Laodicea: because they were so well established in the true gospel-doctrine; and, particularly, with respect to the liberty of the gentile converts; which was what St. Paul, of all the apostles, most clearly understood, and most earnestly maintained, against all opposers.

I should, indeed, have thought that Epaphras had converted the Colossians; if he had not been sent, by that church, to the apostle, as their messenger, to acquaint him with their affairs, and to inquire after his welfare. But I can hardly think they would send away the founder of their church, whilst the church was in its young and tender state. Whoever converted them, the apostle of the gentiles was highly concerned for them, as soon as he heard of their having
St. Paul now writes to the Colossians.

An. Chr. 63.
Nero 9.

He was now in bonds, for maintaining the freedom of the gentile converts from all subjection to the law of Moses. And, for fear the judaizers should take this opportunity to pervert the gentile churches, he wrote several epistles; to reprove the guilty, to settle the wavering, and to commend such as remained steadfast. And he heard, with pleasure, from Epaphras, that the Colossians were of the number of those, who continued firm in the true christian doctrine. But, as the Jews and judaizing christians abounded in Asia minor, and there was danger of the Colossians being infected by them; he took pains to obviate such difficulties, as they might be apt to throw in the way of the lately converted gentiles. And, particularly, to guard against the doctrine of the Essenes; who paid a great veneration to angels; and were peculiar, in their washings, meats, and bodily exercises. And it deserves to be taken notice of, that, excepting this place, there are few, or no, references to the sect of the Essenes, throughout the new testament. Though Josephus is very particular, and express, in his account of them; and representeth them, as a sect, which was very remarkable; and pretty numerous, and well known, before and in his own days; that is, in and about the the time of the ministry of Christ, and his Apostles. But they lived very retired; conversing only with their own sect: and, probably, very few of them imbraced christianity.

What hath been hinted, of the affinity between this and the epistle to the Laodiceans, must be visible to every one, who studies, or carefully compares, the two epistles. The same run of thoughts, and frequently the same expressions, which he had used, in writing to the Laodiceans, seem plainly to have been fresh in the Apostle's mind, when he sat down to write this epistle to the Colossians. And, though that to the Philippians, which was written not long after these two, may be, to great advantage, compared with them, in order to understand all the three; yet the resemblance between the two former is much more remarkable.

Some time after this christian church was planted, some difficulties seem to have rifen among them. And, therefore, they sent away Epaphras, to Rome; to acquaint the Apostle with their conversion to christianity, and with the state of their affairs. But to the great grief of the Apostle, it happened that Epaphras was apprehended, in that imperial city, and put in custody: I suppose, for preaching the gospel there. [See Philemon, ver. 23.] He, therefore, could not send
The epistle to the Colossians.

Send him back to Colosse. But he sent Tychicus and Onesimus. And, by their hands, conveyed this epistle to the Colossians.

As the judaizing christians abounded in those parts, he begins with asserting his apostolic authority; Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, &c. And he wrote, in his own name, and in the name of his beloved Timothy; because several of the Colossians might, very probably, know Timothy; though the Laodiceans did not. He directs this letter to the faithful brethren, at Colosse, in particular; that is, to such, there, as retained the pure gospel-doctrine, and would not regard the judaizers. And (after wishing them all possible happiness, from God, and the Lord Jesus Christ) he goeth on, thus: I thank God, for the account, which I have received from Epaphras, of your conversion to Christianity, and that you express so much love to all the christians; as well as behave, in other respects, becoming the gospel. And, ever since he brought me this good news, I have heartily prayed, that you may increase in the knowledge of the christian doctrine, and live piously and virtuously; as it requires you should: particularly, that you may bear with patience, any persecutions, or discouragements, to which your regard to the gospel may expose you. Considering you were lately idolatrous gentiles, how much ought you to praise God; who hath translated you, out of that kingdom of darkness, into Christ's kingdom, which is a kingdom of light? For it is owing to his death, that you are brought into the church of God, and may hope for the remission of your sins. The jews, and judaizing christians, and particularly some of the sect of the Essenes, pretend a great veneration for angels. But Jesus Christ, who hath admitted you into the number of his people, is much superior to all the angels. For he is the image of the invisible God, and the first-borne of every creature. Nay; by him, God at first created, and now governs, all things. But he is, more particularly, the head of the church, and was the first, who rose from the dead, never to die any more. In one word, it hath pleased the father, that, in him, should all fulness dwell. And, (what deferveth the peculiar regard of the gentile christians) by his death, the ceremonial law is abolished; that wall of partition broken down, which formerly excluded the gentiles from being of his church and people. But now he hath reconciled, or admitted, them; in order to their being virtuous and holy, and retaining the purity of the christian doctrine; which is preached to all mankind; and particularly by me. The apostle of the gentiles. I am, it is true, in bonds, at present; for preaching to the gentiles, and standing up for the unmixed gospel. But I am not discouraged thereby. For the mystery, communicated to me, by Christ, I have made known, and will again make known; that, by my means, a large number of gentiles may be saved, in the day of the Lord. I am, more particularly, anxious for you, at Colosse, and Laodi-cesa, and the other gentile churches, which have never seen me; that you may
"may be rightly instructed in the christian doctrine, as well as supported
under persecution; and may not regard the insinuations of such, as
would tempt you to pay worship to angels, or comply with other jewib
customs. For the christian religion, alone and of itself, is sufficient to in-
struct and save you. And, therefore, I beseech you, to continue sted-
fast in the truth and purity of it. Regard not their subtile and vane
philosophy. Mind not their antient traditions, nor comply with their
rites and ceremonial observations. Christianity will afford you more uce-
ful and substantial knowledge, and make you complete, and acceptable,
in the fight of god, through jesus christ; who is above the angels,
as well as above all mankind. Your christian baptism, by which you were
initiated into the gospel-kingdom, rendereth the circumcision of the flesh in-
tirely needless; if you take care (as it directs and requires of you) to
die unto sin, and live again unto holiness. The judaizers do, very un-
justly, insist upon your complying with the ceremonial law, in order to
your acceptance with god:—Seeing Christ hath struck a nail through
that writing; as men do, when they abolish a law; and hath fastened
it to the crofse; having intirely vacated it, by his death. Yea; and the
angels likewise, whom the Efwnes name with such reverence, and to
whom they would tempt you to pay homage; even these very angels are
now all ministering spirits, subdued to christ, (since his death and ex-
altation) as their head and lord. Let no man, therefore, tempt you to
distinguish between days and meats, as the jews do. For that shadowy
dispensation is abolished by christianity, which is the substance. And
never give into the worship of angels, or the pretended purity of the Es-
wnes; which consists in bodily exercises, and voluntary mortifications.
For, if you do, you forfeit your reward, as christians; and reject christ,
the head; to whom all true christians, like the several members of the
same body, are firmly united; and in whom alone, they can finally be
made happy. You have not been baptized into the jewib religion, or in
the name of angels; but in the name of christ. You have, therefore,
nothing to do with the jewib religion; or with the tenets of the Efwnes,
which are mere human doctrines; but may lawfully use all sorts of whole-
some food; and are not obliged to such severe mortifications, or bodily
exercises; which onely carry a show of piety; but are of no moment,
in comparison to real virtue and true goodnesse. Laying aside, there-
fore, these human inventions, and earthly, temporal, institutions; you
are to raise your minds to heaven, and to the purity and happinesse of
that blessed place; where christ is exalted, at the right-hand of god.
For you, christians, are, by your baptism, dead, both to those carnal
ordinances, and to the vices of the idolatrous parts of the world; and
expect to be glorified, when christ shall appear, as universal judge.
But, as he will glorifie none, but the pious, and virtuous; you must
not indulge yourselves, either in impurity, or malice. These are the
vices, for which a wicked world will be condemned. And you your-
elves were once guilty of them. But, now, all passion, malice, railing,
The epistle to the Colossians.

or obscene speeches, are justly abhorred by you. And, since your conversion to christianity, you know that lying, as well as uncleanness, and all other vices, cannot but be odious to a god of truth and purity. He doeth, indeed, under the gospel, most graciously admit both jews and gentiles; persons of all nations and conditions; into his church; without difference or distinction. But then, as he hath chosen to take you gentiles, as well as the believing jews, into his church; he expects that you should behave accordingly: that you should abound in meekness and charity; that you should patiently bear injuries, and readily forgive such as have offended you; as readily, as christ will forgive you, when penitent. But, again, I recommend charity, as the brightest of the christian virtues; and hope, that you will be particularly careful, to maintain peace and union one with another. Be frequently discoursing together, about the christian doctrine. For this will instruct and admonish you. And, when you would entertain one another; let it not be, as the beasts do; who drink to excess, and then sing lewd and wanton songs. But do you teach and admonish one another, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; chiefly regarding the melody of the heart. Let christ, and the true gospel-doctrine, be magnified and promoted, in whatever you do. You are under the same, or stronger, obligations to social duties, since you became christians: (though you are freed from idolatry, and are under no obligation to observe the ceremonial law of Moses.) Particularly; wives should obey their own husbands, and husbands love their own wives; and not behave with passion, or bitterness, towards them. Children must obey their parents, in all their lawful commands. For so the christian law requires. And parents must not needlessly provoke, or discourage, their children. Slaves should obey their masters, out of conscience; as remembering they are accountable to god; and as hoping for a reward from their great master, christ. And all these duties, the christians are to perform; whether the persons, to whom they are due, be christians, or no. If you do not perform them, you must expect to be punished, (whatever your stations are,) by that righteous judge, with whom is no respect of persons.

As the slaves, who had embraced christianity, were to be faithful; so cb. IV; the christians were to be just, and compassionate, towards their slaves; as considering that they had a master, even christ, to whom they were accountable. He recommends to them the great duties of prayer and praise; and desires that they would particularly pray for him; that, notwithstanding his present confinement, he might preach the true gospel-doctrine. He exhorts them to a peaceable behavior; lest they should, otherwise, provoke any to persecute them: and to be, likewise, prudent and virtuous, in their speech and conversation. Tychicus, faith he, who is a true christians; and one, for whom I have a very great respect, will acquaint you with all my affairs. And, therefore, I will not write about them; but refer you to his account. My design, in sending him, is, that you may acquaint him with the affairs of your church; and that

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...he may comfort you, under any discouraging circumstances. Along with him, I have sent Onesimus, who is a Colossian. He is become a Christian, and is much in my favor. Of him you may, likewise, inquire; and he will confirm Tychicus his account. Aristarchus, the Macedonian, who went with me, from Caesarea, to Rome; and who is now under confinement, for preaching the gospel, in this city; desirous to send his salutations to you. As doeth, likewise, John Mark; who designeth to visit you shortly. I hope you will treat him with the respect, which he deserves. And Jesus, surnamed Justus, sends his salutations to you. These are all Jewish Christians; and yet they have been very serviceable, to me, in my present confinement; and have greatly promoted the true gospel-doctrine. Your messenger, Epaphras, sends his salutations; and prays, most earnestly, that you may continue good Christians. Nay; I must farther acquaint you, that he is very much concerned for the welfare of your church; and of the Christians, at Laodicea, and Hierapolis. Luke, the physician, for whom I have a particular affection and value, saluteth you. And so doeth Demas, also. I desire you would, in my name, salute the Christians at Laodicea; and, particularly, Nymphas; and the church in his house. When you have read this epistle, publicly, in your church, send it to Laodicea, that it may be read in the church there; and get the epistle from Laodicea; and read it also in your church. Put Archippus in mind of his duty, as a minister of Christ; that he may be faithful. I, Paul, have wrote my salutation of you all, with my own hand. Pray for me, who am in chains. I wish you the divine favor. Amen!

CHAP. X. SECT. X.

The history of St. Paul's writing the epistle to Philemon.

Colosse was a city of Phrygia major, built upon the river Lycus, about sixteen miles east from Hierapolis, and about twenty-eight miles almost eastward from Laodicea; which last was built upon the banks of the same river, Lycus. At Colosse lived Philemon; who was, very probably, a native of that country. For Philemon was a common name among the Phrygians.

- See the Letter, at the end of this second volume.
The epistle to Philemon.

The nation of Phrygia was proverbial for being of a slaveish and intractable disposition. And some have alleged, that Philemon might be of the same rough and intractable disposition; which might occasion the apostle's taking so much pains to obtain Onesimus his pardon, and procure a thorough reconciliation. But such things should not, I think, be said from mere conjecture: especially as the apostle has insinuated the contrary; and, in other places, commended Philemon's benevolence and charity. The truth of the matter is: the provocation was very great; and Philemon had reason to be much displeased with Onesimus. He had robbed him; and run away from him, as far as Rome. That would have exasperated any man of spirit.—Grotius observes "that masters had a power to torture their slaves, who behaved ill, and even to put them to death, without applying to the magistrate: and that this was agreeable, not only to the roman, but also to the gracian, law." Onesimus, therefore, might well be afraid of returning to his master again, without some great and powerful intercession, in his favor. And the apostle might very reasonably labor the point, as he does, with great earnestness and address.

That Philemon lived at Colosse, may appear from Col. iv. 9. where (writing to the Colossians) the apostle calls Onesimus, one of them. And from his saluting Archippus, in this letter to Philemon, [ver. 2.] who appears to have been a minister of the church at Colosse. [Col. iv. 17.]

Theodoret is reckoned to have flourished about the beginning of the fifth century. And yet, in his preface to this epistle, he says, "that Philemon's house remained at Colosse unto his time;" that is, above three hundred years after the writing of this epistle.

The keeping one or more slaves; the having a church, or number of christians, in his own house; the refreshing of the bowels of the saints, and providing lodgings for the apostle; are proofs that Philemon was a man of some distinction, and of a considerable estate. This seems confirmed by the polite and respectful manner, with which the apostle addresses him.

He was converted, most probably, from an idolatrous gentile, to the christian faith. From ver. 19. some have been inclined to think that St. Paul converted him. But, ver. 5. the apostle says, "he had [only] heard, of Philemon's faith in Christ, &c." which was the phrase made use of, when he wrote to the christians, whom he had never seen. [Eph. i. 15. and iii. 2, &c. Col. i. 4. and ii. 1.] I, therefore, incline to think, that, during his long stay at Ephesus, Q q 2
some of the Colossians had gone to Ephesus, and there heard him preach the christian doctrine [Acts xix. 10. and xx. 31.] Or that the apostle sent out some of his assistants, and planted the gospel at Colossae and that Philemon received the gospel, from some of the apostle's converts, or assistants; perhaps Timothy, or some of those mentioned, Col. iv. 10. &c. Philem. ver. 23. &c. If the apostle had not come into those parts, preaching the gospel to the gentiles, Philemon had (very likely) never become a christian. And, therefore, well might the apostle say, "that Philemon owed unto him, himself, or his own soul."

This Philemon had formerly a slave, called Onesimus, who had robbed him; and then run away from him, as far as Rome. Whether he repented of what he had done, and voluntarily went to the apostle; or how they came to meet there, is not said. But the apostle, during his confinement, in his own hired house, in that imperial city, converted him to the christian faith, baptized him; and kept him, for some time, to wait upon himself; till, by his conduct, he had confirmed the truth and sincerity of his conversion. And, when Onesimus was determined to return to his master again, the apostle wrote this letter in his behalf. The design of it, was, to beg of Philemon to forgive him, and take him into his family and favor again. For he was become a good christian, and would be a better servant than ever.

This epistle was written, during the apostle's first confinement at Rome; [Acts xxviii. 30.] and, according to the best chronologers, about the year of the vulgar Æra, 63. of Nero, 9. From ver. 22. of this epistle to Philemon, it appears that the apostle had expectations of being set at liberty. And, therefore, it is probable that this epistle was written towards the conclusion of those two years confinement.

The epistle to the Laodiceans, (commonly called the epistle to the Ephesians) and the epistle to the Colossians, were written, about the same time, and sent by the same persons. Accordingly, we find salutations from, and to, several of the same persons. [Compare Philem. ver. 23, 24. with Col. iv. 10; 12; 14. and Philem. ver. 2. with Col. iv. 17.] "Tychicus only had the charge of the epistle to the Laodiceans, Onesimus, of this to Philemon. And they were both joined in the delivery of that to the church of Colossae. In their passage from Rome, they landed at the most convenient port, they could, for their journey towards Colossae; whither, it is likely, they went first. For what St. Paul writes to Timothy, [Tychicus have I sent..."
The epistle to Philemon.

sented to Ephesus, 2 Tim. iv. 12.] must relate to another journey, long after this; that epistle to Timothy being of a later date, by some years. Upon their arrival at Colosse, the immediate busi-

of Onesimus, was, to deliver the epistle, sent to Philemon; which so nearly concerned himself. For the apostle could never have recommended him, in such strong terms, to the church at Colosse, (as he does, Col. iv. 9.) but upon a supposition that his master, Philemon, would, upon reading that letter, be reconciled to him. In order to this, Onesimus must first wait upon his master, and make his submission to him. — This reconciliation, therefore, was probably effected, before the apostle's letter to the church, at Colosse, was publicly read among them. After the affair of Onesimus was over, the epistle to the church at Colosse was to be delivered; in which, both Tychicus and Onesimus were jointly concerned. And, when this was done, Onesimus had no farther orders, from the apostle. But Tychicus was to carry the epistle to the Laodiceans, by himself. For which reason, his name only is mentioned in it. [Eph. vi. 21.] However; Tychicus did not immediately leave Colosse, after the delivery of the letter to that church; but stayed some time, to acquaint them with the state of St. Paul's affairs; and, likewise, to inform himself of their circumstances, to make a report at his return. [Col. iv. 7, 8.] He then proceeded, with the remaining letter, to Laodicea; acquainted them with his having been at Colosse; that they were to expect a copy of the apostle's letter to that church, from thence; and that the messenger, who should bring it, was to carry back a copy of the letter, which had been sent to them; agreeably to St. Paul's direction, Col. iv. 16.” [See the Letter at the end of this second volume.]

"Some have called this a private letter; and would not have had it inserted among the apostolic epistles."—Undoubtedly; the apostles might, upon some occasions, write private letters, as well as other men. Suppose this was only a private letter, nothing gives one a better idea of a man's character than his letters to his private friends. And, in this letter, we have the picture of a wife and good man, and a zealous, generous friend; who knew how to condescend to men of low estate, and promote their temporal and spiritual welfare.—But there is no reason for looking upon this, as a mere private letter. For it was all written with the apostle's own hand; which was much more than that which he called the token in all his epistles. [2 Thess. iii. 17.] It was received, by the primitive christians, as a part:
The history of

part of sacred scripture: and, accordingly, read in the churches.

But, as to the testimonies of the fathers, at large, see Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part 2d.] The argument is not mean, nor any part of this epistle unworthy the great apostle of the gentiles.—

Whoever will carefully study it, will discern a great number of the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, expressed or insinuated.

For instance, (1.) In the religious view, or upon a spiritual account, all Christians are upon a level. Onesimus, the slave, upon becoming a Christian, is the apostle's dear son, and Philemon's brother.

(2.) Christianity makes no alteration in men's civil affairs. By Christian baptism, a slave did not become a freedman. His temporal estate, or condition, was still the same. And, though Onesimus was the apostle's son, and Philemon's brother, upon a religious account; yet he was obliged to be Philemon's slave for ever; unless his master voluntarily gave him his freedom. (3.) Servants should not be taken, or detained, from their own masters, without their masters consent. [See ver. 13, 14.] (4.) We should love, and do good unto, all men. We should not contempt persons of low estate; nor disdain to help the meanest slave, when it is in our power. The apostle has here set us an example of benevolence, condescension, and Christian charity; which it well becomes us to follow. He took pains with, and converted, a slave; and, in a most affectionate and earnest manner, interceded, with his master, for his pardon. (5.) We should not utterly despair of those who are wicked, but should use our best endeavors to reclaim them. Though Onesimus had robbed his master, and run away from him, the apostle attempted his conversion, among others; and succeeded therein. (6.) Restitution is due, where an injury has been done; unless the injured party freely forgive. Accordingly; the apostle Paul gives a promise, under his own hand, for Onesimus his making restitution, as a matter of justice, if Philemon insisted upon it. (7.) We should be grateful to our benefactors. This St. Paul touches upon, very gently, ver. 19. where he intimates to Philemon, that he owed unto him himself also. And, therefore, in point of gratitude, he was obliged to grant his request. (8.) We should forgive the penitent, and be heartily reconciled to them. (9.) The apostle's example teaches us to do all we can, to make up quarrels and differences, and reconcile those who are at variance. (10.) A wise man chooses, sometimes, to address in a soft and obliging manner, even in cases where there is authority to command. (11.) The bishops and pastors of the Christian church, and all teachers of religion, have here the most glorious ex-
The epistle to Philemon.

[Book III. 5. Ch. X. Sect. 33.]

Writ from Rome.

8mple, set before them, to induce them to have a most tender regard to the souls of men of all ranks and conditions; and to endeavor to convert a slave, as well as the rich and great, and An. Chrifi. honorable of the earth. He, who disdained not to teach a slave, a fugitive, and a thief; but preached the doctrine of salvation to him; and took pains with him, till he had restored him, to his master, an honest, worthy man;—how disinterested must he have been? To whom would he not condescend? Or whose salvation and happiness would he not endeavor to promote? Would to God there was the same spirit, in all the teachers of Christianity, at all times, and in all places! (12.) Here is a most glorious proof of the good effects of Christianity, where it is rightly understood, and sincerely embraced. It transforms a worthless slave and thief, into a pious, virtuous, amiable, and useful, man; makes him not only happier and better in himself; but a better servant, and better in all relations and circumstances whatever.

Shall an epistle, so full of useful and excellent instructions, be rejected for its brevity? or because the occasion required that it should be written, concerning one particular person? or addressed to a private man? Men would do well to examine it carefully, before they reject it, or speak of it so slightly.

In this epistle, there are some of the finest strokes of true rhetoric; so that, I think, it may be called The polite epistle. Such deference and respect to Philemon, such affection and concern for Onesimus, such distant but just insinuations, such a genteel and fine address, run through the epistle; that it alone might be sufficient to convince us, that St. Paul was not unacquainted with the world; nor that weak, visionary enthusiast, which the enemies of revelation have sometimes represented him. [But of this, see more in the appendix to the paraphrase and notes on the epistle to Philemon.]

I should think it a very agreeable piece of history, to know the success, which this letter met with; even though the persons concerned have been so many hundreds of years in their graves. However; the primitive christians preserving this letter, and placing it in the sacred canon, are strong arguments to induce us to believe that Philemon granted the apostle's request, and received Onesimus into his house and favor again.

"St."
The epistle to Philemon.

ST. PAUL wrote, in his own name, and in the name of Timothy, to Philemon and his family, wishing them all happiness, from God and the Lord Jesus Christ. He thanks God that Philemon had embraced the Christian faith, and behaved in a generous manner to all Christians;—in which he greatly rejoiced.

As an apostle of Christ, he could have commanded Philemon to have done what was proper: but he rather chose, as the prisoner of Christ, to beseech him to receive his beloved son, Onesimus, whom he had converted to Christianity, during his confinement. He confesses, he had formerly not behaved well; but of late he was become another man; and had been so useful to the apostle, in his confinement, that he would have kept him; if Philemon had known of it, and consented to it. The providence of God had turned his short departure, into the means of his reformation; that his master might receive him, improved, and for life. He, therefore, intreats Philemon to receive him as a Christian brother; or as he would have received the apostle himself, who engaged to pay whatever Onesimus had wronged his master of; if Philemon, who owed himself unto the apostle, should insist upon it. But he hoped Philemon would do more than he had requested of him.

He desires Philemon would provide him a lodging, as hoping that he should be set at liberty. He sends salutations from several of his fellow-laborers. And concludes with wishing Philemon's family the favor of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

CHAP. X. SECT. XI.

The history of St. Paul’s epistle to the Philippians.

It hath already been observed, in the course of this history, that St. Paul planted a Christian church, at Philippi; by converting Lydia, at theproschech; and, afterwards, the jaylor and his family, in the prison, or jaylor’s house. There he cured the lunatic damsel, who had pretended to augury, or divination; and was treated in a cruel manner, by her masters, and the rash magistrates of that Roman colony. Afterwards, he visited the Christians, at Philippi, once or twice; and farther instructed, and confirmed, them.

Of all the churches, of St. Paul’s planting, that at Philippi seemeth to have had the most tender concern for him. And, though they
they appear to have been but a small Church, yet they were peculiarly generous towards him. For, when christianity was first planted, in Macedonia, no other church contributed any thing, towards the support of the apostle, but the Philippians only. Nay; when he was at Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia, they sent him presents, once and again, from Philippi; that he might not be destitute of the necessaries of life, while he planted the gospel, in that city. [See Phil. iv. 15, 16.] When they heard that St. Paul was now under confinement, at Rome, they showed the same affectionate concern for him, which they had always manifested; and sent Epaphroditus, to him, with a present; lest he should want necessaries, during his confinement. From Epaphroditus, the apostle learned the present state of that church. And by him, when he returned home, he sent them this epistle:

Which he wrote, in his own name, and in the name of his beloved Timothy, who was with him, when he founded the church, at Philippi. As also, perhaps, when he visited them, afterwards. [Acts xx. 3, 4.]

As their affection and liberality was so great; and they continued so steadfast, in the true gospel-doctrine; St. Paul, in writing to them, would not assume his apostolic character; nor say anything, which would intimate his having a right to the kindness, which they had shown him.

And, therefore, he begins, "Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ." And he directs the epistle to all the christians of that church; together with their bishops and deacons. For that church of Philippi was settled with fixed officers; though few, if any, other of the churches were so settled, when St. Paul wrote his epistles to them.

After wishing the Philippians the favor of God and of Christ Jesus; and intimateing that he prayed for them, constantly; the apostle tells them, that he had given thanks to God, for their conversion to christianity, ever since they had embraced the gospel. For he was satisfied they would persevere. Which was a comfort to him, now, in his confinement; as it was always. Yea; nothing could yield him more joy, than the love, which they expressed. And he prayed, that they might be rewarded in the day of the Lord. And, to that end, that their virtue and piety might abound more and more.

They were much concerned, to hear of the apostle's confinement. And, very probably, had sent him an account of that, by Epaphroditus. In answer to which, he intimated, that they had no reason to be so much affected. For his confinement had turned to the advancement of the gospel; and made christianity spread, even in the emperor's family, as well as through the city of Rome: and that other christians took courage, from his success, in his confinement, and preached the christian doctrine the more. Some of the wicked judaizers did so, out of a spirit of opposition;
The epistle to the Philippians.

position; in hopes of making the apostle to be confined more strictly, and to suffer more; as being a leading man among the christians. But others, of a better spirit, did it, to assist the apostle; looking upon him as the grand defender of the faith; and one, whom it would be right to assist, as much as they could. The apostle rejoiced in the attempts of both. For he foresaw that christianity would spread the more; and that, in the event, he should be the sooner released, the more it was known what true christianity was. He, indeed, was resigned; and willing either to live, or to die; so as might most promote the spreading of the gospel. If he lived, he would preach it himself. And, if he died, as a martyr for christianity, his death would greatly promote the spread of it. Upon these prospects, he scarce knew which to wish for.

As for his own part, he was rather inclined to die, and to be with christ; as what was much preferable to this mortal life. But his living longer, would be of more advantage to the christians. And he was satisfied that god would, therefore, spare his life, for the benefit of the churches; and, particularly, that he would gratify the Philippians, with the fight of him, again. But (faith he) whether I come, or no; do you live as christians. Retain, steadfastly, the pure christian doctrine, against all the wiles and threats of adversaries. For you have been honored, not only in becoming the disciples of christ; but in having, already, suffered persecution for your religion.

Ch. II. In the next place, the apostle recommendeth mutual love and union; and excites them to humility, from the most perfect example of christ; who, though he might, without robbery, or usurpation, have continued in the form of a god, yet left his state of glory, emptied himself, and took upon him a body; appearing, upon earth, in the humble form of a servant; and becoming obedient to the painful and ignominious death of the cross. For which condescension, and amazing humility, god hath exalted him to the throne of universal dominion; that all creatures might be subject to him, to the glory of god the father.

The Philippians had been obedient to the gospel, when st. paul was among them. He hoped that, much more in his absence, they would promote each other's happiness. For god was working among them, that they might both will and act from a principle of benevolence. A peaceable temper was becoming christians: who were to behave like the children of god, and to distinguish themselves from the wicked world around them. If they retained the purity of the gospel, he intimated that he should not look upon his labor, among them, as lost. As for his part, he could cheerfully lay down his life for them. And he believed they had as sincere a concern for him; and would be as ready to rejoice in his welfare, as he was in theirs. Being very desirous to comfort and establish them, he hoped to send timothy to them, in a little time; a person of the most excellent character, and well-known to them! And the apostle was in great expectation of short-
The epistle to the Philippians.

"by being set at liberty; and of following Timothy, to Philippi. But, from Rome, before his release, or even before he could send Timothy, he thought it proper to send away Epaphroditus, with this epistle. For, he had been sick, since he came to Rome, and in great danger of his life; and the Philippians had, with much concern, heard of his sickness. As soon as ever therefore, he recovered, the apostle sent him away, to Philippi. But, the christians there, might rejoice, to see him in health again. Ch. X.

And he exhorts them to esteem such a person, as Epaphroditus; who Sect.XI. was more concerned for the spread of the gospel, than for his own life. Acts and some of them had either attempted to taint the Philippians, or were likely to endeavor to seduce them, and bring them into subjection to the law of Moses; as if christianity, alone, had been insufficient to justify and save them: — With a view, I say, to the attempts of the judaizers, the apostle cautions them, to beware of those wicked seducers. For true christians are the circumcision, or the true people of God, and not those, who place their confidence in their conformity to the law of Moses. If the law of Moses could have given grounds for hope, and glorying, St. Paul had as good pretensions as any of those judaizers. For he was descended from parents, who were both hebrew Jews. He was circumcized, on the very day appointed in the law. He had been a most zealous pharisee, and had once persecuted the christians; and conformed to the law, in the strictest manner. But all these things he now saw could not avail, to justification. The christian method, alone, was sufficient for that. And, therefore, he most carefully complied with the gospel; in hopes of the happiness, which it proposes to such, as persevere in a course of virtue and piety. And this method he recommendeth; as that, to which all should conform, who understand the christian doctrine.

The judaizers betrayed, by their practice, that they were enemies to the true doctrine, and cross, of Christ. For, they were not only drunkenards, and gluttons; but they gloried in their shame; and their chief perfuit was temporal things. Whereas; St. Paul, the true apostle, had his conversation in heaven. From which heavenly conversation, he was led to look for Jesus to come again, as his savior, and judge; to raise him to glory, and an happy immortality. And, as the Philippians had the same prospect; he recommendeth it to them, to persevere in the true gospel doctrine, and in a suteable practice.

In the next place, he recommends kindness and mutual affittance, Ch. IV. to some particular persons, in that church. One of whom was Clemens. The apostle speaks of him with great respect. And he is generally thought to have been Clemens, bishop of Rome; one of the apostolic fathers; who wrote that excellent and golden remain, of the epistle to the Corinthians. There is a second epistle to the Corinthians ascribed to him, by some; and by the late Mr. Weisstein, a third and fourth; but the three last are reckoned, by the best judges, not to be genuine.

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"The apostle adviseth the whole church, at Philippi, to rejoice in the Lord, and not be too anxious about temporal things; but commit them, by prayer, and with resignation, to the divine disposition. Christians are not only to do what is strictly just; but whatever is amiable, and can recommend christianity. For all such things the apostle had taught the Philippians; and nothing could be more pleasing to God, than such a practice. He thanks them, in the most modest, agreeable, and grateful manner, for their kindness to him; intimating, that he had an equal and contented mind; prepared to suffer want, if called to it. But he was not insensible, either of their former, or late, favors; though he was much more pleased with their presents, as they brought honor to God; and testified the good influence, which christianity had upon their minds; than as they supplied his wants. And he doubted not, but God would amply reward them. He salutes the church at Philippi; and sends salutations from the christians: particularly, from the christians in Nero’s family. And then concludes, as usual: The favor of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen!"

CHAP. X. SECT. XII.

The CONCLUSION.


Thus did St. Paul spend his time, for the two years, in which he lived, in his own hired house, at Rome; always in the custody of a soldier, and frequently chained to him:—receiving all that would come and hear him; and often discourseing, concerning the life, doctrine, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension, of the blessed Jesus:—pointing out, both to Jews and Gentiles, the nature of the kingdom of God; which he was then erecting, under the Messiah, his anointed Son: and proving, both from antient prophecies, and the miraculous gifts; which were conferred, since the pouring out of the Spirit; that christianity had all the evidences of a divine original; which men could reasonably expect, upon the publishing of a true revelation. — By such discourses, as well as by the miracles, which he worked; and, by the laying on of his hands, enabled others to work; he not only confirmed such, as had already embraced the christian religion; but brought in numbers of new converts; making several proselytes in Cæsar’s court; as well as in the camp, and in the city.

But
The Conclusion.

But the apostle's care was not confined to Rome alone. For he received messages, from several of the Christian churches, in distant countries; and sent letters and messengers to the distant churches, where he thought there was most occasion. And, in one word, he made it his study and business to promote the spreading of the gospel. And he did it with all openness, and fortitude; though he was already in chains, upon that account. However; notwithstanding his zeal and diligence, no-body forbade him. For the Romans had not yet made any laws, against the disciples of Jesus; and it was within the first ten years of the reign of Nero, and before his cruelty broke out, against the Christians.

Thus far did St. Luke, the sacred historian, proceed, in writing the history of the first planting of the Christian religion. And, as I am come to the conclusion of his book, which is commonly called, The Acts of the Apostles; I have finished my present design; and shall therefore, put an end to my history:—After I have returned my most humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God; who, out of his abundant mercy and goodness, hath spared my life, and granted me health and leisure thus to complete it.

To his glory I devote it; heartily praying, that it may advance the interest of truth and peace, virtue and liberty! Amen.

The end of the history.
A DISSERTATION;

In which it is shown,

That St. Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles: And that, as the Acts contain a true history, Christianity must be true.

The design of this dissertation, is, (1.) To show that the Acts of the Apostles were written by St. Luke. And (2.) To point out the proofs, which that history affords, of the truth of the Christian religion.

PART I. SECT. I.

In considering the first, it will be proper to inquire, who St. Luke was; and what evidences there are (either internal, or external) of the truth of his history?

According to the best lights, which I have been able to get, from the scriptures, and the antient Christian writers, "St. Luke was a native of Antioch in Syria; and was bred a physician.*" That he was not a Jew, borne in Judæa, or Galilee, seemeth highly probable, from his speaking of the field, which the Jews bought, with the money, that Judas the traitor had returned. For he saith, that, in their own proper dialect, it was called Hakeldama; whereby he seems to intimate that it was not his dialect, though it was the dialect of the Jews. But, that he was a native of Antioch in Syria, is what some of the antient Christians have positively asserted. There is, likewise, a reading in the Cambridge

* Col. iv. 14.  
† Acts i. 18, 19. See the note there.  
‡ Euseb. hist. ecclef. l. 3. c. 4. Hieron. de viris illustr. in Luc. & præfet, in comment. ad Matt.

bridge manuscript, Acts xi. 28, which intimates, that the first time, he is mentioned, in the scripture, he was at Antiocb in Syria. That manuscript is reckoned very antient. But I lay no stress upon it; any farther than that the reading agrees with the most early and most authentic accounts of St. Luke. That he was not a jew, but an uncircumcised gentile, doeth farther and more plainly appear, from Col. iv. 10, 11. compared with ver. 12; 14. For, when the apostle had reckoned up such of his fellow-laborers of the circumcision, as were then, at Rome, with him; he afterwards mentioned St. Luke, and some others, who were also with him, at that time: intimating, that the last were not Jewish converts; though the first-mentioned were all such. And some have thought it a confirmation of his being a gentile, that he wrote purer greek, than the other three evangelists; who were all Jews. And, though that, alone, would not have proved him to have been a gentile; because one Jew might have understood greek, better than another; yet (as far as the observation is just and well-grounded) it may be a confirming evidence, when joined to the other proofs, which have been alleged. For Antiocb was, then, a place famous for the greek learning; and for rhetoric and eloquence. I take St. Luke to have been a devout gentile, or proselyte of the gate; who (though he continued uncircumcised, yet) had forsaken idolatry, and was a worshiper of the true God; and one, who attended upon the service of the synagogue, before christianity was preached to any gentile. For the christian church, at Antiocb, in Syria, was collected from among such. And, if the reading of the Cambridge manuscript, which has been taken notice of, Acts xi. 28. be genuine: St. Luke was a convert to christianity, before the gospel was preached to one idolatrous gentile. — Considering these things, I cannot allow him to have been one of the seventy disciples, whom our Lord sent forth, before his death; because I do not find that our Lord, during his own personal ministry, here, upon earth, preached to any uncircumcised gentile. [For, though he preached to samaritans, as well as Jews; yet, at that time, the samaritans, in general, were circumcised; as well as the Jews, and proselytes of righteousness. And, generally, in all things, except as to the place of worship, held the law of Moses for the rule of their religion.] And, as our Lord did not, then, admit the gentiles to be his disciples; much less did he then choose any uncircumcised gentile, to go and preach.

* See the note on Acts xi. 28.

preach in his name. For, till the harvest of the Jews was gathered in, (which was not, till several years after Christ's ascension,) we do not find that any Gentile was preached to; or received, as a disciple, into the Christian church. And, after that, it was some time, before any of them were appointed to preach the gospel to others. Again: — That St. Luke was not one of the seventy disciples, may be gathered, from his own words, in the introduction to his gospel; where he plainly intimates, that he himself had not been, from the beginning, an eye-witness and minister of the word; but had had his intelligence, from others, of the facts, which he recorded in his gospel. Whereas, in the latter part of the Acts of the Apostles, he frequently speaks of himself, as one that was personally present, and concerned in the things which he has related. He was, very probably, converted to Christianity, by Paul and Barnabas; when these two labored together, a whole year, as Christian prophets, in planting, and watering, the gospel doctrine, at Antioch, in Syria. [Acts xi. 26.] And, after he had been a Christian about eight years, he became an evangelist; travelling generally, along with St. Paul; to assist him, in the work of the gospel. The first time he joined the apostle, with that view, was, when St. Paul, in his second apostolic journey, had got as far as Troas. For there, St. Luke (in the history of the Acts of the Apostles) begins to speak in the first person plural; and to use the words we, and us; giving the reader to understand, that he was, from that time, one of the apostle's company. [Acts xvi. 8, &c.] From Troas, they went, together, to Philippi. And (though I do not find that he was with St. Paul, till that apostle returned to Philippi; yet) there they joined company again; and went up, together, to Jerusalem; to carry the generous, charitable, collection; which the Gentile churches had made, for the use of the poor Christians in Judaea. [Acts xx. 6, &c.] When St. Paul was carried in chains, from Caesarea, to Rome, St. Luke accompanied him, in his voyage; [Acts xxvii. 1, &c.] and continued with him, whilst he was confined, in his own hired house, in that magnificent city. And, accordingly, we find him particularly mentioned, in two of the epistles, which the apostle wrote, from thence, during his first confinement there. [See Col. iv. 14. Philem. ver. 24.] He is once more mentioned, in St. Paul's epistles; namely, 2 Tim. iv. 11. For I take St. Luke, the evangelist, to have been the person there intended; though some have questioned it. And, if he was the person there designed; he was with St. Paul, during that apostle's second confinement, at
St. Luke qualified to write the Acts, &c.

at Rome; and the onely companion, who dared to tarry with the apostle, after he had made his first apologie, and was likely to suffer martyrdom.

St. Luke could, very likely, have carried down his history, to the death of St. Paul. But, I suppose, he had published his gospel, and the Acts of the apostles, some years before that. And did not see proper to add any thing, to what he had said already. For, in studying brevity, he consulted the general good. And, in what he has left us, he has given us a sufficient account of the christian doctrine, and of its grand evidences. [What hath been said, by the writers of later ages, concerning the place, time, and manner, of his death; and what the church of Rome hath reported, concerning his skill in painting, appears to me to be not sufficiently supported, to deserve any regard.] — Besides his acquaintance with St. Paul, St. Luke was, very likely, acquainted with most of the apostles of the circumcision. For we find, that St. Peter went down to Antioch, before St. Luke went out, from thence, as an evangelist; and that St. Luke, himself, was once at Jerusalem, where he saw, and conversed with, the apostle James, as well as with the christian elders of that city. It is possible, he might be at Jerusalem, more than once; or might meet with other of the apostles, in other places.

S E C T. II.

From his long and intimate acquaintance with St. Paul, who had received the knowledge of the gospel, by immediate revelation; and, from conversing with several others, who had seen the Lord in the flesh, and known the things, which had since happened; it appears, that St. Luke was sufficiently qualified to write the former part of this history. And, as to the latter part of it, he had (besides the advantages already mentioned) the opportunity of being personally present; and of seeing, with his own eyes, many of the things, which he has recorded. But, as the truth and authenticity of any history, is a fact; we ought not only to consider the capacity and opportunity of the author, to whom it is ascrib.

* Euseb. eccles. hist. l. 3. c. 4. Hieron. de vir. illust. in Luc. 1 Gal. ii. 11; Acts xxii. 17.
The time of writing the Acts.

ascribed; but, likewise, inquire, "What testimonies there remain, of such as lived in, or near, the time, in which it is said to have been written?" For, if they, (who had a fair and sufficient opportunity to know the fact) acknowledged St. Luke to have been the author of the book, which we call the Acts of the Apostles; and that the things, related in it, were true and genuine; we cannot, with any reason, reject it: especially, as there are no internal marks, or characters, to induce us to exclude it; but many (on the contrary) which may induce us to receive, and esteem, it.

There are two different opinions, as to the time, in which St. Luke wrote, and published, his gospel. The one would fix it in the fifteenth year after Christ's ascension; that is, about the year of Christ 47, or 48. The other is for dating it after St. Mark wrote his gospel; that is, about the year 63, or thirty years after the ascension of Christ. Upon examining the grounds and reasons of these two accounts, I prefer the latter. For I apprehend that St. Luke wrote, both his gospel, and the Acts of the Apostles, in one book; and divided it into two parts; as we commonly do, with histories, and other single volumes. The transition, Acts i. 1, agrees with this account. For the Acts are the second part of the book, or history, of which he himself has called his gospel, the first part. The latter is inscribed to Theophilus, as well as the former. And (which is very remarkable) there is not the author's name prefixed, to the Acts of the Apostles; as there is, to St. Luke's gospel. And yet the author of the Acts of the Apostles is not disputed: (as the author of the epistle to the Hebrews has been; because he hath not prefixed his name.) For, when the gospel and the Acts, were one continued book; and St. Luke's name prefixed to the former; there was no occasion to repete it, before the second part of his work. We have, indeed, separated St. Luke's gospel, and the Acts, by putting St. John's gospel between them. But the reason of that, is, that we may have the four gospels placed together; and St. John is put the last, as having been written long after the other three. It is evident, that the Acts of the Apostles could not have been finished, till the year of our Lord 62, or 63. of Nero 9, because the history of the Christian church is there brought down so low. Now, that agrees, very well, with the latter account.

Instead of repeteing the arguments, for the one opinion, or the other; I would refer the reader to what Mr. Jones hath said, on this subject, Vol. III. p. 113, &c. of his new method of settling the canon of the new testament.

Acts i. 1.
The testimonies of the fathers.

count of the time of St. Luke's publishing his gospel. And, when he had finished his history, it is very likely that he would soon publish it; for the benefit of the christian church, and of mankind.

That St. Luke, who wrote the gospel, which goeth under his name, did also write the Acts of the Apostles, appears, from the general consent of the antient christian writers. I shall, first, give some account of the persons; and, then, of their testimonies.

(1.) Irenæus is so early a witness, that, as he himself tells us, in his youth he saw and heard Polycarp, who had been taught by the Apostles;—conversed with many, who had seen Christ;—and was, also, by the Apostles, appointed bishop of the church of Smyrna, in Asia1. Irenæus was first a presbyter, and afterwards bishop, of Lyons, in France; and is reckoned to have flourished about the year of our Lord 178. He hath, in several parts of his works, ascribed this history to St. Luke, as its author. For instance, citing the history, Acts viii. 9, &c. he introduceth it thus: "Simon the "samaritane, who was one of the magi; of whom Luke, the "disciple and follower of the Apostles, faith, But a certain "man, Simon, by name, &c. m." In another place, citeing Acts xv. 39, &c. he fais, "That Luke was inseparable from Paul;" and his fellow-worker in the gospel, he himself shows, by relating the contention between Paul and Barnabas, concerning John Mark;—and, by his speaking in the first person plural, Acts xvi. 10. We endeavored to go into Macedonia; ver. 11, "We loosed, and came with a straight course; ver. 12. We continued at Philippi, several days; ver. 13. We sat down, and spoke to the women, who resorted to the prosenuch. And again, he fais, Acts xx. 6. And we sailed away, from Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread, and came to Troas; where we abode seven days. And other things, he [that is, Luke] relates, while he was with Paul; mentioning exactly the places, and cities, and number of days, until they went up to Jerusalem: and what things happened there, to Paul; how he was sent bound, to Rome; and the name of the centurion, that took charge of him; and the signs of the ship: how they were shipwrecked, and in what island they were saved, and how courteously they

1 Iren. adv. haer. i. 3. c. 3. § 4. & apud Euseb. eccles. hist. l. 4. c. 14. & l. 5. c. 20.  
"Simon enim samaritana, magus ille, de quo, discipulus & sectator Apostolorum, Lucas, ait, "Vir quidam, autem, nomine Simon, &c." adverf. haer. ref. l. i. c. 23. [alias c. 20.] § 1.
The Testimonies of the fathers prove,

were received, Paul healing the chief-man of the island; and how they sailed, from thence, to Puteoli; and, from thence, arrived at Rome; and how long they stayed at Rome. At all which things he was present, and relates them with fidelity, and without ostentation: — And that he was not only a companion, but also a fellow-laborer, of the Apostles; and especially of Paul; Paul himself has declared, in his epistles. For this, Irenœus quotes the words of 2 Tim. iv. 9, 10, 11. and Col. iv. 14. And, presently after, he quotes, also, Acts xx. 25, &c. Again; quoting part of St. Stephen's speech, Acts vii. he says, "Luke hath wrote, that Stephen spoke thus, &c." These are some of the many places, in Irenœus; where the Acts of the Apostles are ascribed to St. Luke, as their author. But it would be tedious, to put down all the places, where he has quoted, or alluded to, that history. For there are few things, recorded in the Acts, which have not been mentioned by Irenœus.


(3.) Tertullian is generally reckoned to be the most antient Latin father now remaining. He was a presbyter of Carthage, the capital city of Africa; and is reckoned to have flourished, about the year of our Lord 200. He cites several places, out of the Acts of the Apostles; which he, in one place, calls the commentary of Luke.

(4.) Origen, a presbyter of Alexandria, who was the scholar of Clemens of Alexandria, and who is reckoned to have flourished about the year of Christ 230; ascribes the Acts of the Apostles to St. Luke.

(5.) Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, who was borne at Cæsarea, in Palestine, and surnamed Pamphilus, from the name of his friend, Pamphilus the martyr; — flourished about the year 315; and was most diligent and indefatigable, in his inquiries into Christianty.

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* Iren. l. 3. c. 14.  0 Lucas autem Stephanum — sic dixisse de Mose scriptit; Iren. l. 4. c. 29.  1 Ka3δ γε ὁ Λουκᾶς ἐν ταῖς προφητείαις τῶν ἀποστόλων ἀπεστάλη ἐκ τῶν Πατρίων Χριστί. Strom. l. 5. p. 588. edit. Sylburg. p. 996. edit. Potter.  2 Vid. eiam Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 14.  3 Porro, cum in codem commentario Lucas, &c. Lib. de jejun. adv. pæsch. c. 10. p. 549. B. edit. Rigaltii.  4 Λουκᾶς, ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἐν τοῖς προφητείαις, ἀποτελεστικόν, apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 6. c. 25. Some may perhaps, question whether these are the words of Origen, or of Eusebius himself. But, supposing they should be ascribed to the latter; they may be looked upon as a testimony, though not so antient. However; I look upon them as the words of Origen.  

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that St. Luke wrote the Acts.

tian antiquity. — He, who made so diligent and curious a search, expressly ascribes the Acts of the Apostles to St. Luke; saying, that "Luke, a native of Antioch, and by profession a physician, did, "for the most part, accompany Paul; and, being diligently con-"sidered with the other Apostles, he hath left us, in two in-"spired books, lessons, which are medicinal for our souls: — The "one is the gospel; — the other is the Acts of the Apostles," &c. 1. (6.) Jerome, who flourished towards the end of the fourth century, affirms the Acts of the Apostles to have been the composition of St. Luke 5. (7.) Several antient greek manuscripts, of the new testament, have the name of St. Luke prefixed to this history 6. As hath also, the old syriac version. — From all these testimonies, the author of the Acts of the Apostles is fully determined. Especially, as there is nothing, which can, with any color of reason, or probability, be objected against their testimonies.

S. E C T. III.

As we have found out the author of the Acts of the Apostles; and the time, in, or about which, they were written; it may be of service, farther, and more particularly, to consider, what regard the primitive christians paid to that history.

I. The history of the Acts of the Apostles is found in thirteen catalogues of the books of the new testament; which are the principal catalogues of those sacred books, in the writings of the fathers, for the four first centuries 7.

II. The

1 Euseb. hist. eccl. 1. 3. c. 4.
2 Hieron. de vir. illuf. in Ioan. "Aeta apostolorum, fictur viderat, compofuit." Vid. etiam Epif. ad Paulin. vers. fin.
4 The catalogues, which I refer to, are, (1.) That of Origen; Comment. in Matt. apud Euseb. H. E. 1. 6. c. 25. & l. 5. Exposit. in Ioan. ibid. (2.) Eusebius Pamphilus; whose catalogue of the books of the new testament is to be found, Hist. eccl. 1. 3. c. 25. (3.) Caius; bishop of Alexandria in Egypt, flourished about the year of Christ 315. and hath left us a catalogue of the books of the new testament. Fragment. Epif. Teffal. tom. 2. & in Synopli, tom. 1. (4.) Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, flourished about the year of Christ 340. His catalogue is in cantic. 4. § ult. p. 101. (5.) The bishops, assembled in the council of Laodicea, in the year of Christ 364. have given us their catalogue; Canon 59. And it ought to
The Acts, alluded to, by the apostolic fathers.

II. The Acts of the apostles ought to be looked upon, as a true history, and as written about the time, which we contend for; because they are cited, or alluded to, in the writings of the primitive christians. As will appear, by the following instances.

(1.) The antient epistle, ascribed to Barnabas, which is thought to have been written about the year of Christ 71., seems to allude to Acts x. 42. For, speaking of Christ, whom he calls the son of God; who is also Lord; the author of that epistle faith, “He shall judge the quick and the dead.”

(2.) Clemens is mentioned, with great respect, by St. Paul. Phil. iv. 3. He was bishop of Rome. And, therefore, commonly called Clemens Romanus. He wrote an excellent epistle, to the christian church at Corinth, about the year of Christ 96., which is extant at this day; and is looked upon, as one of the most valuable remains of christian antiquity. In that epistle, he alludes to Acts xiii. 22. His words are: “And what shall we say of David, so highly testified of: to whom God said, I have found a man after my own heart; David, the son of Jesse; with holy oil have I anointed him?” St. Paul doeth, indeed, cite these words from Psal. lxxxix. 20. But, as they are introduced, by Clemens, with the same, or like, form of quotation, with that in the Acts; and these words, [after

to be observed, that the canons of this council were, not long after, received into the body of the canons of the universal church. (6.) Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, flourished about the year of Christ 370. His catalogue is, hereof, 76. contra Anom. p. 399. (7.) Gregory Nazianzen, bishop of Constantinople, flourished about the year of Christ 375. and has left us a catalogue of the books of the new testament. Carm. de veris & genuin. scriptur. (8.) Philastrius, bishop of Brixia, in Venice, flourished about the year of our Lord 380. His catalogue is to be found, Lib. de heres. num. 87. (9.) Jerome, who flourished about the year 382. has given us a catalogue of the books of the new testament. Epist. ad Paulin. 83. tract. 6. p. 2. Which epistle is also, commonly, prefixed to the latin bible, vulgar. edit. (10.) Ruffus, presbyter of Aquilejium, flourished about the year of Christ 390. You may find his catalogue, Exposit. in symboul. apos. § 36. inter ep. Hieron. part. 1. tract. 3. p. 110. & inter opera Cyprian. p. 575. (11.) Austin, bishop of Hippo, in Africa, flourished about the year of Christ 394. His catalogue remains; — de doctrin. Christ. l. 2. c. 8. tom. operum 3. p. 25. (12.) The forty-four bishops, assembled in the third council of Carthage, (of whom Austin was one) have given us their catalogue, Canon 47. & cap. ult. (13.) The anonymous author of the work, under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite, who is thought to have flourished about the year of Christ 390, has confirmed the above-mentioned catalogues. Lib. de hierarch. eccles. c. 3. p. 3. All these catalogues, unanimously, and with one consent, reckon the Acts, among the sacred books of the new testament. See Mr. Jones his new and full method of settling the canonical books of the new testament, vol. 1. P. 72. &c.

The Acts, alluded to, by the apostolic fathers.

after my own heart, are not in the psalm; but the expression of St. Paul, recorded only in the Acts; it is rather probable, that Clemens alluded to what he had read, in the Acts. Nor is there any reason to object, that, "perhaps, they both cited according to the septuagint." For there are no such words, in any of the copies of the septuagint; nor any various readings, like it, to be found. Again: there is an allusion, in the same epistle, to Acts xx. 35, where Clemens is commending the Corinthians, for their former behavior; and says, among other things, that "they were more willing to give, than to receive."

(3.) Hermas (who is reckoned to be the person, saluted by St. Paul, Rom. xvi. 14, and to have wrote the ancient book, called the pastor, or shepherd, about the year of our Lord 100,) seems to allude to Acts v. 41. His words are: "But you, who suffer death for his name, ought to honor the Lord; that the Lord accounts you worthy to bear his name."

(4.) Ignatius was bishop of the Christian church, at Antioch, in Syria, the latter part of the first, and the beginning of the second century; and is reckoned to have been intimately acquainted with several of the apostles of our Lord. It is said, that he was sent, from Syria, to Rome, about the year 107, to be devoured by wild beasts, for the testimony of Christ; and that, as he went, through Asia, under a strong guard of soldiers, he confirmed the Christian churches, in every city, by his discourse; and wrote seven epistles, which are still extant. In that to the church at Smyrna, there is an allusion to Acts x. 41. The words are; "But, after his resurrection, he did eat and drink with them."

(5.) Polycarp was so early a father, that he was not only taught by the apostles, and had conversed with many, who had seen Christ; but was also, by the apostles, appointed bishop of the church of Smyrna, in Asia. And be is thought, by many, to have been the angel of the church of Smyrna, to whom the epistle, in the Revelation, was sent. He lived a long time; and, in his old age, suffered a glorious and splendid martyrdom. But, before he was crowned with martyrdom, he wrote a most excellent and useful epistle, to the Philippians, about the year of Christ, 108, which is still extant. In that epistle, he has repeated Acts ii. 24, with the variation of only one single word. For, speaking of Christ, he says,

Clem. Roman. epist. ad Corinth. c. 2. Μᾶς ὁ θεὸς σώζεται, καὶ οὐκ ἄνθρωπος. Vid. lib. 3. simil. 9. § 28. 
Vid. epist. ad Smyrn. § 3. 
See Rev. ii. 8.
The Acts, alluded to, by Papias and Justin Martyr.

The Acts, alluded to, by Papias and Justin Martyr.

fais, "Whom God hath raised up; having loosed the pains of "hades; that is, of the grave, or of the invisible world." By which, he, very probably, meant death; as St. Peter has expressed it.

As these five were apostolic fathers, I was willing to mention such of their expressions, as are most like to those of the Acts; because they conversed with the apostles; and, very probably, with St. Luke himself. And, therefore, their repeating his words, or alluding to them, must be a very great confirmation to the truth and genuineness of his history. Though they have not, formally, quoted them from him; nor ascribed them to St. Luke, as words taken out of his history. For that was not so common, in the apostolic age.

We now proceed to other testimonies, and confirmations, of the truth of St. Luke's history. Among which, we shall find many express quotations, acknowledged to be taken out of the Acts of the apostles. (1.) Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, in Asia, who was a companion of Polycarp, and flourished about the year of Christ 116. has given some confirmation to the Acts of the apostles, in what he says of Philip; but, especially, in what he says of Justus, called Barbabas. For he intimates, that he had seen, and talked with, Philip's daughters; who are mentioned, Acts xxi. 9. And, of Justus, called Barbabas; for the description of whom he [or Eusebius] refers to Acts i. 23. Of that Justus, I say, he relates this miracle: "That he drank deadly poison; and, by the grace of the Lord, suffered no harm."

(2.) Justin Martyr was borne at Sicem, which stood nigh mount Gerizim, and was the head city of the Samaritane sect. He was early a lover of truth, and had studied philosophy, under several masters, of different sects; but preferred the sentiments of Plato, 'till he became acquainted with Christianity; which he then embraced, as the only certain and useful philosophy. His conversion is dated about

1 Supposing the passages, which we have quoted, from the apostolic fathers, were not taken from St. Luke, or any other Christian writer; but were expressions, common among the first Christians: — Even then, they are confirmations of St. Luke's writing in the apostolic age; in as much as they shew him to have been acquainted with the phrases then in use. But, as the words, in several of the above-cited passages, are like St. Luke's; it is more probable, I think, that they alluded to what he had said. And, what may confirm this, is, that they allude to some passages in the old testament, much in the same manner; that is, without quoting the author, or repeating the words exactly.

Euseb. hist. eccles. l. 3. c. 39. 1 It is called Sichem, John iv. 5.

The Acts, alluded to, by Justin Martyr, &c.

about the year of Christ 133, when he himself is reckoned to have been about thirty years of age. In the beginning of the reign of Antonine the pious, he came to Rome; and, in the year 140, presented his first apologie, to that emperor. Afterwards, he went into Asia; and, particularly, to Ephesus; where he had the celebrated conference, with Trypho, the Jew. Then he returned, again, to Rome; where he wrote his second apologie, inscribed to Mark Antonine the philosopher. And, it is thought, he suffered martyrdom, about the year 164. — Justin shows that he had read the Acts of the Apostles, by the following expressions. "Moses was thought worthy to partake of all the learning of the Egyptians:" Which seems to be a plane allusion to Acts vii. 22. Again, he, in another place of his writings, faith; "For the Jews, who had the prophecies, and always expected the coming of the Christ, knew him not. And, not only so, but even killed him. But the Gentiles, who had never heard of Christ, till the Apostles, setting forth, from Jerusalem, taught them the things concerning him; being filled with joy, and faith, they forsook their idols, and gave themselves up to the unbegotten God, through Jesus Christ." In which, he appears to have given the sense of Acts xiii. 27. and to have had a reference to the history, recorded in the same chapter; from ver. 44, to the end. And, finally, in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew, he saith: "Though it had been obscurely declared, by the prophets, that Christ should suffer; and, after that, be Lord of all," &c. In which, he hath given us the sense, and some of the words, recorded by St. Luke, Acts xxvi. 22, 23. And, that he took them, not from the expressions, which were then common among Christians, but from the Acts of the Apostles; appears highly probable, in that he mentions memoirs, commentaries, or records, written by the Apostles, and their companions: referring to the writings of St. Mark and St. Luke, as well as of the Apostles themselves.

(3.) In the seventeenth year of Mark Antonine, and the hundred seventy-seventh of Christ, the Christians in France suffered a very great persecution; undergoing exquisite torments, with amazing patience. Among others, Potinus, Bishop of Lyons, then above ninety years of age, was apprehended, and carried before the governor. By whom, he was examined; and before whom, he made a
generous confession of the christian religion. And, having suffered
many indignities, he was sent to prison; where he soon expired.

The churches of Lyons and Vienne sent a relation of the sufferings
of their martyrs, in a letter to the churches of Asia and Phrygia; a
large part of which is still extant. And it is the finest thing, of
the kind, in all antiquity. Some think that it was composed by Ire-
naeus. That letter affords a considerable testimony to the books of the
new testament; and, particularly, to the Acts of the apostles. And
how valuable their testimony must be, is manifest, from what hath
been said of them; and that they had, for their bishop, Pothinus;
who dyed, aged above ninety, in the year 177. and was borne,
therefore, about the 87th year of our Lord. The words of that letter,
which refer to the history of the Acts, are these: "They prayed for
those, from whom they suffered hard things; as did the perfect
martyr, Stephen; " Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And,
" if he prayed for those who stoned him; how much more ought
" we to pray for the brethren?"

(4.) Irenaeus (of whom I have given a particular account above;
as being first a presbyter, under Pothinus; and then succeding
him, as bishop of Lyons, in France; and who is reckoned to have
flourished about the year of Christ, 178. He, I say,) hath,
very frequently, quoted the Acts of the apostles, as "written by
Luke, the disciple and companion of the apostles." There are
few things, recorded in that book, which have not been mentioned
by Irenaeus. I have already put down one passage, giving a general
account of all the latter part of the Acts of the apostles. But,
besides that, and many other things, in behalf of St. Luke; Ire-
naeus argues with those, who disowned the authority of Paul, and
yet owned Luke's gospel: that "they must, of necessity, own the
Acts; and, consequently, Paul's authority."

I will here put down another passage, wherein Irenaeus bears tes-
timony to St. Luke's history. "Nor can they (fais he) pretend
" that Paul is not an apostle, when he was chosen to this end;
" nor can they show that Luke is not to be credited, who has re-
" lated to us the truth, with the greatest exactness. " [He refers to
Acts ix. 5; 15, 16. containing an account of Paul's conversion, and
vocation; which he had just before quoted expressly, and argued
from. After which, he proceeds:] "And, possibly, God has, for
this

* Euseb. hist. eccl. 1. 5. c. 2.
* Iren. adv. hæres. I. 3. c. 15. init. And Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel
history, part 2. vol. i. pag. 363, &c.
Clemens Alexandrinus, and Tertullian.

This reason, so ordered, that many parts of the gospel should be declared to us, by Luke; which all are under a necessity of receiving: that so all might receive, likewise, his subsequent testimony, which he hath given, concerning the Acts, and doctrine, of the apostles; and might have a sincere and uncorrupted relation of truth, and be saved. Therefore, his testimony is true; and the doctrine of the apostles is manifest and uniform, without any deceit; hiding nothing from men; nor teaching one thing in private, and another in public.

As Irenæus hath, so frequently, quoted the Acts of the apostles, I shall not put down any more passages from him; but pass on to other of the fathers: after I have informed my reader, that I have, upon examination, found above thirty places, in the works of that father, (and the index, to Dr. Grabe’s edition, has taken notice of, as many more,) where the book of the Acts is quoted. In several of which, St. Luke is named, as the author: And the credit of that evangelist, and the usefulness of his writings, is asserted, and defended.

(5.) Titus Flavins Clemens was a presbyter of the church, at Alexandria; and author of several books, relating to Christianity. Such of them, as are still extant, he is reckoned to have wrote, about the year of Christ 194. And, in them, he acknowledges, and frequently quotes, the Acts of the apostles; ascribing them to Luke, (who wrote one of the four gospels) as their author. Mr. Jones has refered to seven places, where the Acts of the apostles are quoted by Clemens. In some of which, the quotations are of a considerable length.

(6.) Tertullian is, generally, reckoned the most antient latin father, now remaining. He was borne at Carthage; not long after the midle of the second century. And is reckoned to have flourished, about the year of Christ, 200. He has made very numerous appeals to, and quotations from, the Acts of the apostles, in such of his works, as are still extant; ascribing them to St. Luke, as their author. And (as I have already observed) he calls them Luke’s commentary. In one place, says he, “We find, in the Acts of the apostles, that they, who had John’s baptism, had not received the holy spirit; nor so much as heard, whether there was
The testimony of Tertullian.

"was any." In which words, he planely refers to Acts xix. 1, 2, 3. In another part of his works, he takes notice, that, "truely he, that is, [Christ] fulfilled the promise, which he had made; of sending the spirit, which should lead the disciples into all truth: the Acts of the Apostles attesting the descent of the holy spirit. Which scripture, they, who do not receive, cannot be of the holy spirit; nor can they prove the holy spirit to have been sent to the disciples; nor can they defend the church. For as much as they have nothing to show, when, and with what beginning, the body was formed." This passage (as has been well observed) shows the great authority and usefulness of this book; and that christians had not (at that time) any authentic account of the first preaching, and progress, of the gospel, after our savior's resurrection, besides this one book, of the Acts of the Apostles. Out of which, Tertullian hath quoted so many passages; and which we still have.

I will not tire my reader, with any more quotations, from the fathers; because, I think, these are abundantly sufficient: especially when it is added, that "the later fathers cite the Acts of the Apostles, continually; as the only authentic history, which they had, of the primitive state of the church." I would only observe, how unjustly it hath been asserted, "That the Acts of the Apostles were not much known, nor much regarded, in the four first centuries." (1.) Some have argued, for this, from a passage in the works of Chrysostome. But, supposing that Chrysostome had directly asserted such a thing, he would have deserved no regard; because the testimonies, already produced, are so many, and unquestionable. However; Chrysostome himself hath actually asserted the contrary, in such of his works, as are unquestionable: "intimating, that the Acts of the Apostles were wont to be read, publicly, in their churches, after easter, and before whitsontide." From whence, some have concluded, that neither the other passage, nor the work, in which it is found, ought to be ascribed to Chrysostome. But Dr. Lardner has, with more probability, allowed the work to be Chrysostome's: and supposes, that

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* De præcari. harœt. c. 22. p. 209, D.
* Dr. Lardner's credibility, &c. part 2d. vol. 2d. p. 588, 589.
* Mr. Jones on the canon, &c. vol. 3d. p. 164.
* Mr. Jones on the canon, &c. vol. 3d. p. 164.
* Vid. Fabric. pref. in 2 tom. cod. oper. N. T.
The Acts well known, in the four first centuries.

that the expressions are onely oratorical; in which, Chrysostome exaggerates extremely. And that his meaning was, "He wished, the Acts of the Apostles were better known to his hearers: — and that he was grieved to think how little acquainted some were with that part of sacred scripture."

(2.) Erasmius would infer the same thing, "from his finding more various readings, in the Acts of the Apostles, than in any other of the sacred books of the new testament." But surely, if the argument of that very learned man will prove any thing, it is the direct contrary. For the more various readings there are, in any book, the more frequently it has been transcribed. And, consequently, the more it appears to have been in use.

As we have proved, that St. Luke wrote this book; and that, while the facts were well known; and the persons concerned were; many of them, alive, to bear their testimony to them: We now proceed to,

PART II.

Namely, "To point out the proofs, which the Acts of the Apostles afford, of the truth of christianity."

And these will appear to be strong, and many. For,

1. "The general doctrine contains nothing absurd, and unreasonable." It teaches us, that there is one, onely, living, and true, God; who made heaven, and earth, and all things that are therein. That we men, in particular, are his off-spring. That his providence extends to all ages, and nations. For, he has never left himself without a witness; in that he has given men rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with joy and gladness. That this universal creator, and wise governor, cannot, possibly, be confined within such narrow limits, as temples, built by men; nor be represented, by any image, or picture. For he is omnipresent. And, in him, we live, move, and have our beings. That, as he is infinite in wisdom, and abundant in good.

The general doctrine of christianity, reasonable.

goodness, he loves all his creatures, and is no respector of persons; but, in every nation, he, that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. That he requires, of every man, only according to his ability; and the opportunities, which he enjoys. And, therefore, the times of former darkness he winked at; and did not, then, expect so much knowledge and virtue, among men: because they were placed in less advantageous circumstances. But that, when the world was over-run with ignorance, idolatry, and the most amazing wickedness, God sent down his own Son, a person of the highest dignity, and greatest purity, to call mankind to repentance; and to assure them of mercy, if they did sincerely repent. That, as the Son of God condescended so much, as to appear, in our nature; and to live among men, for a number of years, in order to instruct them, both by his doctrine and example; and even to lay down his life, for their redemption; therefore, God hath raised him from the dead, and exalted him to his own right-hand; and made him Christ, or the anointed King, and Lord over all. Having, also, constituted him Judge, both of the living and of the dead. In consequence of which, men are commanded to invoke his sacred name:—to be initiated into his religion, by the plane and significant rite of baptism; which intitles them to all the privileges, and charges them with all the obligations, of the members of his church and kingdom. And, after that, they are frequently, and with great thankfulness, to commemorate his dying love; by eating bread, and drinking wine, in rememberance of him: thereby professing themselves his disciples; and repeating their resolutions, to imitate and obey him.

This glorious person conversed chiefly in Judaea, and Galilee; beginning his reformation among the Jews; who had, then, the soundest notions of God, and religion: though they, also, were fallen into an amazing degeneracy. After he had duly prepared the well-disposed among the Jews, he himself returned to heaven; and left the great work to be carried on, by persons, whom he had instructed; and to whom he had not only gave a commission, but commu-

The general doctrine of Christianity, reasonable.

communicated a fulness of the spirit. And, when they had reap
ed the harvest, of what he had sown, among the Jews; they, ac
ording to his express order, addressed themselves to the Gentiles:
teaching them the folly, and wickedness, both of idolatry, and
every vice; and recommending it to all men, everywhere, to re
pent. Towards God, they recommended the great duties of love
and fear, adoration and obedience: towards men, justice and charity,
truth and sincerity; love and beneficence: and, as to their own per
sonal conduct, sobriety and temperance, chastity and universal purity.
Frequently inculcating, upon their converts, the necessity of pa
tience, and a contented mind; to get above this present world; and
to have their affections fixed on a better state to come, that they
might rather suffer difficulties, and persecution, for the sake of their
religion, than betray, or give it up. And all these excellent rules,
they enforced, by the weighty argument of a righteous judgment to
come: when the Son of God shall descend, as universal judge, and
raise all mankind out of their graves; and will show the highest
favor to sincere penitents, and the prevailing good; but will punish
the wicked, with a dreadful and exemplary destruction. — Is there
any thing, in this doctrine, absurd and unreasonable? Any thing,
but what is highly worthy of God, and admirably suited to the pre
sent state of men? Such is its intrinsic worth and excellence, that one
would be ready to ask; What need could there be of miracles, to
propagate a doctrine, which is, in itself, so reasonable and good?
Would it not have been sufficient, barely to have proposed it; and
then left it to recommend itself, by its own worth, and beauty?
— But, if we take a closer view of the prejudices of mankind; of
the difficulty of breaking off wicked and inveterate habits; and of
men's fondnesses for the religion, in which they have been educated;
as well as of their love of pomp and pleasure; and what strikes upon
the senses; more than of such a simple doctrine, as that of the gospel,
though founded upon the most solid truth; and recommending the
purest, noblest, virtue: — we shall no longer wonder, that infinite
wisdom:
The particular doctrines thereof, reasonable.

Wisdom should grant the power of working miracles, and the attestation of the gifts of the spirit, to propagate a doctrine, which is, in itself, so excellent and good.

2. "The particular doctrines, taught by the apostles, were, with great propriety and wisdom, suited to the state of the person, to whom they preached." The jews did, already, believe in the one true God. And, therefore, they proceeded, directly, to prove to them, that Jesus was the Christ: that they might believe, and obey, him, whom God had sent. — The proselytes of the gate had forsaken idolatry, and believed in the one, true God. And, therefore, they, likewise, were exhorted to believe in Christ, and embrace his religion; as highly conducive to their increase in virtue and piety here, and to their being meet for the happiness of the world to come. But, as the idolatrous gentiles trusted in false gods, and did not acknowledge the one, only, living and true God; they began with persuading them to forsake their idolatry; and believe in him, who is God alone. And, when they had persuaded them, to turn from dead idols, unto the living and true God; — they then, and not 'till then, laid before them the evidences for believing also, in Jesus, whom God had sent, as the great prophet and savior of the world.

The apostles never attempted to set men free from social duties, or to abridge them of any of their civil rights and privileges. No! though they brought them over to a new religion, yet they often intimated that christianity alters nothing in men's civil affairs. The christian converts, therefore, continued under the same obligations, as formerly, to obey the laws of the several countries, where they lived; and had as good a claim, as ever, to all the privileges and advantages of civil society. The moral law is of everlasting obligation; and cannot, possibly, be abolished. But christians are obliged to obey the moral law, not only from the fitness of things; but as it is adopted into the christian law, and enforced by gospel-motives. — The ceremonial law of the jews was abolished, or vacated, by the death of Christ, and the setting up of his religion in the world. For, as it was designed to promote virtue and piety, among the jews, only 'till the time of reformation, by the gospel. And, as the gospel promotes these things, after a nobler, and more effectual, manner; the ceremonial law was laid aside, as no longer of any use. However; such of the jewish christians, as could not shake off their fondness for it, were indulged in the observation of it. Though they, who understood, and were convinced of, their christian liberty, were no longer
The evidences, of prophecy and miracles.

The evidences of prophecy and miracles. But the gentle converts were warned, longer in subjection to it. But the gentle converts were warned, not to submit to that yoke of bondage. For they could plead no prejudice, in favor of it. They, therefore, were assured, that if they added the observance of the law of Moses, to that of the gospel, as necessary to their salvation; they would cast the highest contempt on the gospel, and render it to them of none effect.

3. “The proofs and evidences, which the apostles gave, of their mission and doctrine, were abundantly sufficient; both as to their strength, and number.” Besides the reasonableness of what they advanced, they appealed to prophecies and miracles, and the various gifts of the spirit. They did, indeed, always found their doctrine upon facts. But prophecy was a confirming evidence; both among the Jews, and proselytes of the gate.

As to the argument, drawn from ancient prophecies, I would observe, that some of the prophecies, mentioned in the Acts, and other books of the new testament, were express predictions; and have been shown, by many writers, to have been literally accomplished. And, supposing other passages, which have, sometimes, been taken for prophecies, were no more than the apostles applying a general rule, or saying, to a particular case; just as we say, upon several occasions, “The old proverb is made good.” Or, “The old saying is verified.” Or their arguing from a similar case; or using the words of some of the ancient prophets, by way of accommodation; and to express themselves in phrases, that were familiar among the Jews; — that will not, in the least, invalidate the argument, from real predictions. And, upon examining the particular places, I am well satisfied, that all the passages, taken from the ancient prophets, may be fairly reduced to one or other of these heads.

— As the Jews, and proselytes of the gate, were acquainted with the scriptures of the old testament, and acknowledged their authority; when the apostles preached among them, they argued from the ancient prophecies. But, in converting idolatrous gentiles, they took another method; arguing, for the being and perfections of the true God, from the works of creation and providence; and appealing to miracles, and other facts, for the proof of Jesus his being the great prophet and savior of mankind. And, in this, as well as in all other things, they acted with great propriety. For, it would have been absurd, to have argued, from ancient prophecies.

* See Dr. Sykes, Mr. Chandler, Bishop Chandler, Mr. Jeffries, Dr. Bullock; and several other answers to Collins his grounds and reasons, &c.
The argument summed up.

As to miracles, and the various gifts of the spirit:—it seems clear and evident to me, that there was nothing unbecoming the divine wisdom, in granting men such supernatural aids when they were sent, by him, to attempt an universal reformation. And the evidences have been shown to be so full, and so many, that no man could reasonably have expected more; even upon so great, and uncommon, an occasion. Let us now, in the 4th, and last place, sum up the whole argument. As both the general, and particular, doctrines, contained in the Acts of the Apostles, are so reasonable; and the proofs and evidences were so many, and strong; as well as wisely suited to all sorts of persons:—Certainly, Christianitv, pure, primitive, original Christianity was true; and sufficiently attested to have come from God. And, “if it was once true; what pretence can any man now have, for rejecting it?” Will he allege, “that he cannot believe the history?” But, “for what reason will he allege such a thing? It is mere perverseness, to reject any history, without some sufficient objections against its truth and validity.” “Are all histories to be rejected? And no facts credited; but what we ourselves have seen, and been personally acquainted with?” I never knew any man so hardy, as to assert this, and stand to it. And, if the histories, of former ages, may be credible; why may not the history of the Acts of the apostles deserve regard? Will it be objected, that, “it was written by a friend to Christianity; and one that was, himself, a party concerned?” To this, I would reply; that it is hardly possible (nay, morally speaking, it is not possible) that any man should write such an history, fairly and honestly, but a friend to Christianity. Can it be thought, that an enemy to Christianity (supposing such things to have really happened; and that he had been acquainted with them):—Can it be thought, I say, that an enemy to Christianity) would have given us a faithful history of such remarkable and uncommon things; and yet continue an enemy? Would not the whole thread of such an history, condemn such a man? And would not all the world be ready to say, “Do you know this doctrine to be so excellent; and that so many, and such great and surprising miracles were worked, in confirmation of it? And yet, do you yourself disbelieve this doctrine; and deny the truth of this religion?” Surely! no man, that had any value for his reputation, would have wrote such an history, to condemn himself of the greatest per-
The argument summed up.

pervertens. And one, who had no value for his reputation, would certainly deserve no credit, nor regard. But, supposing a man, upon considering christianity, together with its evidences, had turned christian, and, after that, wrote such an history: — Why! then, he was a friend; and, in some measure, a party concerned, as well as St. Luke. And, if a friend to christianity, be the one-ly person, that can be reasonably supposed to give a fair and full account of the doctrine, together with its grand attestations; "who could be more proper, than a companion of the apostles? who not only converted with those, that were eye and ear-witnesses of the facts: but was personally concerned in many of the things, which he relates?" There are few historians, fo immediately acquainted with the facts, about which they write. And yet we, generally, give credit to their accounts: unless we have some weighty reasons to the contrary.

Show the marks of forgery, or the ancient and credible history, which contradicts what is said, in the Acts of the apostles; and then you may, with some reason, talk of rejecting that book. There are no inconsistences, nor contradictions, in the history itself. Even the miraculous and extraordinary facts, there related, were not impossible to the divine power, to which they are constantly and uniformly ascribed. Neither are they improbable: considering the grand design and occasion of them. For, planting a new religion among men, in a time of such universal darkness and degeneracy, must have required an extraordinary, divine, interposition. And great and striking evidences were, in a manner, necessary; to conquer men's great prejudices, and make them attentive. The plainseness and simplicity of the narration, are strong circumstances in it's favor. The writer appears to have been very honest, and impartial; and to have set down, very fairly, the objections, which were made to christianity, both by jews and heathens; and the reflections, which enemies cast upon it, and upon the first preachers of it. He has, likewise, with a just and honest freedom, mentioned the weaknesses, faults, and prejudices, both of the apostles, and their converts. There is a great and remarkable harmony between the occasional hints, dispersed up and down, in St. Paul's epistles; and the facts, recorded in this history. In so much as that it is generally acknowledged, that the history of the Acts is the best clue, to guide us, in the studying of the epistles, written by that apostle. The other parts of the new testament do, like-
The argument summed up.

wife, agree with this history; and give great confirmation to it. For the doctrines and principles are, every where, uniformly the same. The conclusions of the gospels contain a brief account of those things, which are more particularly related, in the beginning of the Acts. And there are frequent intimations, in other parts of the gospels, that such an effusion of the spirit was expected; and that, "with a view to the very design, which the apostles and primitive christians are said to have carried on, by virtue of that extraordinary effusion, which Christ poured out, upon his disciples, after his ascension. And, finally, the epistles of the other apostles (as well as those of St. Paul) plainly suppose such things to have happened, as are related in the Acts of the apostles. So that the history of the Acts, is one of the most important parts of the sacred history. For neither the gospels, nor epistles, could have been so clearly understood, without it. But, by the help of it, the whole scheme of the christian revelation is set before us, in an easie and manifest view.

Even the incidental things, mentioned by St. Luke, are so exactly agreeable to all the accounts, which remain, of the best, antient historians, among the jews, and beathens; that no person, who had forged such an history, in later ages, could have had that external confirmation: but would have betrayed himself, by alluding to some customs, or opinions, since sprung up; or by misrepresenting some circumstance, or using some phrase, or expression, not then in use. The plea of forgery, therefore, in later ages, cannot be allowed. And, for a man, to have published an history of such things, so early, as St. Luke wrote; (that is, while some of the apostles, and many other persons, were alive, who were concerned in the transactions, which he has recorded;) if his account had not been punctually true, could have been onely to have exposed himself to an easie confutation, and certain infamy.

As, therefore, the Acts of the apostles are, in themselves, consistent and uniform;—the incidental things agreeable to the best, antient historians, which have come down to us;—and the main facts supported and confirmed, by the other books of the new testament, and by the unanimous testimony of so many of the antient fathers: — We may, I think, very fairly, and with great justnesse, conclude, that, if any history of former times deserves credit, the Acts of the apostles ought to be received, and credited.
The Conclusion.

...if the history of the Acts of the Apostles be true, Christianity cannot be false.” For a doctrine, so good in itself, and attended with so many miraculous and divine testimonies, has all the possible marks of a true revelation.

I will, therefore, conclude, with most earnestly wishing, that Christianity were imbraced, by all mankind, according to its intrinsic worth, and abundant evidence! — That the purity and simplicity of the original institution, as it was left by Christ, and his Apostles, in the scriptures, were more attended to! — And that all, who believe Christianity to be true, would manifest it; by such a virtuous, holy, life, as that excellent religion doeth, everywhere, recommend!

The end of the Dissertations.

A L E T
A LETTER to the AUTHOR,

CONCERNING

THE PERSONS TO WHOM ST. PAUL WROTE WHAT IS CALLED,

The epistle to the Ephesians.

Reverend Sir,

I HAVE, at your desire, sent you my thoughts, upon that question, which has employed the pens of several learned men of late years, Whether St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians (as it appears to have been called very early) was written, by him, to that church? And I have done it, with more freedom, because I do not apprehend it can be any person's interest to determine this question, one way or the other, but as the evidence appears to him. When you have perused what I have written, I shall be glad of your opinion concerning it; and am, &c.

SEVERAL reasons have been offered by Doctor Mill to show, that what is called The epistle to the Ephesians, was not writen by the apostle Paul to that church, but to the Laodiceans*. That it was not written to the Ephesians, he endeavours to prove, not onely from the subject-matter of the epistle in general; but also from several particular expressions, which seem no ways suited to *a church, with which the apostle had been conversant for three years, as he had with that at Ephesus, before this epistle was writen, but appear very proper in writing to persons, whom he had never seen, but only heard of, from the relation of others; which was the case of the Laodiceans. And, therefore, he very justly observes the similitude of those expressions with others in the epistle to the Colossians, whom St. Paul had not seen, when he wrote to them. But what chiefly determined him to think that epistle was writen to the Laodiceans, was the direction given by the apostle near the close of his epistle, which he wrote to the Colossians: When this epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea†. The Doctor's objections to Ephesus seem to carry great weight with them, which I shall not here re-pete; but what he has said in favor of Laodicea, don't appear so convinc-
A LETTER concerning the persons, &c.

... and I am rather inclined to think this was designed as a sort of general epistle for the use of such Gentile Christians, more especially those of Asia, of whose conversion the Apostle had heard, but had not visited them; than directed to any particular church (like that to the Colossians) though it was sent first to Laodicea. What has led me into this sentiment, I shall now endeavour to explain, with as much brevity, as the nature of the subject will permit.

The manner, in which I conceive this affair might be at first conducted, is as follows. It is pretty generally agreed, that this epistle was sent by St. Paul, from Rome, at the same time with those to the Colossians and Philemon. Tychicus only had the charge of the first, Onesimus of that to Philemon, and they were both joined in the delivery of that to the church at Colos.; In their passage from Rome they landed on the coast of Asia, at the most convenient port they could, for their journey afterwards to Colos.; whither, I suppose, they went first. For what St. Paul writes to Timothy: Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus: must relate to another journey after this, that epistle to Timothy being of a later date by some years. Upon their arrival at Colos., the immediate business of Onesimus was to deliver the epistle sent to Philemon, which so nearly concerned himself. For the Apostle could never have recommended him in such strong terms to the church at Colos., but upon a supposition that his master Philemon would very readily be reconciled to him, upon reading that letter. In order to this therefore Onesimus must first wait upon his master, and make his submission to him, whose slave he had been, but had run from him, and consequently was yet his property. This makes the Apostle say in his epistle to Philemon, speaking of Onesimus: Whom I would have retained with me — but without my mind would I do nothing. And presently after he desires, that he would no longer treat him as a servant or slave, but as a Christian brother. I presume therefore, it can't well be doubted, but that his master soon manumitted him, and most probably, before the Apostle's letter sent to that church was publicly read among them. For till this was done, what the Apostle says to the Colossians, in that letter, concerning Onesimus, could not be applied to him in a civil sense: Who is one of you: for slaves were not considered as members of any civil communities. It was true indeed in a religious sense, considering them as Christians, even while he continued a slave: for as he had told them before, with regard to the rights of Christianity, there is neither bond nor free, but all stand in an equal relation to Christ; and, as he saith to the Corinthians, are his freemen. But still, his being first made free by his master would doubtless add a weight to the message he was charged with, by St. Paul, and conciliate a greater regard to him in that church.

After the affair of Onesimus was over, the epistle to the church at Colos. was to be delivered, in which both Tychicus and Onesimus were jointly concerned. And when this was done, Onesimus had no further orders from the Apostle, but Tychicus was to carry the third epistle by himself; for which reason his name only is mentioned in it. However, Tychicus did so.
A letter concerning the persons, to whom

A letter concerning the persons, to whom
did not immediately leave Coloss, after the delivery of the letter to
that church; but stayed some time there, to acquaint them with the
state of St. Paul's affairs, and likewise to inform himself of their circum-
crances, in order to make a report to him at his return. He then goes
with the remaining letter to Laodicea, acquaints them with his having
been at Coloss, that they were to expect a copy of the apostle's letter
to that church from thence, and that the messengers, who should bring it,
were to carry back a copy of the letter which had been sent to them; a-
greeably to St. Paul's direction to the Colossians, which I have cited
above.

Coloss and Laodicea were, as Strabo says, two cities of Phrygia major,
both of them upon the river Lycus. As they are placed by Cellarius in
his map of Asia minor, Coloss appears to be the more westerly; but Dr.
Smith says, Laodicea lay westward of Coloss; and that, in his return to
Smyrna, he travelled, from Coloss to Laodicea, in about seven hours.
However, as the distance between these two cities was no greater, accord-
ing to the place where Typhicus and Onesimus landed upon the coast, and
the situation of the road afterwards, they might go conveniently enough
to one or the other of them first. But as they were both obliged to go to
Coloss, and Onesimus had no business at Laodicea, nor could appear at
all with any character, till he had been with his master at Coloss; there
were sufficient reasons to determine their going thither first, though it was
the farther place of the two. Besides, had the epistle sent to the Laodi-
cians been delivered first, it is reasonable to suppose, they would have
been directed to carry a copy of it to Coloss, and bring from thence a
transcript of their letter; instead of the contrary orders given to the Co-
lossians.

But the main difficulty is, how to account for the words in Ephes, in the
beginning of the epistle I am now considering; for the removing of which
several conjectures have been offered, by Dr. Mill, Mr. Peirce, and others.
That which appears to me the most probable is, what I met with in a Lat-
in Dissertation upon this subject, published some years ago in the Literary
Journal; the substance of which I shall here endeavour to represent, to-
gether with some further considerations that have occurred to me since.
Dr. Mill had observed, that Basil, (who lived in the latter part of the fourth
century) owns, that some antient copies of this epistle, written before his
time, had not the words in Ephes in the first verse; and that Marcion having
talked of a copy, in which were the words in Laodicea, and not in Ephes, he
was charged by Tertullian. (who wrote against him in the beginning of the third
century) with having made that alteration. Tertullian's words are these:
Ecclesiae quidem veritate epistolam islam ad Ephesios habemus emisiam, non ad
Laodicenos. Sed Marcion ci titulum aliquando interpolare gestit, quasi in

Dr. Mill took this passage as a proof, that some copies, as old as Tertullian's time, had in them the words in Ephes. And from an expression in one of Ignatius's epistles (which I shall have occasion to cite afterwards) he concludes he had such a copy. But the
St. Paul wrote, what is called, The epistle to the Ephesians:

the writer of the Dissertation thinks it evident from the words of Tertullian, that by the title he meant the inscription only; and that neither the words in Epist., nor in Laodicea, were inserted into the text of the copies, on either side. For had Marcion's copy in Laodicea, in the text, Tertullian would not have charged him with altering the title, but the words of the epistle. And if the words in Epist. had been in Tertullian's own copy, he would not have endeavoured to support that reading, from the authority or tradition of the church, but have appealed to the copy itself. But as he has done neither of these, it seems most natural from his way of reasoning to understand this passage as referring only to the title or inscription; which might then differ, for a reason I shall have occasion to mention presently. And that Tertullian meant this, by the word titulum, and not the salutation, with which the apostle begins this epistle, seems farther confirmed, by what Basil relates; who, though he says it was written to the Ephesians, yet owns expressly, that he had seen ancient copies, which had not the words in Epist., nor any others in the room of them. I shall transcribe his own words: To the Ephesians, as truly united to him, who is, through knowledge, he called them in a peculiar sense, such as adore; saying: To the saints who are, and the faithful in Christ Jesus. For those before us have transmitted it, and we have found it in ancient copies. By the words τοι ἐστιν, who is, Basil refers to the name of God, I am; by which he revealed himself to Moses, and which the Septuagint translate ἐστιν. But his applying this to the words τοι ἐστιν, instead of ἐστιν, they will admit of an easier sense, in this manner: To the saints, who are also faithful in Christ Jesus: τοι ἐστιν καὶ ἐστιν, to the saints and faithful, being also the characters in the salutation to those of Colos. What Jerome says upon this subject is somewhat obscure, whose words are these: Quidam curiosius, quam necessē est, putant, ex eo quod Moysi dictum sit. By the expression alli arbitratus, as it stands in opposition to quidam putant, the writer of the Dissertation supposes Jerome meant no more, than that some persons imagined or thought that epistle was written to the saints and faithful at Ephesus; and consequently that the words in Epist. were not found in their copies, any more than they were in the copies of those who gave into the other interpretation.

From these considerations that author concludes, that this epistle was written, by the apostle Paul, to no particular church; but to such gentle churches and christians, who, as he expresses himself in writing to the Colossians, had not seen his face; tho' it was sent first to Laodicea. And Chii. x.
A LETTER concerning the persons, to whom

further to confirm this opinion he observes, that the valediction at the end of the epistle runs in the same general terms, as were used at the beginning: Peace be to the brethren¹. And again: Grace be with all them, that ²
love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. But in all the other epistles to particular churches, not only where the apostle had been conversant, but also in that to the Colossians, whom he had never visited, the valediction is in the second person: Grace be with you.³

And it is observable, that the manner of expression, all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, answers very well to the character of the faithful in Christ Jesus, at the beginning of the epistle. Besides, as he remarks, had this epistle been written particularly to the Laodiceans; the apostle in mentioning it to the Colossians, would scarcely, as one may suppose, have directed them to read ὅπως ἐν θαυμασίᾳ, that from Laodicea; but rather ὅπως ἐν ἁγίᾳ λαοδικσίᾳ, that to the Laodiceans. But considering it as a general epistle, only sent first to the Laodiceans, the other expression is very just, especially as the Colossians were to fetch a copy from thence; for which reason likewise he orders them, with great propriety, to salute the brethren in Laodicea.

To these observations of this learned writer, I may add, that in all St. Paul's epistles, written to particular churches, there is some peculiar case mentioned respecting each church, that seems to have been one reason at least for writing them; which is also observed in his epistle to the Colossians, whom he there cautions against the worship of angels. On the contrary, in this epistle we find nothing but such general doctrines of Christianity, as equally concerned all the gentile churches, thro' the first three chapters, which end in a doxology, and make a separate part; and in the three following chapters the directions relating to practice are laid down more at large, than in any of his other epistles: which method suits very well with the nature of a general epistle, being somewhat in the manner of an institute. Besides, what other probable reason can be given, why St. Paul did not join Timothy's name with his own in the beginning of this epistle, as well as in those to the Colossians and Philemon; but that he being especially appointed the apostle of the Gentiles, might think proper in such a general epistle, written to the gentile christians, to appear alone in that character? Had this epistle been written particularly to the church of Laodicea, must it not have seemed strange, when that to the Colossians and this came to be read together in both churches, that the name of Timothy, who was then at Rome with the apostle, should be found in one of them, and not in the other? The difficulty is still greater, supposing it was written to the Ephesians. For can it be thought he would have omitted him in writing to a church, where Timothy was so well known, and had been so serviceable; and yet have mentioned him to strangers? And it may perhaps deserve a remark, that the general terms, in which he expresses his valediction, at the close of the epistle, ὅπως ἐν ἁγίᾳ, &c. seem to countenance the reading of the Alexandrian copy and some others, which add the word ἐν ἁγίᾳ to ἐξουσίαι, at the beginning of the epistle; ἐν ἁγίᾳ ἐνδείξατε, &c. to all the saints, who are also faithful in Christ Jesus.
St. Paul wrote, what is called, The epistle to the Ephesians.

"Jefus. This renders the address still more general, and very well suits both the tenor of the epistle afterwards, and the valediction with which it concludes.

I am sensible it may be replied here, that, notwithstanding such general expressions, from the likeness of one or two passages in this epistle to others in that to the Colossians, it may seem probable they were both written to particular churches. The places I refer to are these: Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jefus, and love unto all the saints. Here the apostle speaks to them in the second person, as he does in almost the like terms to the Colossians: Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints. But it is observable, that although in our English version the words your faith are put in both places, yet they are not the same in the original. In the latter indeed it is 

Here the apostle speaks to them in the second person, as he does in almost the like terms to the Colossians: Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints. But it is observable, that although in our English version the words your faith are put in both places, yet they are not the same in the original. In the latter indeed it is 

whereas in the former it is 

The other passage is this, where, speaking of Tychicus, the apostle says: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts. To the Colossians it is thus: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts. But some copies read here likewise, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might, &c. These words may seem to be spoken to some particular persons, but still they are applicable to any church indefinitely. And why may not Tychicus be supposed to have visited some other churches in those parts, and to have left with them copies of this epistle? Though whether he actually did so or not, such provisional expressions were very proper, in case he had opportunity for it. I can't perceive therefore, that this objection has really any force in it. But now there are some expressions in the epistle to the Colossians, besides the salutation to them by name, at the beginning, which refer to them in particular, and could be applied to no other church. As where the apostle speaking of Onesimus, and afterwards of Epaphras, says: Who is one of you? But nothing of this nature is found in the other epistle, that confines it to any single church. So that there are no expressions, but what may suit a general epistle; and some which do not so well agree with a particular one.

As to what has been said of the different titles, which were antiently placed at the head of this epistle, that might probably happen by copies being afterwards diffused to different churches. The original, as has been said, was sent to Laodicea; which might be occasioned partly from it's being so near to Colosse, whither St. Paul then designing to send Tychicus, took the opportunity of that conveyance; and partly because it was a large and populous city, from which copies might be conveyed most conveniently into other parts of the adjacent countries. For Apamea and Laodicea were, as Strabo informs us, the largest cities of Phrygia. But Tychicus might be ordered in that journey to leave a copy at Ephesus, on his return: for I can't think he went thither first, considering the case of Oves-
A letter concerning the persons, to whom

mus at that time, who was with him; and besides, as the epistle seems to
be addressed to such gentile converts, whom St. Paul had not seen, one
would suppose in propriety it should first be delivered to some such church.
Now Ephesus being the most considerable city in all those parts, and a
sea-port, more copies might afterwards be sent from thence (westward
especially, and along the coast) than from Laodicea, which lay far up
the country, and as the epistle had at first no inscription to any particular
church, this might in time occasion such a title, as we find now prefixed,
Πάντα το Λαοδίκην ἀπρό έρεονίν ἐν σφιγή, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the
Ephesians, to be written upon some copies that came from Ephesus. And
both Irenæus bishop of Lyons, and Clement of Alexandria, who cite
this epistle as written to the Ephesians before Tertullian, might use such
copies. But other copies again, for a like reason, might have Λαοδίκειαν
instead of Εφέσου; and no more be designed by either, but to intimate the
place from whence those copies were received, or to which the epistle, as
they thought, had first been sent by the apostle; and not that it was
written by him to either of those churches in particular. And accordingly,
Marcion, who lived some time at Sinope in Paphlagonia, nearer to Lao-
dicea than Ephesus, coming afterwards to Rome, might bring with him a
copy of this epistle, which had the words Αρνίτου in the title. For that
Tertullian in his charge against him referred to the title, seems further evident
from another passage, in which he says: Praeter eo bis et de alia epistolae,
quam nos ad Epheos praepositum habemus, haeretici vero ad Laodicenos.

And as this might in itself appear a novelty in those western parts, to
such who had always been accustomed to the Ephesian copies; so it would
naturally be more suspected, as coming from an heretic, and render
persons tenacious of the other title; till at length, the reason of the title be-

ing forgotten, occasion was taken from thence to insert the words Εφέσος
into the text. And in doing this they might also (as Dr. Mill remarks)

imagine themselves countenanced, from those words of the apostle to Ti-
thought: Τιτ. β η ιος το οικηστής Εφέσου: not considering the distance of time
between the writing those two epistles, as was hinted above:

But if it be true, as Dr. Mill thought, that Ignatius had a copy of this
epistle, with the words Εφέσος in the beginning, that will entirely destroy
this hypothesis; tho the difficulty will still remain, how to accommodate
them to the whole scheme of the epistle. It may be worth while therefore
to enquire a little into this matter. And for that purpose I shall tran-
scribe the passage, as it stands in the smaller epistle to the E-
phesians, to which the Doctor refers. He is there speaking to them, and

διέλειμα το θερετήρια, υπ' αυτ ου τούτων, δι' επιστολος μεταβαλειμα υμών εν Χριστῷ Ιερον
Which words, in the edition published by Ittigius, the Latin version ex-
presses thus: Pauli symmystae, qui sanzetieatus, martirium confecetus, et digne
beatus est (ad cuius vestigia contingat mihi ut inventari, ubi Deo potius fuerit)
qui tota epistolam memor vestri est in Christo Jefu. It is only the last clause of
this sentence, that has any relation to the present subject; which, accord-

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St. Paul wrote, what is called, The epistle to the Ephesians. 349

ing to the Latin version, may be thus rendered in English: Who in an whole epistle is mindful of you in Christ Jesus; the word who refering to Paul, mentioned before. But the proper sense of ὑμουργεῖν is to mention, or make mention of; and not barely to retain in memory. And so Ignatius himself elsewhere uses it: ἀλλὰ μάλις γένοιτο μοι αὕτη ὑμουργεῖν: which is there translated, Sed abist a me, ut eorum mentionem faciam: that is, But far be it from Smyr. § 5. me to mention them. Tho' neither will this remove the difficulty. For who, if he design to tell another, that a third person had written a letter to him, would say, He had made mention of him in an whole letter: This passage therefore is more justly translated in an antient version of Ignatius's epistles, published by archbishop Usher, in this manner: Qui in omni epistola memorandum facit osetri: that is: Who in every epistle makes mention of you: refering who to Paul, as the other translation does. But tho' this version be right, the fact is not true. For St. Paul mentions the Ephesians in none of his epistles; nor so much as the place, except in both those to Timothy, and the former to the Corinthians, eting aside that in debate. I can't therefore but imagine, here must be a mistake in the Greek copies of Ignatius, which might probably have been occasioned in the following manner. After the words ἐπιστ. came to be inserted in the epistle of St. Paul, which was now thought to have been writen to that church, some body imagining that Ignatius designed to signify as much in that passage, changed ὑμουργεῖν into ὑμουργεῖν. For if we read ὑμουργεῖν, the relative will refer to the nearer antecedent ποιεῖ; and not to ἐξεργαζόμενος, which is more remote. And therefore in the Latin version I have given above, of this whole sentence, that member, which stands immediately before the relative qui, is enclosed in a parenthesis, in order to refer qui to Paul, in the preceding member. With this small alteration of s into o, the sense will be: To me [meaning himself] who make mention of you in every epistle. In the other sense of the words, Ignatius only tells the Ephesians, what they knew many years before, if that epistle of St. Paul was writen to them, but in this he acquaints them with what was new to them, and must have been highly pleasing to them to hear. And as this was very proper for him to say, and somewhat like St. Paul's manner, whose pattern he there desires to follow; so the truth of it is still evident, for he does mention the Ephesians in every one of his other five epistles to the churches. And these six epistles of Ignatius are all that are mentioned by Eusebius, except one to Polycarp; which being of a more private nature, there is no mention in it of any church, or single person, but at Smyrna, where Polycarp was then bishop. I might add further, that had Ignatius designedd the former sense, he would scarce have said ὑμουργεῖν, but ἐκ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου. For tho' ἀνάρ be sometimes used to denote an integral, and not an univeral whole; yet 'tis of such things, of which there is but one of a fort, or at least where there can be no ambiguity, as ἡ ἡσυχία, ἀλάκτωρ ἀνεκτίπτομέν, which is not the case here: for who upon the first view of that passage would not be apt to interpret ὑμουργεῖν in ἐκ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου in every epistle, rather than in an whole epistle? In the larger epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians,
A LETTER concerning the persons, to whom

Ephesians, this passage is very differently expressed: & ηµαι τοι µεν παν την ιερη

Who always makes mention of us in his prayers: the relative

respecting Jesus Christ, mentioned here in the preceding clause. What

might occasion this alteration, whether the impropriety of the former ex-
pression in one sense, or the inconsistency of it with truth in the other,
or whatever other reason, I will not pretend to say. But the loss of this

passage, as a proof that St. Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians, is suf-

ficiently made up by another, that is not in the smaller epistle of Ignatius.

The words are these: Και ίνα, ὥσπερ ιππος ἵππος, ἵππος ἵππος, ήδη ἐκείνον: that is, And ye, [Ephesians] are, as Paul wrote to you, one body, and one

spirit. The clause, One body, and one spirit, is taken from St. Paul's own

epistle, and seems to me one plain instance, among others, that these

larger epistles of Ignatius were written after the smaller. I have been the

longer upon these passages of Ignatius, by reason of the weight his autho-

rity might justly claim in this case; was it certain that he had spoken of

the apostle Paul, as written by him to the Ephesians. For if this epistle was written in the ninth year of Nero, and that of Ignatius

in the tenth of Trajan, as bishop Pearson places them, the distance of

time will be but forty-five years; so that Ignatius, being then far advanced

in age, could not well be ignorant of the truth of this matter. And be-

sides, Onesimus was bishop of Ephesus at the time Ignatius wrote his

epistle to that church, is mentioned in it, and had lately made Ignatius

a visit; so that had there been then any doubt concerning this affair, he

could easily have set him right. Upon the whole therefore, there seems

to be no foundation, from the passage of Ignatius, referred to by Dr. Mill,
to imagine, that the words Εφεσος, were at that time inserted in St. Paul's

epistle; since it is more reasonable to think he speaks there of his own

epistles, and not of any particular one written by that apostle: tho' some

person afterwards, by the alteration of a single letter, gave the sentence

that turn. Nor can I see any reason to conclude with the author of the

Dissertation, that Ignatius had a copy of St. Paul's epistle with the title

& Εφεσος: tho' was it true, it could make nothing against what has been

offered above, upon that subject. And it seems somewhat strange, when

he has endeavoured to prove, that the words Εφεσος were unknown to

Tertullian, that presently after he should seem at all to doubt, whether

this insertion was not made 'till after the time of Ignatius, post Ignatii tem-

pora demum; that is, pretty early in the second century. I am therefore

at a loss to reconcile the inference he draws from it with his reasoning be-

fore, when he says: Adeo ut etiam ex boc exemplo pateat non temere Celsun

secundo seculo quibusdam Christianis objecisse, Scripturae S. falsationem binis,

tribus, imo pluribus vicibus fašiam.

It may perhaps be objected to the emendation proposed in the epistle of

Ignatius, that some of his epistles were written after that to the Ephesians,

and therefore he could not then say, that he had made mention of them

in every epistle. For according to Eusebius's account, Ignatius upon his
arrival at Smyrna, in his journey to Rome, wrote his four epistles to the
churches at Ephesus, Magnesia, Trallium, and Rome; and afterwards,
when he came to Troas, the two others to the churches at Philadelphia
and Smyrna, and that to Polycarp. But this can't, I think, affect the
emendation: for as Ignatius does mention the Ephesians in each of the
three other epistles written from Smyrna, this of itself is sufficient to sup-
port it; and his doing the same thing in the other two epistles after-
wards, was only continuing to do, what he told the Ephesians he did:
at the time he wrote to them.

I am sensible that conjectures are never applied to worse purpose,
than when they are made use of, to weaken the credit of the sacred:
writings. But neither the divine authority of this epistle, nor the au-
thor of it, is here called in question; the enquiry is only about the
persons to whom it was first written. And tho' it has for so many ages
past been received, as written to the Ephesians; yet as we find this
was not the general sense of the earliest times, and by reading the
epistle in this view the same propriety of expression does not appear,
as in all the other epistles of the same apostle; an attempt to remove
these difficulties, modestly proposed, cannot, I presume, be justly thought
blameable. The cause of Christianity may possibly be served, but can no
ways be disserved by it; and therefore whatever the success be, the design
must by all impartial judges be at least esteemed innocent.

The end of the second volume.
THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST PLANTING OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION:

Taken from the Acts of the Apostles, and their Epistles, &c.

Being the APPENDIX; OR, VOLUME the THIRD.

By GEORGE BENSON, D. D.

LONDON:
Printed and Sold by J. Waugh and W. Fenner, at the Turk's-Head, in Lombard-Street.

CIV. MCCCL. LVII.
To the Second Edition.

In a bad state of health, and in the midst of various complaints, and distresses; I have, at length, finished a second edition of this large work.

Besides a careful revisal, and correction, of the former edition; there are the following additions; namely,

Appendix, No. I. A dissertation on Acts iv. 4. or, an inquiry, whether the five thousand converts to Christianity, at Jerusalem, included the former three thousand; or were a distinct number? In this dissertation, there is, also, an account of the reason for raising the large, charitable fund; and how long that community of goods continued.

No. II. An essay, concerning St. Paul's behavior, at Athens. And, more particularly, an inquiry, "Whether he worked any miracles there?" Acts xvii. 15, to the end of the chapter.

No. III. A dissertation on St. Paul's reproveing St. Peter, for his behavior, at Antioch: with a view, more particularly, to rectifie the mistakes of Dr. Conyers Middleton, in his cursory reflections on Galat. ii. ii; &c.
P R Æ F A C E.

N°. IV: A dissertation on John xix. 14. to reconcile what St. John has there said, of it's being the sixth hour, when our Lord stood before Pontius Pilate, with what the other evangelists have said, of it's being the third hour, when he was crucified.

N°. V. A postscript to the letter, at the end of the second volume of this history, concerning the persons, to whom St. Paul wrote, what is commonly called, The epistle to the Ephesians.

VI. - A map, done upon a copper-plate; adapted to the whole work, but more especially, to St. Paul's apostolic journeys.

This map is of the same nature with that prefixed to the late Lord Barrington's miscellanea sacra: though the reader will find some few additions, and alterations.

VII. The contents of the whole work.

VIII. Five indexes; namely, (1.) of the hebrew words. (2.) of the greek words. (3.) of the texts differently read. (4.) of the texts occasionally explained. (5.) of the most material things.

N. B. The additions are printed separately, for the use of such as have the former edition; if any such choose to buy them.

The former edition was printed, in two volumes, quarto. So is this history, now, printed again. The dissertation, at the end of the second volume, was formerly, called an appendix. I have, now, called that, a dissertation; and given, to the additional pieces, the title of The appendix; or, vol. iii. Not that the additions are equal, in bulk, to another volume. But they are so intitled, to keep up, in the reader's mind, a clear and distinct idea of each part of the work: that, if there should be occasion, at any time, to make quotations from it, or references to it, it may easily be understood, whether the first, or second, edition is intended; or what part of the work is quoted, or referred to.

My original plan is now executed. The history is brought down to the end of the Acts of the apostles. The epistles, which come within that period, are abridged. And I have lived to revise this work, and publish it again.
P R Æ F A C E.

If any one, that comes after me, should think fit to carry down the sacred history, to the end of the first century, it would come into his scheme, to give the history, and abridgement, of the epistle to Titus, the epistle to the Hebrews, and the second epistle to Timothy. And to give some account of the gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke. The history, and synopsis, of the seven (commonly called) catholic epistles, would come within that period. The time, also, of writing the book of the Revelation, ought not to be omitted; nor the grand design of it. Which is finely represented, in Mr. Lowman’s excellent preface to his paraphrase and notes on the book of the revelation. And it might be highly proper to inquire, “Whether that sacred book ought to be interpreted, by synchronisms, or without them?”

And, finally, it would be right to give an account of the gospel of St. John; the time of writing it; and the view, which the apostle had, in committing it to writing: particularly, his intention to leave, on record, some things, which the other three evangelists had not mentioned.

So far, would such a history concern the books, that belong to the sacred canon. A clear and faithful history of which, would be of unspeakable advantage.

In such a work, two of the apostolic fathers might be mentioned, and a short account given of them; namely, the epistle, ascribed to Barnabas, and the epistle of Clement, Romanus, to the Corinthians. For these two come within this period: as the epistle ascribed to Barnabas, is reckoned to have been written, about the year of Christ, 71; and Clement, his epistle to the Corinthians, about the year 96. Dr. Lardner’s credibility of the gospel-history, part II, would be of great service, in drawing up an account of these two apostolic fathers, and of their writings.

If the Jewish and Roman history was carried on, from period to period, down to the end of the first century; then, those very signal events, of the destruction of Jerusalem; the demolishing the temple; the overthrow of the Jewish polity; and the dispersion of that once highly-favored nation; might be enlarged upon, with great propriety.

The reader, who would see, how remarkably the prediction, Matt. xxiv, 1, &c. agreed with the events, related by the historians, may receive
receive full satisfaction, from a perusal of archbishop Tillotson's sermons on that subject. Where he will observe the several particulars, predicted, of the destruction of Jerusalem; and the foregoing events, connected with it, corroborated, by the express testimonies of Dion Cassius, Tacitus, Josephus, and other historians.

We need not refer to the testimony of history, to know whether the Jews have been led captive, into all nations; as our Saviour foretold. For the present state of that unhappy nation, is as well known, as it is wonderful.

And whoever would see the argument, which may be drawn from it, in confirmation of Christianity, placed in the strongest light, he will read, with pleasure, the French author of the Principes de la foi chrétienne, as quoted by Gilbert Welt, Esq; on the resurrection of Christ, p. 395. 409. — The learned, (though almost forgotten) Dr. Jackson's collections, relating to the state of the Jews, compared with the prophecies concerning them, [do also] deserve to be consulted.*

These would be excellent helps. But an historian should re-examine whatever he finds to his purpose; and digest it into one continued historical narration.

Such a history, well executed, would, among many other things, show, that Josephus and Tacitus, who have treated the Christians, with contempt, or great virulence, have, notwithstanding, strongly corroborated our Lord's divine mission; by pointing out, how exactly the grand events tallied with the prediction. For the testimony of enemies hath ever been reckoned of great importance.

It is not possible, at this distance of time and place, to conceive the force, which the prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the clear accomplishment thereof, must have had, upon the minds of the Christians of that age; and upon numbers of sober and attentive persons; who were not professed Christians. We may imagine somewhat of it, from the forcible manner, in which it would strike the Protestant world to behold the downfall of popery, according to the prediction, Rev. xivth. chap.

But these, and other reflections, I will not now, any longer, dwell upon. I hope

* See Mr. Douglass his criterion, or miracles examined, &c. p. 346.
I hope my good-natured readers will indulge me in saying, "that, in what I have done, I have done it faithfully, and to the best of my abilities.

If I had believed Christianity to be false, no worldly considerations whatever could have induced me to have wrote so much, to make the world believe that it is true. — And, if it be true; it is not an indifferent matter, whether men receive, or reject, it.

As for my own part, I have studied the books of scripture; and, more especially, the New Testament, for above thirty years. From thence, I have taken my notions of Christianity, and of the evidence of it. I have read the objections of the infidels. And have found, that their acquaintance with the scriptures is but very superficial: that they have no steady principles of their own: and that their design is to pull down Christianity, without giving the world any other scheme of religion, or morals, instead of it.

I am, indeed, convinced, that the anti-revelationists are, in general, unfair writers; and have no good views; yet I am very thankful that this controversy has broke out, and been carried on, such a length, in my time. Because I should, otherwise, never have seen the objections placed in so strong a light, nor cleared up so fully, and to such rational satisfaction. I should never have understood my bible so well; never have seen the arguments for the divine original of it, placed in such a variety of views; nor have apprehended the evidences to have been so very strong, extensive, and numerous.

I have, with great pleasure, observed, that many things, against which, the enemies of revelation have objected, have, upon a more narrow inspection, turned out beauties, instead of blemishes; and arguments in favor of Christianity, instead of objections against it. And I am not without hope, that the writers, who have, of late, so openly, and in such great numbers, appeared, against revelation, are paving the way, for a more general and extensive spread of it.

For, if Christians, of different denominations, would but give up what they cannot rationally defend; and return to the scriptures, as the sole standard of revealed religion; then would Christianity, pure, uncorrupted, Christianity, appear in its genuine simplicity, and native excellence. Jews, heathens, and Mahometans would be struck with the amiable nature, and abundant evidence, of it; and well-minded deists be induced to admire, and embrace, it. — An event!
**P R Æ F A C E.**

"event! devoutly to be wished: but which could not, perhaps, be brought about, by any other method. Though it would, in my apprehension, be one of the most grand and desirable of all events: and make Christianity the glory, and the joy, of the whole earth.

"However so great and extensive an affair may turn out:—After repeated examination, I am persuaded, that the Christian religion, as it lies uncorrupted, in the scriptures, is of divine original. And, the more I have examined into the nature and evidence of it, the more I am convinced of the divine mission of Jesus, and of the truth of his gospel.

"I am apprehensive that my glass is, almost, run out. But I believe a future state of exact retribution, according to every man's real character.—And, in the view of that grand and interesting event, I have thought it my duty to live and act. —I am convinced, that I must shortly die. But I know that the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and no torment shall touch them. Being absent from the body, they are present with the Lord. And, when they depart hence, they are with Christ; which is far better. —After a few years, or ages, (which are as nothing, when compared to eternity,) I expect, also, that Jesus will come again, to this earth; but in quite a different form and manner, and for entirely a different purpose, from his former appearance. I depend upon his power, to raise me from the gloomy mansions of the grave. I am not without hopes of being, then, approved by him. And I would not part with the consolation, which, in this respect, Christianity affords me, for the whole world.

"With an heart warmed with such sentiments, I could sincerely wish, that all my readers were Christians, not only in name and profession; but indeed, and in truth. Nay; I could, most heartily, rejoice, in the knowledge, piety, and everlasting happiness, of the whole human race. And it gives me unspeakable pleasure, to think of the extensive benevolence of the deity, who has declared, that he would have all men to be saved; and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

"Towards the accomplishing so great and good a work; I have thrown in my mite. And humbly pray, that it may be attended with a divine blessing. Amen!

Prefect-street, Goodman's-fields,
London, September 1. 1755.
A P P E N D I X
TO THE
HISTORY
OF THE
First planting of the Christian Religion.

NUM B. I.

A D I S S E R T A T I O N  O N

Acts IV. 4. Howbeit, many of them, who heard the word, believed. And the number of the men was about five thousand.

DR. Lightfoot, [vol. i. of his works, p. 760.] is clear in it, that these 5000 make up a sum entirely distinct from the 3000, mentioned chap. 2d. For (1.) This is a discourse concerning a miracle, done by Peter and John. And verse 1,—23. concerns that affair onely. And what reason can be alleged, why, in this sentence alone, the sacred historian should start from his main design? (2.) It is a manner of reckoning unusual in scripture, to mention five thousand, and to mean onely two thousand, without any intimation of such a meaning. (3.) The number of the men was about 5000. Of what men? Of those, who heard the word, and believed. What word did they hear and believe? The word preached by Peter and John, ver. 1. and not the word preached on the day of pentecost, by all the apostles. [See, also, Dr. Whitby, upon the place.]

To this account, various things have been objected. As (1.) “Whereas the word [γνώσατε] is used, chap. i. 15. is is here χριστιανόη.
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"τρυγ, and ought to have been rendered [became.]"

Answer. The passages, where γίνεσθαι, or γίνομαι, signifies [to be], are so very numerous, that there is no need of pointing to any particular places. And the word ευρήκη might justly be translated [was.] Rom. xvi. 2. 2 Cor. vii. 14. and is very properly so translated, 1 Cor. x. 6. and xv. 10. 2 Cor. iii. 7. 1 Thes. i. 7. 1 Thef. i. 5; 7.

However; the word, ευρήκη, may here signify [became] if the following interpretation be approved. "Salvian, presbyter of Mar slees, who flourished about the year 440, supposesthe number of 5000, in this place, to be additional to the 3000, chap. ii. 4. making in all eight thousand. Nevertheless, that may not be the true sense. Nor yet, that the number was now 5000, including the 3000, converted by St. Peter's first sermon. For many of them had come, from divers and remote parts, to Jerusalem, to be present, at the feast of pentecost. And, probably, when the feast was over, [or, at least, before this time,] they returned to their several countries, and dwellings. Nor does St. Luke say, that now 5000 were added, to the apostles, or to the church. But he saith, that at this season, many of them, which heard the word, believed, or were converted. And the number of the men was made, ευρήκη, 5000. With the addition of converts, now made, the whole number of believers, at Jerusalem, amounted to 5000. Many of the first 3000 were dead, or removed. But, from time to time, new converts had been made. And, at this season, many believed. Whereby, the number of believers, at Jerusalem, became five thousand."

Objection second, "It is hardly to be thought (unlesse it was expressly asserted) that another day should be much more remarkable for it's number of converts, than that, on which the spirit descended." Answer. If the apostles continued to work a number of miracles, one after another, as we are assured they did, then the evidence of their divine mission and doctrine became clearer and stronger. And, consequently, the number of converts might rationally be expected to be considerably augmented.

Objection third. "As for any argument, drawn from the probability of more than 5000 being converted in a year's time, it is alleged that there is no proof at all, that this event was a year, or even a month, after the descent of the spirit. Nay, it seems highly improbable that the sanhedrim should suffer the apostles to go.

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See Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel history, part 2. vol. xi. p. 201, 202.
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"go on so long, unquestioned, in their public work. And to suppose that they did not teach publicly would be most absurd." [See Dr. Dodderidge upon the place.]

Suppose it was not a month after the descent of the spirit; then it must have been, most probably, during the feast of pentecost, which feast lasted only seven days. For there seems no reason to suppose that these numerous converts were, all, or most, of them, the stated inhabitants of Jerusalem. And, after pentecost, it was some months before the approach of the next public festival, when all the males in Israel were obliged to go up to Jerusalem. But how little this is favored, by the sacred historian, may appear, even from a cursory view of several circumstances. Three thousand were converted, on the ever-memorable day of pentecost; that very day, on which the spirit was poured out. And those three thousand were baptized. After which, it is said, [chap. ii. 42.] that they continued to attend upon the teaching of the apostles, and breaking of bread, and prayer. They also, sold their possessions and goods, and raised a common fund. Which appears to me to have been to support the numerous converts, who came from distant countries, while they continued together, at Jerusalem. For the converts, who were inhabitants of Jerusalem, were at home; and continued in their stated business, and usual methods of providing for themselves and their families. And those Jewish converts, who had come from distant countries, to celebrate that festival, at Jerusalem, would, of course, be provided, for their subsistence, during the festival; and to bear the charges of their traveling home again. Very likely, some of them had more plenty than they themselves wanted. And that they, most probably, threw into the common fund. And, indeed, it was very proper that they should tarry together, some months, at Jerusalem, till they had learned the scheme of Christianity, from the apostles. And, during the continuance of so many thousands together, it was highly requisite that they should have a common bank; that none of them, in such a situation, might want the common necessaries of life. — After these things, it is again observed [chap. ii. 47.] that there were added daily, unto the church, the saved, or reformed; or such as were put into the sure way to salvation. Now, to talk of a daily addition to the church, for part of one week, seems not so likely, as it would be, if that addition had been gradually going on, for the space of some weeks, or months; till, after some time, the following miracles, added to all the former, increased the number of converts, in Jerusalem, to five thousand. Moreover; it appears probable to me that the sacred
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sacred historian had quite done with the account of the three thousand: and that the greatest part of them, living in remote places, were gone back to their respective countries. Upon which, the community of goods might, possibly, cease for a time. But was revived again, (as we shall see afterwards) upon this second, and more numerous, conversion. At least, there is nothing, that I know of, in the sacred history, that contradicts any one of these particulars.

Having, therefore, quite finished his account of the three thousand, the sacred historian seems to me to go on, and give the history of increasing the number of converts, in Jerusalem, to five thousand. Which was occasioned by St. Peter and St. John’s going up to the temple, and curing the lame man, who was laid at the beautiful gate, to beg alms for his subsistence. Indeed, it is not said when this happened. It might be at the following feast of tabernacles, or at the next passover. For the numerous conversion renders it highly probable that it was at one of the three great festivals, when all the males in Israel were commanded to go up to Jerusalem. — Upon this very numerous conversion, the two apostles are taken into private custody; and examined, the next day, by the sanhedrin. Before whom, Peter boldly asserted that, by a power, derived from Jesus of Nazareth, they had cured that lame man: that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, but whom God had raised from the dead. — These things quite confounded the sanhedrin. For the miracle was unquestionable. The man was standing there, before them. He was well known in Jerusalem, was forty years of age, and had been lame from his birth; and was now evidently and perfectly cured. The sanhedrin, therefore, were quite at a loss what to do in the case. However; they called in the two apostles, and brow-beat them. And charged them to preach no more, in the name of Jesus. Which charge they bravely refused to comply with. And, when the sanhedrin had farther charged and threatened them, they dismissed them. — Then the two apostles return to the Christian church. And, upon relating how they had escaped, the church unanimously praised God for their deliverance; and prayed for farther support and divine assistance. Upon which, the house was shaken; and they had a fresh effusion of the spirit. And they preached the Christian doctrine with boldness. And there was a common fund, again, raised for the support of the christians, while such numbers continued together. And houses and lands were sold, to raise and support that truly generous and charitable fund.
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Now, what occasion had St. Luke, whose history is so remarkably concise, to repeat this, a second time, of their having a common fund? If the fund had not been revived again, upon the converts thereof residing at Jerusalem, amounting to five thousand, as it had been first formed, upon the conversion of the three thousand? This clearly accounts for the repetition, shows the reasonableness of such a common bank, in those peculiar circumstances; and may as clearly teach us, that, in other circumstances, there is no reason for such a community of goods, among christians. Nay; in most cases, it would be highly improper, and attended with very bad consequences. But, while the five thousand continued together, at Jerusalem, to learn the scheme of christianity, from the apostles, that such of them, as were not the stated inhabitants of that city, might carry it home, to their respective countries, such a community of goods was of very great service, and, in a manner, necessary.

That a large bank was not raised, with a view to have a constant community of goods, or a stated maintenance for the whole church, at Jerusalem, down to the destruction of that city, may farther appear, from the christian church at Antioch's sending a pretty large charitable contribution, not many years after this, for the support of the christians in Judea, in a time of great scarcity. For it is well known that the church at Jerusalem was the principal christian church in Judea. And accordingly, that charitable collection was sent to the elders of the christian church, at Jerusalem, by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. [See Acts xi. 27,—30.]

But still it is objected, "That, as the apostles preached publicly, the sanhedrim would not suffer them to go on, so long, un questioned." Answer. It is allowed that the apostles continued to preach publicly. But as to the sanhedrin's not molesting them sooner; that might depend upon a variety of circumstances. — The Jews had not the power of life and death. That power was, then, in the hands of the romans. The resurrection of Christ, after they had procured his crucifixion, had greatly disconcerted the measures of the leading jews. And, for a while, they were confounded, and quite at a stand, when they saw that the apostles rose up, preached, and worked numerous miracles, in the name of Jesus. Our Lord, himself, had gone about, preaching, for two (or three) years and an half, before they could get him apprehended; though they were very desirous to have suppressed and destroyed him, much sooner. Men may eagerly wish to crush their adversaries; but, when their adversaries have evidently truth and right on their side; and those supported by
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by open and notorious facts; it is not an easie matter to crush them. And even to attempt it, must be very unpopular. A consideration which was of great weight with the leading men of the Jewish nation. The providence of God would, very probably, exercise a watchful eye over the apostles and first disciples, till Christianity had got a considerable footing, at Jerusalem; and among the Jews, who came thither, from various quarters. And one plane argument, whereby the Sanhedrim would be restrained, is hinted, Acts ii. 47, namely, that, as yet, the Christians had favor with all the people. The very reason, which is alleged, in the four gospels, more than once, for the leading Jews not apprehending, and putting to death, our blessed Lord, much sooner than they did.—Nay; we see, in the very case before us, that what the Sanhedrim did, was so flagrantly unjust, and so very unpopular, that they dared not to venture to put the two apostles to death, or even to inflict any lesser punishments upon them. They only threatened, without proceeding any farther. For they did not care to risk their own characters, so far, as to lose all reputation with the people. And how unpopular their opposition to the apostles, and ill treatment of them, was, appears, from another instance, not long after this. For, when they had apprehended all the twelve apostles, and put them into the common prison, an angel came, by night, and set them at liberty; and ordered them to go, and preach the gospel, publicly, in one of the courts of the temple. They did so. And the Sanhedrim sent the captain of the temple to apprehend them again. He and his men, accordingly, came, and seized upon them, in the court of the temple; as they were preaching, to a great multitude; there: and led them away to the court of the Sanhedrim. But they dared not use the apostles, with any roughness, or violence. For they were afraid of the people, lest they should have stoned them; if they had been witnesses to any ill usage of the apostles. [Acts v. 26.] Nay; I do not know whether Gamaliel's preventing the Sanhedrim from putting all the twelve apostles to death, might not, in a great measure, proceed from his being well apprised how very unpopular such an action would have rendered him, and the other leading Jews.

Objection fourth. Some may, possibly, inquire, "If the Jewish converts were so numerous, what became of them afterwards? For church-history never intimates anything of the Jewish converts being so numerous."

Answer. That there were great numbers of Jews converted to the Christian faith, appears plainely, from St. James his speech, [Acts xxi.
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20. who affords expressly, that they were many myriads. Whereas, one myriad is ten thousand. Perhaps, many of them apostatized; as our Savior prophesied great numbers would do. [See Matt. xxiv. 10, &c.] But, as the history of the Christian church, (and especially of the Jewish Christians,) from the conclusion of the Acts of the Apostles, to the end of the second century, is very imperfect, we cannot, with any certainty, say, what became of them.

However; I look upon the greatest part, both of the three thousand, and of the five thousand, to have been Jews, come up to Jerusalem, at the great festivals; who, afterwards, returned to their respective cities and countries. And who would greatly facilitate the spread of Christianity, in those remote places.

I would confirm some of the above-mentioned observations, by some curious extracts, from Mr. David Clarkson's treatise of the primitive episcopacy; p. 4, &c. where, speaking of the thousands, who were converted, to Christianity, at Jerusalem, he says: "It is but a small proportion of those thousands, that can in reason be accounted the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and so fixed members of that church. For they were converted, at one of the great feasts, at which times the inhabitants were not, by far, a twentieth part of those that were assembled, in the city. That this may appear, let us inquire both after the number of the inhabitants; and of those that, from other places, resorted to those solemnities. To begin with the latter of these. "Josephus [de bell. jud. l. 7. c. 1. § 968. Havercamp. edit. l. 6. c. 9. § 3. p. 399.] tells us; and, out of him, Eusebius [Hist. lib. 3. c. 5.] that Cestius Gallus, willing to represent to Nero, (who contemned the Jews,) the strength of that people, desired the priests to take an account of their number. They, in order thereto, at the passover, when several companies (the least consisting of ten, many of twenty,) were each of them to have their sacrifice, numbered the sacrifices, which came to 255600. Then, reckoning, as though each company had no fewer than ten, they collected the number of the people at the passover 270000, all legally clean. But, allowing the families, or companies, their just number, it amounted to 300000. So Eusebius, τριάκοσια μυρίαδων, [vel μυρίαδων.] and Josephus, elsewhere, ἐκ έλατον τριάκοσιων μυρίαδων. [p. 798. edit. Genev. An. 1635.] But, then, they were all, in a manner, foreigners: οἴκους δὲ

* In Havercamp's edition, it is 256500.
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The inhabitants of Jerusalem were but 120,000; as we learn by Hacateus, [in Joseph. contra Appion. l. 1. edit. Havercamp. p. 456.] not centum & quinquaginta millia, as the translator. And it may be Hacateus, or his informer, over-reached, as well in the number of the citizens, as in the measures of the city. He makes the circuit of it fifty furlongs. Whereas, Josephus saith, it was but thirty-three: [de bell. jud. lib. 6. c. 17. p. 914.] and the circumference of Titus, in the siege, but thirty-nine furlongs. [l. 6. c. 12.] And, when 12000 were slain, in Jerusalem, in one night, the loss is represented, as though the greatest part of the citizens had been destroyed. [l. 5. c. 12.] But there is no need of these advantages. Let us suppose the inhabitants to have been 150,000; (30,000 more than Hacateus makes them;) yet this will be but a twentieth part of three millions: (And no less were wont to be at Jerusalem, at the three great solemnities.) And, then, in all reason, no more than a twentieth part of the converted must be accounted inhabitants of the city; and so fixed members of the church. For that this happiness should fall, in greater proportion, upon those of the city, than upon the foreigners, at that time, in it; both being in all the same circumstances; none can, upon any ground, imagine. And, if but a twentieth part of the converted were inhabitants, let them be twenty, or forty, or eighty, thousand; or as many as the myriads, [Acts xxii. 10.] amount to; the church at Jerusalem will not be so much greatened, by them; but that it might well meet in one congregation. If the converts had been an hundred thousand, the proportion of that church therein would have been but five thousand. And more have been, in one congregation, in the primitive times, elsewhere. Or else Eusebius could not have found μισθοδήμος ἐκποιονωγεῖς. [l. 8. c. 1.]

And Mr. Clarkson, [ibid. p. 106, &c.] farther saith, Jerusalem was far inferior, in greatness, to the four cities fore-mentioned; [namely, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Carthage;] yet may be thought considerable, in this discourse; because of the many thousands converted there, by the apostles. From whence it is concluded, that they were more than could meet together, in one place, for communion. But I have shewed this, before, to be a mistake. And that, of those five thousand converted, the twentieth part cannot in reason be accounted inhabitants of the city. About forty years after, this church consisted of no more than Pella, a small city, could entertain, together with its own inhabitants.
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For thither they all retired, as Eusebius informs us; [l. 3. c. 5.] being admonished from heaven to leave the city. And, [Epiphanius, de ponder. & menfur. c. 15.] χάριτος οἱ μαθηταί, [all the disciples,] being warned, by an angel, to leave the city, a little before it was destroyed, obeyed; and dwelt in Pella, a city of Decapolis. And they deserved the title of ἐπιφάνεια, (whether Josephus intended it for them, or others,) who, he saith, after the retreat of Cestius, from Jerusalem, left the city, as a ship ready to sink. ωλολοι τῶν ἐπιφάνων, &c. [de bell. jud. l. c. μ. edit. Haercamp. l. 2. c. 20. § 1. p. 206.] And, from hence, archbishop Whitgift concludes the smallness of their numbers. How few christians, saith he, were there, at Jerusalem, not long before it was destroyed, being above forty years after Christ? Doeth not Eusebius testify, [l. 3. c. 5.] that they were all received into a little town, called Pella? And yet the apostles had spent much time, and labor, in preaching there. But the number of those, who did not profess Christ, in that city, was infinite.

Not long after the destruction of Jerusalem, if we believe Epiphanius, [ubi supra, n. 15.] they returned, from Pella, to Jerusalem; and settled in the ruins of a part of the desolate city; no fit place to entertain multitudes: and, near fifty years after, [they] are found very low and few. For, as the same author tells us, Adrian, in his progress through those parts of the empire, coming to Jerusalem, finds the whole city laid level with the ground, except a few houses, and a little church. Παράκλ. ἐλίγων ἐκκλησίας, καὶ τῆς ἔκκλησίας μᾶρας ἑυγενής. [ibid. c. 14.] And one would judge they could not be very many, whom so small a church could contain, and so few houses lodge.

After Adrian had raised the city Ælia, out of the ruins of the old Jerusalem, the church there was so far from rising with the city, that it fell from what it was before; being, in his time, very much diminished, if not quite ruined, as to its ancient constitution. For Adrian, provoked by the rebellion of the jews, by severe edicts, excludes them all, not onely from Jerusalem, but [from] all the territory round about it. As Aristob Pellæus, [in Euseb. l. 4. c. 6.] And Sulpitius Severus, [hist. l. 2.] saith, this prohibition reached, not onely those, that were jews by religion, but all that were jews, by extract, though professing the christian religion. So that, if the church, then at Jerusalem, were either wholly, or for the greatest part, constituted of such jews; by this law, it was either quite dissipated, or greatly diminished. Now, Vol. III. B
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Eusebius tells us, that, from the apostles, to this last devastation of Palestine, by Adrian, that church did consist of such Jews, [ἐκ Ἱερουσαλήμ], which we must understand, either absolutely, so as none else but believing Jews were members of that church; or else, none but they in comparison, very few of the Gentiles. In the first sense, by this edict, it would be quite dissolved, as to it's being a church at Jerusalem. In the latter sense, it would be reduced to a small compass; and very few members; namely, those only of the believing Gentiles. And, in this sense, I take it, because there was a church here still. But, all of Jewish extract being excluded, by the emperor's authority, it was constituted only of Gentiles; cessantibus bis qui fuerant ex judæis. [Jer. in chron.] So Eusebius saith, that that church was made up of Gentiles. And the reason he gives; because, by Adrian's edict, immediately before-mentioned, the city was emptied of all the Jewish nation. [Euseb. l. 4. c. 6.] So that, upon this constitution of Adrian, about the eighteenth, or nineteenth, year, of his reign, as Eusebius computes it, Anno 135. the church of Jerusalem consisted only of those Gentiles; which were so few, as they are not thought fit to be brought to account, by him, who gives the best account of the state of the church, in those times.

It is like their numbers were increased, before Narcissus was bishop there, in the third age. Yet then, they were not so many, but that the whole number could meet together, with their bishop, at the paschal vigil; as appears, by what we meet with, in Eusebius, [l. 6. c. 6.] The people assembled with Narcissus, at the great vigil. And, while they were watching, oil failing them for their lights, τὸ ὁμιλοῖον, the whole multitude were greatly troubled. Whereupon Narcissus procures them a supply, in an extraordinary way, as it is there reported.

Nay; in Cyril's time, which was in the fourth age. [Anno 353.] it seems they were no more than could assemble in one place. For the people, as Sozomen relates it, being astonished at an apparition in the air, all leave their houses, their markets, and their work; and men, women, and children, meet in the church, ἵνα ἐκκλησίας ἀπολῦσον. And there all together, uno ore, [with one voice,] join in the praises of Christ. [Hist. l. 3. c. 4.]

The end of the first dissertation.

APPEND.
APPENDIX

NUMB. II.

An Essay, concerning St. Paul's behavior at Athens; and particularly, whether he worked any miracles there. Acts xvii. 15, to the end of that chapter.

SECT. I.

Dr. Wall [in his note on Acts xvii. 33.] saith; "There is no mention of any miracle, done, by St. Paul, at Athens. Perhaps [he worked no miracle, there,] for the very same reason, that our Savor would shew no sign to the generation of the pharisees."

In this short note, Dr. Wall seems to allude to what Dr. Bentley had said, more at large, in his sermons at Boyle's lectures, Serm. 6. towards the beginning.

This, to some, may appear to be a curious subject. But it is not an empty speculation. Dr. Bentley has touched upon it, by the by; but has not exhausted it. And I know not of any other author, that has wrote upon it.

I. "Let us suppose this to be fact, that St. Paul did not work any miracle at Athens. There might be several good reasons offered for such a conduct."

(1.) Our blessed lord himself, who had the spirit without measure, and could work miracles, when, and where, ever, he thought proper, did not see fit to work miracles, at all times, and in all places.

We have five instances upon record, in the four gospels, of our lord's refusing to work a miracle, even when it was desired. The first instance, is, that recorded, Matt. xii. 38, &c. "Then certain of the scribes and pharisees answered, saying, we would see a sign [or miracle] from you." But Jesus would not gratifie them, in that
that request. He knew the hearts of all men; and with what disposition those scribes and pharisees desired him to work another miracle. It was not from a desire of farther evidence of his divine mission, or that they might be rationally convinced of the truth of his doctrine: but from perverseness and obstinacy, a cavilling temper, or a light and wanton curiosity. The miracles, which he had already worked, in great numbers, were either denied, disregarded, or most maliciously ascribed to a confederacy with evil spirits. And all the evidence, arising from them, was set aside, as of no force or validity. Our lord, therefore, very justly refused, at their request, to work any other miracle: and referred to his own resurrection, as the grand, confirming, evidence of his divine mission. A second instance, of the same kind, may be found, Matt. xvi. 1, &c. Mark viii. 11, &c. where the same sort of men, the pharisees, were joined with some of the opposite sect of the sadducees. And they are said to have come, and tempted him, desiring "that he would show them a sign [or miracle] from heaven." Jesus had, before that, worked miracles, almost without number, both by sea and by land, in the fields and highways, in the synagogues, in the wilderness, in villages and larger towns. But they pretended they still wanted evidence: and desired a sign from heaven; that sign, perhaps, mentioned, Dan. vii. 13, 14. of the messiah, or son of man's coming in the clouds of heaven, to take upon him universal dominion. But the time was not yet come, for his taking possession of all power, both in heaven and upon earth. And our lord, in his answer, intimated that they had evidence enough, and were sufficiently capable of judging, if they had not been perverse, and determined not to submit, and become his disciples. There is a third instance of our savior's refusing to gratify the perverse and cavilling jews, who, again, wanted to see a sign from heaven. Luke xi. 16; 29, &c. But, as the case was pretty much the same with the former; our lord's answer was nearly the same, also. A fourth instance is our lord's refusing to gratify the Nazarenes. [Matt. xiii. 54, &c. Mark vi. 1, &c.] But the temper of the Nazarenes will fairly account for that. Jesus had been educated at Nazareth, from about two years old to thirty. After he was baptized, and filled with the holy spirit, he began to preach, and to work miracles; for that purpose, going about, throughout all Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem, and even to some parts of Samaria. By such methods, he acquired the reputation of an extraordinary prophet. After that, he returned to Nazareth, where he had been educated. And going (according to cul-
An essay on Acts xvii. 15, &c.
eufo to the synagogue, on the sabbath-day, he stood up, to read the scriptures; (which any Jew might do, at the request, or by the permission, of the rulers of the synagogue;) and, having read a passage, in the prophecies of Isaiah, he intimated to them, that that was a prediction concerning himself; and he went on to discourse, in that admirable manner, that the eyes of the whole congregation were intensely fixed upon him. And they all bore witness to the gracious words, which proceeded out of his mouth. But, though they applauded his doctrine and eloquence, yet they rejected him, for that very reason, which should have led them to have received him; namely, because they had known him from a child, were acquainted with his relations and friends, and were sure that he had had no learned education. Jesus knew them thoroughly, and spoke to their thoughts, when he said, “You will, I know, be apt to apply to me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; that is, work as many and as great miracles, among us, your own towns men and neighbors; as you have done, in other towns and villages. But I know your perverseness; and that you will not then acknowledge my divine mission, nor receive my doctrine. As, therefore, there were many poor widows, in Israel, in the days of Elijah. And that prophet was sent to relieve only one of them, during a long and grievous famine. And, as in the times of Elisa, there were many leprous persons, in Israel; and yet he was not allowed to cure any of them by miracle, though God enabled him, miraculously, to cure Naaman the Syrian. So, though I have worked miracles, in other places, where I had a prospect of doing good; yet, as I know there is no such prospect among you, I do not think it proper to comply with your request.” Upon this, the people of Nazareth presently discovered that Jesus knew their hearts. For, when they had heard these things, they were filled with wrath. And the whole congregation unanimously rose up, at once; seized upon Jesus; and, in a violent manner, hurried him out of the synagogue, with a design to throw him down the precipice of that hill, on which their town stood. And they would certainly, in that manner, have put him to death; if Jesus had not, suddenly, rendered himself invisible; and so passed through the midst of them, without being discerned. And thus, by working that one miracle, he, for the present, escaped out of their hands. [See Luke iv. 16, &c.] From that time, Jesus moved his stated habitation. And, leaving Nazareth, he settled, not many miles from them, at the town of Capernaum; where he met with a much better reception. There,
There, and in all the neighboring towns and villages, he continued to preach, and work miracles. Whereby the inhabitants of Nazareth had frequent opportunities of hearing of his fame; or of attending upon his discourses, and beholding his miracles, if they had pleased:—though he did not now reside among them, nor as yet return to them. It is reckoned to have been above a year, since he had been at Nazareth, and they had attempted his life. So long a time did he graciously afford them, to cool and repent; to lay aside their anger and criminal prejudices. And, if they had had a sincere love of truth, he now afforded them another opportunity for the reception of it. For he returned to Nazareth; and, going into the synagogue, on the sabbath-day, he again began to teach them the doctrine of life and salvation. But they, immediately, discovered the same narrow, envious, and prejudiced spirit; the same hardiness of heart, and perverse turn of mind, as before. For, though they were astonished at his learning and wisdom: yet, as they had known Joseph, the carpenter, his reputed father; and still knew his other relations, who were poor people in that town; they could not be persuaded to attend to his doctrine; neither did they regard the evidence of his divine mission, which arose from the miracles, worked by him, in all the neighboring towns and villages. Upon which, Jesus declared again, as he had done before, "that a prophet is, no where, so little esteemed, as among his own countrymen and old acquaintance." And, then, the evangelist adds, that he did not do many mighty works, there; because of their unbelief. Which is thus expressed, Mark vi. 5, 6. namely, "that there he could do no mighty works; save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folks, and healed them." The word [cannot] is often used for [will not,] both in sacred and profane writers. And St. Mark most evidently means, that our lord could not, consistently with his wisdom and goodness; or he did not choose it; because he knew, it could answer no good end. For, it is plain, St. Mark thought that Jesus did not want power: in as much as he has mentioned his working some few miracles there, at this very time.

The fifth and last instance of this kind, is recorded, Luke xxiii. 8, &c. For our lord would not gratify Herod Antipas, who wanted to see him work a miracle. And whoever considers the character of that governor, as given briefly in the new testament, and more at large by Josephus, will not be at a loss to account for our savior's conduct towards him. He had married the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea; and lived with her, a considerable time. Then
An essay on Acts xvii. 15, &c.

He married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whilst his brother was still alive. John the baptist, whom the Jews in general looked upon, as a prophet, reproved him freely, for his adultery, and incest, and other flagrant crimes. Which touched his conscience, but did not reform him. Herodias was exasperated, and studied revenge. And, by her, was Herod prevailed upon, to throw John the baptist into prison, and afterwards to cut off his head. Some messengers, also, had come, once, to Jesus; to order him to depart out of Herod's dominions, and threaten him with death, if he did not. [Luke xiii. 31, &c.] In answer to which, our lord sent this message, "Go, tell that fox, [that crafty and cruel man,] Behold, I cast out demons, and perform miraculous cures, to-day and to-morrow. And, the third day, I shall be perfected; [or have perfectly finished my present work, within the dominions of Herod.] But, it is not in his power to put me to death. For I am to die a violent death, at Jerusalem; whither the power and dominion of Herod does not extend." When, therefore, after all this, Pontius Pilate sent Jesus to Herod, and Herod wanted to see some miracle done by him; it is no wonder that our lord would not work any miracle, for such a man, and upon such an occasion. Jesus thoroughly knew the man, and his character. He knew that he had no inclination to become his disciple; nor would Herod regard any miracle, as an evidence of his divine mission. And Herod and his soldiers, presently, manifested that Jesus had not judged amiss. For they insolently mocked and derided him, and treated him with great indignity and contempt.

Our blessed lord never refused the working of a miracle, at the request of those, who came to him, either for the sake of conviction, or for relief for themselves or their friends. But he, who could work miracles, whenever he pleased, constantly refused to exert that divine power, when there was no prospect of proving his mission, and spreading his doctrine.

(2.) Suppose St. Paul did work no miracle, at Athens, it ought carefully to be observed, "that the apostles could not work miracles, when, and where, ever they pleased."

If St. Paul could have miraculously cured him, he would scarcely have left Trophimus sick at Miletus; [as we find he did, 2 Tim. iv. 20.] nor suffered Epaphroditus to be sick, nigh unto death. [Philipp. ii. 27.] And, instead of advising Timothy to drink water no longer, but to make use of a little wine, because of his sickly constitution; St. Paul would, most probably, have mended Timothy's constitution;
An essay on Acts xvii. 15, &c.

An essay on Acts xvii. 15, &c.

stitution; and miraculously changed it into that of a robust and healthy man. If the apostles could have worked miracles at pleasure, they would not, perhaps, have endured such cruel treatment, as they met with; but would have cured themselves, immediately, of their wounds and bruises; or rendered themselves invulnerable, or incapable of being hurt; or have struck their adversaries dead, or otherwise disabled them. But then we should have wanted their great examples of patience and fortitude, and the strong proofs of their integrity; which led them to face all danger, to suffer much, and even to undergo a violent death; rather than betray a good conscience, or the christian faith.

The divine wisdom, by an impulse of the spirit, directed the apostles, when and where they were to attempt the working of a miracle. And then the divine power always produced the effect. If, therefore, St. Paul did work no miracle, at Athens, the divine wisdom saw fit otherwise. And what has any body to object to that? There can be no imputation upon the apostle, on that account. Neither does it render his working miracles elsewhere, in the least, suspicious or doubtful. His conduct was reasonable. And the miraculous power, which was granted him, was under the direction of divine wisdom; which was perfectly right, and as it should be.

The apostles, by the laying on of their hands, conveyed spiritual gifts and miraculous powers to their converts; but not what gifts and powers they pleased. No! The spirit divided unto every man, severally, as he saw proper. The apostles might have been partial to some of their relations or friends; and could not have known what would have conduced most to the general good of the church, or of mankind. But the spirit knew exactly what gifts or powers were proper for every man, and what would be most for the general good. And the spirit could have no bias to partiality, nor be guilty of any mistake.

(3.) If an enemy to divine revelation should object, and say, "The apostle was afraid to attempt the working of a miracle, before persons of such a fusing, inquisitive temper, and acute genius, as the Athenians, for fear of being found out; and having the delusion exposèd. And, therefore, he very prudently declined such an attempt, at Athens. But, among more barbarous and stupid people, he is represented as working miracles; because they could more easily be imposed upon, by artifice and delusions."

What has been said might furnish us with a satisfactorie answer to such an objection. The miracles, ascribed to the apostles, were no frauds.
frauds nor delusions. But the divine wisdom did not see fit to gratify capacious and obstinate persons; nor indulge such as wanted to see miracles, out of a light and wanton curiosity. Where their divine mission could be confirmed, and the doctrine spread, there miracles were worked; but not otherwise. Now, it is well known that the Athenians were a vain and conceited, a light and trifling, set of people. This was their general character. And, in the xvith chapter of the Acts of the apostles, it is the very picture of them. When the apostle reasoned, in the most sober and just manner; some of them laughed at him. Others said, "What would this babler say?" And, when he had proceeded, as far as their vanity and perseverance would allow him, others said, with a remarkable carelessness and indifference of mind, "We will hear thee, upon this point, at some other time." But we do not find that they made any farther inquiry after him, or his doctrine. They vainly phantasied that they had ingrossed all the valuable knowlege in the world; and that all other people were barbarous and ignorant. The gospel-doctrine might be true, or false. But they looked upon it as an empty speculation, which it was not worth their while to examine. Among such a people, it is no wonder, if the divine wisdom did not see fit to effect any miracle. It would have been casting pearls before swine; exerting an extraordinary power to convince such as did not want to be convinced.

S E C T. II.

Thus far I have argued, upon a supposition that St. Paul did work no miracles at Athens. But, from St. Luke's silence, in the Acts of the apostles, it does not follow that St. Paul worked no miracles there. For, Acts xvi. 6. there is no account of St. Paul's preaching, or working miracles, as he passed through Galatia, at this time. But, from Acts xviii. 23. it appears that christianity was planted among the Galatians, in that first journey, mentioned Acts xvi. 6. For, when St. Paul and his companions came, a second time, into that country, they confirmed the churches; or strengthened and established such as were already christians. And, though there is no account, in either of these two places, of miracles being wrought.

See what Gregorie Nazianzen has said, concerning the whimsical, light, and pragmatical, manners of the Athenian people; but, more especially, of the young students, or academicians; and of the professors, or sophists, there. [Vid. Gregor. Nazianzen, orat. 20. p. 327, 328.]
wrought in Galatia; yet, from Gal. iii. 2; 5. it is evident, St. Paul had wrought miracles among them, and confered upon them spiritual gifts and miraculous powers. Again; Acts xvii. 1, &c. St. Luke has taken no notice of St. Paul's working any miracles at Thessalonica. And yet, [1 Thess. i. 5.] St. Paul plainly intimates that he had worked miracles there. In the history of St. Paul's planting the gospel, at Corinth, [Acts xviii. 1, &c.] there is no intimation of his working any miracle, nor of his confering the holy spirit, upon any of the christians, there. Whereas; whoever carefully reads the two epistles to the Corinthians, will find, that that church abounded with spiritual gifts and miraculous powers, which St. Paul had confered upon them. [See particularly 1 Cor. xii. xiii. and xivth chapters.] From these observations, it may appear, that St. Paul might work one, or more, miracles, at Athens; and yet St. Luke take no notice of it, in the Acts of the apostles. The case was this; the sacred writers wrote books for the use of mankind in general. And, therefore, they studied brevity; and mentioned no miracles, but what were either remarkable in themselves, in their circumstan-
ces, or in their consequences. Accordingly, in the four gospels, there is a particular account of such remarkable miracles. But, as to other miracles, it is said onely, in general terms, that Jesus worked great numbers of miracles; that whole countries brought in their sick and diseased, from the distance of many miles, on every side; and he miraculously cured them all. Where the miracles were of the same kind with those worked frequently, and attended with no remarkable circumstances, nor consequences, there they are mentioned onely in general, or passed over in silence. Just so it is again, in the acts of the apostles, as any one will discern, who reads that history with attention, and compares one part of it with another; and the whole with the several apostolic epistles. It will not, therefore, be granted, unto any one that makes this objection, "that St. Paul did not work any miracle at Athens; — merely, because St. Luke hath not mentioned that fact."

There are two things, which very much induce me to think that St. Paul did work some miracles at Athens. (1.) It was his usual custum, by the laying on of his hands, to impart some spiritual gifts, or miraculous powers, to his converts, wherever he came. And St. Luke has told us, Acts xvii. 34. that he made some few converts there. Now, imparting such gifts and powers was itself a very great miracle.

But it may be argued farther, that, in order to convert those few persons, it was necessary that St. Paul should have given them
An essay on Acts xvii. 15, &c.

them some satisfactory proofs of his apostolic mission; which he could hardly have done, without working some miracles. They might, indeed, have heard of his working miracles elsewhere. But that was not such full and satisfactory evidence, as the beholding a miracle with their own eyes. A favor, which, in the days of the apostles might be expected!

(2.) We learn, from the fathers, that there was a christian church, at Athens, for some ages after. And Origen, in his book against Cel-fus, [book 3. p. 128, 129. of Spencer's edition, in 4to.] compares the christians with the heathens of that city; and shows how much the former excelled the latter, in piety and virtue. Quadratus, also, promoted christianity, at Athens; being constituted bishop of the christian church there, after the martyrdom of Publius, their former bishop.

Now, from these things, it may plainly appear that St. Paul had done more towards planting christianity, and causing it to take root, at Athens, than is mentioned, in the brief history of what he said and did there, Acts xvii. 15, &c.

S E C T. III.

It may not be improper to make some observations upon what has been said.

1. How much does a vane, conceited, temper of mind cut off all improvements in knowledge and virtue? Lord Shaftesbury [in his characteristics, vol. i. p. 30.] fais, "I believe our great and learned apostle found less advantage, from the easy treatment of his Athenian antagonists, than from the most surly and curt spirit of the most persecuting, jewishe cities." In not persecuting the apostle, the Athenians, certainly, acted right. But, it cannot be to their honor, that they were so easy, as to be indifferent to such important truths, as the gospel contains. If, in other cities, upon their bearing persecution with patience and a remarkable fortitude, the apostles and their assistents were more attended to; there was nothing wonderful, nor unreasonable, in that. But, if they had met with no persecution, any where, such is the nature of the gospel-doctrine, and such evidence attended their divine mission, that, among persons of

4 For an account of Quadratus, see Eusebius his ecclesiastical history, book 4. chap. 23. at the beginning. Dr. Lardner's credibility of the gospel-history, part 2d. chap. 28. near the beginning.
An essay on Acts xvii. 15, &c.

inquiring and well-disposed minds, Christianity would, nevertheless, have made its way in the world.

The Athenians were, indeed, continually inquiring after some thing new and strange. Some new notions, some philosophical speculations, pleased them for a while. But these gave way to some other; and so on. Their philosophy had little, or no, influence upon their morals, or upon common life. How few of them inquired after truth, with a view to retain it, and to improve in manly virtue and substantial piety? They despised men of other nations; especially such as were not professed philosophers. Some of the Athenians cried out, "What would this babler say?" Why! if they had not been so vain and prejudiced, they might have heard him deliver truths of the last importance; sufficient to check their pride and insolence, and to lead them to knowledge of a much superior kind, to any, which they had among them. But, being indifferent to all that he had to offer; so easy and indolent, as not to care whether his doctrine was true or false; they paid little regard to that divine messenger. They had determined before-hand, and phantied that he could add nothing to their knowledge. Such an arrogant people might be expected to treat the apostle with contempt and indifference, and even to slight the great doctrine of salvation and eternal life.

Men of high rank and great estates are apt to hear their inferiors with an air of superiority. Men of a learned education are apt to slight even men of genius, who have not had their advantages. Whereas; the high-born and the rich are not always the most knowing. And a liberal education does not always render men more valuable to society, than persons of great sagacity, whose education has been less advantageous or liberal.

In the education of youth, peculiar care should be taken to check this temper of conceit and vanity. And a fairness and candor of mind, a love of truth and openness to conviction, should be often and earnestly, recommended, as necessary to improvement in useful knowledge and solid virtue. They should be taught, that a good genius, in the poorest person, deserves regard; that learning also, when joined with good sense and virtue, is an unspeakable blessing; that a wise man will learn, all he can, from young or old, rich or poor, friend or enemy; from his own country-men, or from foreigners; from one of his own, or of a different, party. But, by pride, men contract a certain narrowness of mind. And a cavilling youth seldom proves a wise man. A carelessness and indifference a-
An essay on Acts xvii. 15, &c.

about truth and falsehood, good and evil, prevents men's making a progress in useful knowledge and true goodness. He, who loves truth, and embraces it, wherever he finds it, walks with his eyes open. But the vain and conceited walk with their eyes shut, and fall into destruction. It is really a very unhappy thing, when men, from a love of this world, or a sort of philosophical pride, grow thus conceited; and become cold and indifferent about virtue and religion, good and evil. And I wish I could say, that this was not, in some degree, the prevailing turn of our age and nation.

(2.) It is easy to observe with what decency and propriety St. Paul behaved at Athens; as he did, every where else.

From their having an altar inscribed, To the unknown God, he took occasion to preach, among them, the true God, whose nature and perfections were, in a great measure, unknown, at Athens. From the works of creation and providence, he proved the being, and pointed out the perfections, of the true God, who made heaven and earth; to which none of their idol-gods could lay any claim. He did not argue with the Athenians, from the law of Moses, nor from the Jewish prophets, with which they were not acquainted; but from the visible works of creation and providence. And, after he had proved the being, and pointed out the perfections, of the true God, he was sliding into the article, which is fundamental to Christianity; namely, 'that Jesus is constituted Lord and judge of all.' And that he was going to prove, from the miracles of Jesus; and particularly from his rising again from the dead. But the conceited audience would hear no more. Upon the very mention of the resurrection from the dead, some of them laughed. Others, with a careless air, said, 'Some time or other, they would hear him again, upon that subject.' But there is no intimation of their doing so; nor of their inquiring, any farther, after him, or his doctrine. And the apostle, observing the spirit of the people, did not make a long stay there. He knew, it would be to little purpose. And, therefore, he went to other places, where there was a prospect of doing more good.

(3.) It is the plainest indication of the great modesty of the sacred writers; that instead of enlarging, or taking all occasions to expatiate, upon the miracles, which were actually worked, they have contented themselves with giving a particular account of some few. Others they have mentioned, only in general terms. And others, again, they have, with design, passed over, in profound silence.
And have given no intimation, in their history, that they were worked at all.

(4, Lastly,) With what admirable propriety is the sacred history committed to writing?

Books, that are short, are soon read. And, thereby, adapted to the circumstances of the bulk of mankind. They, that labor for their bread; or that are engaged in business, have not time to read large books. Accordingly; the books of scripture, which were designed for general use, are short and concise.

If St. Paul did work any miracles, at Athens, (as I am inclined to think he did) St. Luke did not think fit to mention it. Because he had taken particular notice of his working miracles elsewhere. And, if any miracles were worked at Athens, they were of the same nature, with those done in other places. And, consequently, could afford no new observations; especially as they were not attended with any remarkable circumstances, or effects. They, therefore, were, with great propriety, passed over in silence. And the general good consulted, by such conciseness.

These proprieties, in the behavior of the apostle, and in the manner of writing the sacred history, are here mentioned, with a view to excite in men a greater love to the scriptures, to cause them to read them more frequently, and with greater delight; to strengthen the faith of christians, and promote their holiness; and thereby prepare them, more and more, for the mercy of our lord Jesus Christ, unto everlasting life. Amen!

The end of the essay.

APPEND-
APPENDIX

N U M B. III.

A DISSERTATION on St. Paul's reproveing St. Peter, for his behavior at Antioch. With a view, more particularly, to rectifie the mistakes of Dr. Conyers Middleton, in his cursory reflections on this subject.

The history of the behavior of St. Peter, at Antioch, and of St. Paul's reproveing him for it, is recorded, by St. Paul himself, Gal. ii. 11, &c. and in no other part of the new testament.

St. Paul's words are, But, when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face: because he was to be blamed. For, before that certain men came, from James, he did eat with the gentiles. But, when they were come, he withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them, who were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled, likewise, with him: insomuch that Barnabas, also, was carried away with their dissimulation. But, when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter, before them all,

"If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the gentiles, and not as do the Jews; why compelest thou the gentiles to live as do the Jews? &c."

SECT. I.

For about seven or eight years after our Lord's ascension, the gospel was preached to none, but unto the Jews onely. Even St. Peter was so much averse to the preaching it, to any gentile; that he was, with difficulty, prevailed upon, to undertake it, by the vision of the sheet, let down from heaven, in which there appeared all sorts of creatures, clean or unclean, according to the law of Moses. And a voice, from heaven, came, along with the vision, saying unto him, "Rise, Peter,
A dissertation on Gal. ii. 11, &c. 

ter, kill and eat, of any of these creatures, without any difference, or distinction." [Acts x. 1, &c.] Cornelius, also, at Caesarea, had the vision of an angel, who directed him to send for St. Peter, who was then at Joppa. Moreover; St. Peter, himself, had an express order, from the spirit, to go along with the messengers of Cornelius. And, when he was come to Caesarea, and into the house of Cornelius; and began to preach the gospel to him, and to his friends, who were uncircumcised gentiles; the holy spirit fell down, from heaven, upon those devout gentiles; so that they immediately spoke a variety of languages, and magnified God. All these things convinced St. Peter that they had a right to christian baptism, as well as the jewf converts. And he, accordingly, ordered that they should be baptized, with water, in the name of the lord Jesus, in whom they now believed. — But, when he went up, from Caesarea, to Jerusalem, the zealous jewish christians, there, chid him severely, for what he had done. And St. Peter, to clear himself, related the evidences, which he had had, of it's being the will of God, that he should do what he had done; namely, the vision of the sheet, to him; the vision of an angel, to Cornelius; the order of the spirit, to go along with the messengers of Cornelius; and the effusion of the spirit upon Cornelius and his friends.— These things put them to silence, for the present. But this controversy broke out again, afterwards, with more violence. And occasioned many and warm contentions, among the christians of that age.

The persecution, which arose, against the christians, about the time of St. Stephen's martyrdom, caused them to leave Jerusalem, and flee to distant places. Some of them went to Phœnicia; others, to the island Cyprus; and others, to Antioch in Syria. But they preached the gospel, to none, but unto the jews. However; when St. Peter had opened the door of faith unto the gentiles, some of the dispersed christians followed his example, and preached the gospel to the devout gentiles; particularly, at Antioch, in Syria; and made a great number of converts among them. But Paul and Barnabas went thither; and much increased their number. [Acts xi. 1, &c.]

Some years after this, some of the zealous jewish christians went down, from Judæa, to Antioch; and taught the gentile converts, there; "that, unless they would be circumcised, and observe the law of Moses, [as well as the gospel of Christ,] they could not be saved." That occasioned the apostolic decree; of which we have said
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said so much, in the first and second volumes of this history; especially upon Acts xv. 1, &c.

According to the best chronologers, it was soon after the apostolic decree was agreed upon, by the apostles, elders, and brethren, that Peter went down, from Jerusalem, to Antioch. And this is confirmed, by his meeting with the two apostles of the gentiles, there. For, soon after this, they parted company, and went on separate peregrinations. [Acts xv. 35, &c.] Perhaps, the leading apostle of the circumcision had a mind to go, and see, with his own eyes, how matters went, in that considerable church of gentile christians, lately planted at Antioch. But his behavior, there, was not such as the great apostle of the gentiles could approve. For, tho' there had, lately, been a sharp contention, between the jewish and gentile converts. And the question had been determined, in favor of the gentile christians, who were to be acknowledged as brethren, without any farther regard, than formerly, to jewish customs, or to the law of Moses. And St. Peter himself had had a great hand, in bringing about that determination: yet, for all that, his behavior, at Antioch, in some measure, tended to betray the liberty of the gentile christians; and appeared, as if it had been his opinion, that they were not taken into full communion with the jewish converts. For, before that some zealous jewish christians came, from James, (the only apostle, then, at Jerusalem?) St. Peter did eat, and freely converse, with the gentile christians, as persons taken into full communion with the jewish converts; and set upon a level with them, in the christian church. But, when those zealots were come, he acted, as if he had been ashamed of what he had done, or as desirous to conceal it. For he withdrew, from such familiar society with the gentile christians; and kept at a distance from them; as if they had been still unclean; and unfit for the familiar and free conversation of such as had been jews. And, by his great example, many others of the less bigotted jewish christians dissembled, likewise. In so much that even Barnabas, also, one of the apostles of the gentiles, was carried away with the dissimulation: very probably, through that easiness of temper, which was natural to him. St. Peter remembered how sharply the jewish christians, at Jerusalem, had reprimanded him, for going, and eating with Cornelius, and his friends, at Caesarea, when he first preached to uncircumcised gentiles.

He might, therefore, perhaps, take this method, in order to prevent such another censure. Nay; St. Paul assureth us, that St. Peter did it, because he was afraid of the jewish christians. But the great
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Apostle of the gentiles, who was no way inferior to St. Peter, nor one whit behind the chief of the apostles, when he saw that he walked not uprightly, nor according to the truth and sincerity of the gospel; but, in effect, betrayed the liberty of the gentile converts, he withstood St. Peter to his face, and publicly reproved him. For he was really blame-worthy. St. Paul was afraid lest the behavior of St. Peter should renew the dispute, which had lately, been so amicably determined, at Jerusalem. And, therefore, he, before them all, reproved St. Peter, in the following manner; "If you said he, who are a Jewish convert, yourself, take the liberty, sometimes, to live after the manner of the gentiles; and freely eat, and familiarly converse, with them; laying aside those rules and customs, which the Jews generally observe; why do not you always do so, among them? Why do you tempt the gentile converts to conform to Jewish customs, as necessary to full communion with Jewish Christians? This will, very probably, be the unhappy consequence of your withdrawing yourself, publicly, from the gentile converts, as unclean, or unfit for your familiar conversation.

We, who are Jews by birth, as well as religion; and not of the race of the gentiles, whom our nation has hitherto reckoned so wicked and polluted: — We, I say, of the holy seed of the Jews, have found that a man, subject to the law of Moses, cannot be justified, but by the method proposed in the gospel. And, therefore, we have embraced Christianity; that we might be justified by faith in Christ; and not by the deeds of the law of Moses. For, by the deeds of that law, no flesh shall be justified. But, if, after we have sought justification by the gospel-method, we must have recourse to the law again, we are still but where we were, without the gospel; that is, sinners, under condemnation. Is the gospel-method, then, insufficient to justify and save us? Or is Jesus Christ the minister of sin, to condemn men, as the law did? God forbid! And yet this must, certainly, be the case. If I, who have quitted the law of Moses, to put myself under the gospel, should, again, put myself under the law, I make myself a transgressor. I reassemble the guilt of all my former transgressions; from which, by that law, I cannot be justified. And, when you build again the wall of partition, to hedge in the Jews, and keep out the gentiles; which wall you yourself first broke down; do not you destroy your own works? Do not you represent these gentiles, as still polluted and unclean? Even though God has shown you, a little while ago, not to account any man polluted, or un-
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fit for your society and conversation? By the tenor of the law of
Moses itself, I, by embracing christianity, am discharged from
that law, that I might be appropriated unto God; and live ac-
ceptably unto him, in his spiritual kingdom, which he hath now
set up, under bis son. I, as a member of Christ's body, am
crucified with him. But, though I am, thereby, dead to the
law, I nevertheless live. Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.
That is, the life, which I now live in the flesh, is upon no other
principle, nor according to any other law, but that of faith in the
son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. In so do-
ing, I avoid frustrating the favor, which God has manifested in
the gospel. For, if justification, or acceptance with God, come
by the law of Moses; then Christ is dead, and the gospel revealed,
in vane.

This was St. Paul's reproof of St. Peter's cowardly behavior;
which well deserved a reproof. And, to the honor of St. Peter, let
it be observed, that it does not appear, but that he humbly acquiesced,
and did not resent that honest freedom of St. Paul, but took it kindly.
This may be gathered from 2 Pet. iii. 15, where he styles St. Paul, his
beloved brother; recommends his epistles; and intimates that there was
a perfect harmony, and good understanding, between them. — Now,
what is there, in all this, so very strange and unreasonable?

However; a great clamor has been raised, from this remarkable
passage, against the character of these two apostles. And Dr. Conyers
Middleton has not lessened the clamor, nor abated the difficulties, in
his cursory reflections, &c. Perhaps, some readers may imagine that
he has done a great deal towards increasing both.

S E C T. II.

Dr. Middleton observes, that, from the earliest ages of the church,
this story has been a constant topic of raillery to the sceptics and
unbelievers. Porphyry, the old enemy of our religion, has taken
occasion from it, to charge Paul, with assuming falsely, to him-
sell, the merit of facts, which never really happened, in order to
extoll his own character, and depress Peter's, out of envy to
his more eminent virtues. Or, allowing the fact to be true, to
accuse Paul, of insolence and rashness, in reproveing his superior,
for a compliance, of which he himself was notoriously guilty. Or,
loftly, to impute to both these great apostles, a levity, incon-
D 2

"flacity,
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"stancy, and weakness of mind; which betrayed them into a con-
duct, unworthy of their sacred character."

Upon this, I would make the following remarks, (1.) That one
does not wonder that an apostate from Christianity, and one of such
effrontery, and cankered malice against the gospel, should give St.
Paul the lye: and charge him " with assuming, to himself, the
merit of facts, which never really happened." But St. Paul was
not given to tell lies; though Porphyry has been branded, as taking
great liberties of that kind. And, as to the very instance, now be-
fore us; how did Porphyry know, that those facts did never real-
ly happen. He was not borne, 'till about the year of Christ 232.
And, therefore, came into the world too late, for having any per-
sonal knowledge of the affair. If he had had any counter-history,
he would not have failed to have published it. In short, he knew
nothing of the matter, but what he learned, from St. Paul's epistle
to the Galatians. And, besides the argument from St. Paul's ge-
eral character, as a person of known integrity, and the most strict
veracity; it is not probable, that St. Paul would falsify, in such a
particular, in an epistle, that was to be spread among the churches;
and, which was likely enough, sometime or other, to come into
the hands of St. Peter. Nay; we may learn, from 2 Pet. iii.
15, 16. that St. Peter had read all St. Paul's epistles; and, conse-
quently, that to the Galatians, among the rest. And yet, instead
of contradicting this fact, he styled him his beloved brother Paul:
and recommended his epistles to the churches.

(2.) Porphyry could acknowledge the more eminent virtues of St.
Peter, in order to depress the character of St. Paul. But he
could have talked of the more eminent virtues of St. Paul, if he had
had a mind to have depressed the character of St. Peter. Or he could,
with as grave a face, and as good a conscience, have denied that
either of them had any eminent virtues, or any virtues, at all. And
have allowed this fact, in order to accuse St. Paul with insolence
and rashness, in reproving his superior, for a compliance, of
which he himself was notoriously guilty. Or have imputed unto
both

 Locator Porphyrii blasphemandi, si aut Petrum errasse, aut Paulum procaci-
ter apostolorum principem confutasse credatur. [Hieronom. comment. in epist. ad Ga-
lat. c. 2.]

Ut blasphemanit Porphyrii impudentiam coerceret, qui Paulum & Petrum puerili
dict inter se pugnasse certamine; immo, exardisse Paulum in invidiam virtutum
Petri; & ea scriptura jeactanter, quae vel non fecerit; vel, si fecerit, procaciter la-
cerit, id in alio reprehendens, quod ipse commiserit. [Hieromon.]
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"both these great apostles, a levity, inconstancy, and weakness of mind; which betrayed them into a conduct, unworthy of their sacred character;" though Porphyry would have laughed at any one, who should have believed that there was any thing sacred in the character of either of them. In short; he could have granted facts to be true, or asserted them to be false; forged history out of his own brains; or denied the truth of the most authentic history; just as would have conduced most to cast aspersions upon the apostles, or upon the gospel of our blessed lord.

(3.) St. Paul was not, himself, guilty of the same compliance, as I shall have occasion to shew hereafter.

Dr. Middleton, who had not the highest veneration for the fathers, has given us the interpretation of some of the most eminent of them; and saies, These objections [of Porphyry's] were thought so dishonorable to christianity, by some of the antient fathers, that many nice and subtile interpretations were invented, to evade the force of them. One of the first, which was applied to this purpose, in those primitive ages, was the supposition of another person, of the name of Cephas, besides the apostle; one of the seventy disciples, eminent for his zeal and piety; with whom Paul had this dispute. This is mentioned, by Eusebius, on the authority of Clemens of Alexandria. And it is observed, by the critics, that, though we now find the name of Peter, in all our present copies of this text; yet many of them, in the first ages, had Cephas, in the place of it. For nothing could possibly, give birth to the hypothesis above-mentioned, of a different person from the apostle, but the name of Cephas, in that place. Which was inserted, probably, for that very reason, of silencing the cavils of adversaries.

But

It is not certain that Cephas was inserted, in this place, in some antient copies, by design or contrivance; but merely as accidental, or a matter of indifference. For Cephas was his name, in syriae, or syro-chaldaic, as Peter was his name in greek. Both these words signifying a stone, or rock. Accordingly; the apostle Peter is called Cephas, John i. 43, 1 Cor. i. 12, and iii. 22, and ix. 5, and xv. 5, as well as in this chapter: namely, Galat. ii. 9. And I know of no body, that doubts of the words being used, for St. Peter, in the places now alleged. A person, disposed to make evasions, when he is pressed with a difficulty, might as easily have said that, allowing the present reading to be genuine, another Peter was intended, in this place, and not the apostle; as imagining the apostle Peter would not be guilty of such an unworthy conduct. But the one solution, or the other, would be entirely groundless. For the judaizers, in the churches of Galatia, as well as elsewhere, would gladly have set up the authority of the leading apostles of the circumcision,
But the supposition of another Cephas, distinct from the apostle, of whom there was no mention in the gospel, nor any authentic account in history, was an argument too precarious to satisfy men of judgement. For which reason, we find it disclaimed by some of the primitive fathers. "We know no other Cephas, saith Jerome, but him, who, in the gospel and the epistles, is sometimes called Cephas, and sometimes Peter. Both which names, the one greek, the other hebrew, or syriac, are of the same import. And, if, on the account of Porphyry's blasphemy, and lest Peter should be particularly of James, Peter, and John, against the authority of St. Paul. And St. Paul is, in this very chapter, showing that there was no foundation for that insinuation.

The antient greek copies, and the greek fathers, in general, read verse the fifth, To whom we gave place, by subjection, no not for an hour. The old latin text, and the latin fathers, read, without the negative particle; To whom we gave way, by yielding to them, for a season. This alteration is thought to have been made designedly, for two reasons. (1.) They might, perhaps, reckon this last reading more suitable to the place, and connection; as if St. Paul had designed to intimate, that, though he would not, at first, allow Titus to be circumcised; yet, because of certain zealous jewih brethren, who had been privately introduced, he did make a temporary compliance. (2.) It is asserted to be agreeable to fact, and to the real history of St. Paul's conduct. From which, it appears that he did actually comply, on certain occasions; and yield, for a time, to the prejudices of the jews, in order to appease their resentment against him. [Acts xvi. 3. and xviii. 18. and xxvi. 26.] So that several of the antient fathers preferred this reading, and sense, of the text. But, after this contrariety between the greek and latin copies had subsisted, through the seven first centuries of the church, the authority of the greek at last prevailed, as being consonant to the general doctrine, and tenor, of this epistle. To which arguments, I would answer, (1.) The authority of the antient greek copies is superior to that of the old latin copies. (2.) It is more agreeable to the connection, and to the main scope of St. Paul's argument, in this place, to read, with the negative particle, according to the common reading, [To whom we gave place, by subjection; no, not for an hour.] For St. Paul is acquainting the churches in Galatia, how strenuously he had always stood up for the liberty of the gentile christians, or their freedom from the law of Moses. He was, indeed, very ready to oblige the scrupulous, that were honest. But we cannot suppose that he would be so ready to oblige false brethren, craftily crept in, among them, to fay out the liberty, granted unto the gentile churches; with a view to bring them into bondage to the ceremonial law. If he had yielded unto them, for one hour; they would soon have risen in their demands, for a compliance of a longer duration, and of a more extensive nature. St. Paul, therefore, had the highest reason, for his vigorous opposition to such ill-designing men; and for not yielding, in the least, to them; no, not for one hour; "that the truth of the gospel might continue with the gentile churches;" or that they might strenuously stand up for their freedom from the Mosaic law. — And, with the same view, he intimates that he was so far from yielding, by subjection, to jewih christians, of an inferior rank and order, that he opposed, and publicly reproved, St. Peter, himself, for some part of his conduct, which tended to betray the liberty of the gentile christians. (3.) St. Paul never did make any such compliance, as is here insinuated. But of this, I shall have occasion to say more, hereafter.
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"be thought to have erred, we must presently feign another Cer-
"phas, we shall have work enough upon our hands, in expunging
"numberless places of the holy scriptures, which he finds fault
"with, because he does not understand it."

Chrysostome shows, likewise, from the circumstances of the fact
itself, that it must have been the apostle Peter, who was concerned
in it: because no other person could have had authority enough,
to draw the Jews, and Barnabas also, into his party.

S E C T. III.

Dr. Middleton procedes thus:—Let us inquire, then, what were
the sentiments of these fathers, on this story; and in what man-
ner they interpreted it, in order to elude the calumnies of Por-
phyry.

Chrysostome, who makes it the subject of an homily, preached, by
him, in that very city [of Antioch,] where it was transacted, takes
great pains to show, "that this seeming quarrel between the two
apostles, was wholly feigned and dissembled; and had been con-
certed, beforehand, between them, with great art and prudence,
for the sake of the converted Jews. For Peter, knowing that
he should give much scandal to those, who came from Jerusa-
lem, as being more zealous and stiff in their prejudices, than the
provincial Jews, if he should bluntly require them, to quit the
whole observance of their ceremonies, and live in common with
the Gentiles, chose rather to comply with them for a while, for
the sake of infusing himself, the more effectually, into their
favor and esteem. But that he might draw them, and himself
too, the sooner, out of a compliance, which he really condem-
ed, he begged of Paul, to expostulate with him, for it, very
sharply, in public: that, from his silence, and patience under
such a reproof, the Jews might infer a tacit acknowledgment of
his error; and, by observing that he had nothing to say, in de-
fence of their conduct, might be convinced that it was not right,
and so be induced to change it."

This plot, then, having had its effect, in Antioch, St. Paul,
according to Chrysostome, applies it here, again, to the benefit of the
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Galatians; and with the same view, with which he had, before, been an actor in it, he now gives a relation of it, writing; "dissimulating, still, the real state of it; that the Galatians, perceiving how severely Peter himself had been reproved, might be the more confirmed, and resolute, in the rejection of them."

Jerome's opinion of this affair is much the same with Chrysostome's; namely, that this "quarrel was but a fiction, contrived, privately, between the two apostles, for the benefit of their new converts. Peter's commission was, more particularly, directed to the Jews; Paul's, to the Gentiles. And, both of them were equally concerned, and zealous, to promote the common cause of the gospel; yet each was, more especially, obliged, to secure the salvation of those, who were especially committed to his care. Wherefore, as there were great jealousies, and contests, between the two factions, of the Jewish and Gentile converts, about the observance of the Mosaic rites, so it was concerted, by the apostles, that Peter, in order to keep the Jews united to himself, and to the faith of Christ, should, outwardly, declare himself on their side, and pretend a zeal for their principles. And, left the Gentiles, on the other hand, should be drawn, by his authority, to imitate his conduct, Paul was to oppose him, warmly, in public, for the sake of keeping his party, likewise, entire; and preserving his credit with them. So that, by their mutual dissimulation, both sides might, in the end, be saved. This he illustrates, by the example of the lawyers, who seem, often, to scold, and to quarrel, with each other; when they mean nothing more, than to deceive the bystanders, and gain the greater credit with their clients; by an affected zeal for the cause, which they have undertaken to defend. If any one thinks, fais he, that Paul did really withstand Peter; and, out of zeal for the truth, did boldly assault his superior; he will not be able to account for Paul's conduct; when, to the Jews, he became a Jew, that he might gain the Jews: who must be condemned of the same hypocrisy, when he shaved his head, at Cenchrea; and paid his vow, on that occasion, in the temple; and circumcised Timothy, the son of a Gentile, &c. — And with what face, could he have had the


b Sed, ut ante diximus, refitit, secundum faciem publicam, Petro: ut hypocris obervandae legis, quae nocet eis, qui ex gentibus crediderant, correctionis hypocrisi emendaretur; & eterque populus salus fereat, &c. Unde & Paulus eadem arte, quâ ille simulabat, ei refitit in faciem, &c. [Hieronom. comment. in loc.]

c Ut, omisiis sepe negotiiis, in propriis contumelias venterentur, & jocularis in invicem dente morderent, &c. Idem, ibid,
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"the assurance, to condemn that, in Peter, the apostle of the Jews; "which he himself was guilty of, though the apostle of the Gentiles"?"

Such were the sentiments of St. Jerome; which he explains, at large, in his commentary on the epistle to the Galatians. But this solution of the matter was greatly censured by St. Austin; and gave occasion to an epistolary controversy, upon it, between those two great doctors of the primitive church.

St. Austin charges it "with being nothing else, but a defence of "useful and seasonable lying:" and insists, that, if Paul knew Peter "to be innocent, at the same time, when he declared him to be blame- "able, and not to act according to the truth of the gospel, it was in "reality a lie. Which it is impious to charge upon an apostle; and,""especially, in an epistle, where he calls God to witness that he does "not, ly. He shows, also, the pernicious consequence of such a doc- "trine; and that it would destroy the authority of the scripture it- "self, by making it impossible to distinguish, between its real and "dissimulated meaning. For the prevention of which evil, he exhorts "Jerome to a recantation. As for his own part, he allows Peter to "be blameable; yet not for continuing, with his countrymen, "to observe the traditions of his ancestors. Which he might have "done, both innocently and consistently. But for obliging the "Gentiles to observe them, also, in the same manner ."

Jerome, on the contrary, persisted in his opinion: which he con- "firmed by many arguments, as well as by the testimonies of all the best "interpreters before him; "challenging Austin to produce any good au- "thor of a contrary sentiment: and declaring that it would have "been the greatest impudence and audaciousness, in Paul, to reprove "Peter ."

"Si putat aliquis verum Paulum Petro restitisse, & pro veritate evangeli 
intrepide injuriam fecisse præcessori; non ei stabit illud, quod & ipse Paulus judæis judæus fac-
tus est, ut judæos luciferaret, & ejusdem simulationis tenebitur reus, &c. — qua auctoritate, qua fronte, audet hoc in Petro reprehendere, qui circumcisionis apostolus erat, quod ipse, apostolus gentium, arguitur commississe? [Hieron. comment. in loc.]

Patrocinium mendacii suceptum esse, vel a te, tali viro, vel a quopiam, si alius ista scriptis; fator non mediocris dolore. [Epist. August. ad Hieron. operum Hieron. 
vol. 4. par. 2. ep. 65. p. 602.]

Arripite, obsecro te, ingenuam & vere christianam severitatem: & palliante 
ut dicitur, cane. [ibid. ep. 67. p. 606.]

Quapropter nonideo Petrum emendavit, quod paternas traditiones observaret, quod 
scacere vellet, nec mendaciter nec incongrue faceret. — Sed quomiam gentes coeget 
judæarum, &c. [ibid.] And, elsewhere, Austin alleges that Peter's fault did not lie in 
his compliance with the Jewish rites; but in imposing the same, also, upon the Gentiles. 
Non quia servavit consuetudinem judæarum, sed quia gentibus eam volebat imponere. 
[Augustin. expost. in Galat. ii. 11.]
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Peter, so smartly, for practices, of which he himself was more eminently guilty. And, as for Austin's opinion, concerning the expediency of observing the rites of the law, he treats it as a mere barefe: and the same; for which, Cerinthus and Ebion had been condemned, by the church.

But, notwithstanding the great authority of those renowned saints, Chrysostome and Jerome, it is certain, their interpretation of this story is unnatural and absurd, contrary to reason, and to the plain, obvious sense of St. Paul's account of this matter. Whereas; St. Austin's interpretation is agreeable both to the particular sense of the epistle to the Galatians, and to the general doctrine of the new testament; notwithstanding Jerome treats it, as nothing better than barefe.

The modern commentators are of no more authority than the antients; that is, they none of them deserve any regard, any farther than their interpretations are agreeable to right reason, or grounded upon the critical sense of scripture, and consistent with the scope and connection of the sacred writer.—And, therefore, I shall pass on, without examining their various opinions, concerning St. Paul's meaning, in this place.

SECT. IV.

In the essay concerning the abolishing of the ceremonial law, annexed to the paraphrase and notes on the epistle to Titus, I have treated of this subject, more at large. But, as St. Paul's conduct, with respect to his compliances with the prejudices of the Jewish christians, has been severely censured, by the open enemies of the bible: and has, I apprehend, been misunderstood by several professed christians: it may not be improper to add something more, in this place; as that subject has so near a connection with the passage, which we are here considering.

In the above-mentioned essay, it has been shown, that the Jewish christians were (de jure) absolved from the ceremonial law, immediately, upon their imbracing christianity; and that, as the gentile christians had not been subject to the ceremonial law, antecedent to their imbracing christianity, so they were not obliged to observe it, after they became christians.

The ceremonial law was, indeed, abolished, by the death of Christ, and the consequent erecting of his kingdom; without his making
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 makeing the ceremonial law, any part of the law of his kingdom. For, in the precepts of the new testament, may be found the whole christian law. — Yet there were two cases, in which a jew, even after he became a christian, was indulged, in the observation of the ceremonial law; namely, (1.) As the jewisb christians had the prejudices of education, in favor of the continuance of the ceremonial law. Now, the prejudices of education are, in some persons and cases, so very difficulty conquered; that great allowances must be made, for such persons, and in such remarkable cases. Accordingly; the ever-blessed GOD, who well knows our frame, and compassionates our infirmities, did graciously bear with such honest, though mistaken and prejudiced, jewisb christians. And St. PAUL has, briefly, but very clearly, laid down, what was the rule in that case. Rom. xiv. 14. / know, and am persuaded by the lord JESUS, that, of itself, nothing [no kind of meat, or drink, prohibited by the law of Mofes] is common, [or unclean.] But unto him, that thinketh any thing to be unclean; to him, it is unclean. And, ver. 20. He, that doubteth, [or distinguishes, between meats clean, or unclean, by the law of Mofes] is condemned, if be eat; [that is, of such meats, as were prohibited, by that law;] because he eateth not of faith. [He doeth not act according to the full persuasion of his own mind.] For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin. [Whatsoever a man doeth, contrary to the dictates of his own conscience, he acts what he should not. And thereby sins, or offends GOD.]

This, then, is one of the two cases, in which GOD indulged the jewisb christians, in the observation of the ceremonial law; namely, till they had fully conquered the prejudices of education; and were, in their own minds, thoroughly convinced that the ceremonial law was entirely abolished; and that they were, no longer, under any obligation to observe it.

The other case, in which a jewisb christian was allowed, of GOD, in some instances, to observe the ceremonial law, even though he was fully convinced that that law was abolished: — The other case, I say, was this; namely, in condescension to the deep-rooted prejudices of the jews, and jewisb christians: — in order to induce the jews to imbrace the christian religion; or to preserve the jewisb christians from apostatizing; after they had, for some time, professed the christian faith. For that reason, St. PAUL had his head shorne, at Cenchrea, and took on him the nazarite's vow. [Acts xviii. 18.] For that reason, when St. PAUL had a mind to take Timothty, to travel, with him, as an evangelist, he took him, and circumcised him; because of the jews, in and about Lystra. For they
all knew that his mother was a Jewess; and that, therefore, he ought to have been circumcised, in his infancy. For it was their maxim, that "Partus sequitur ventrem" "a man was to be reckoned a Jew, if his mother was a Jewess." But they, also, knew that Timothy's father was a Gentile; and would not permit him to be circumcised, in his infancy. [See on Acts xvi. 3.] It was upon the first of these two principles, that the Jewish Christians proceeded. [Acts xxi. 20.] For, though many myriads of Jews had imbraced Christianity, yet they continued all, in general, zealous for the law of Moses. Because they had not yet conquered the prejudices of their education, in favor of a law, which was of divine original: and which, as they apprehended, was to continue for ever.—And, upon the latter of these two principles, St. James, and the elders of the Christian church at Jerusalem, proceeded, when they recommended it, to St. Paul, to join, with the four Jewish Christians, who were under the Nazarite's vow; and to be purified with them; then to offer the usual oblations; and to be himself, at the whole expense. [Acts xxi. 20, &c.] From the same principle, St. Paul complied with that advice, in order to preserve an union between the Jewish Christians, and the Gentile churches of his planting: and that he might, also, clear himself of the charge, of his having taught all the Jewish Christians, in Gentile countries, to forsake the law of Moses. That charge, indeed, as they had stated it, was not true. For St. Paul had not taught all the Jews, in Gentile countries, "that the ceremonial law was abolished." In his discourses, in the Jewish synagogues, recorded in the acts of the apostles, he doeth not appear to have said any thing about it. He well knew that truth must be instilled into their minds, gradually, if at all: and that most of the Jews, among whom he preached, were too strongly prejudiced, to have borne such a discovery. Now, that excellent apostle was too wise and benevolent, to bespeak their aversion to Christianity, and to frustrate the great design of his life and labors.—In his epistles to Gentile churches, he brought in some of the objections of Jews, and Judaizing Christians. And, in answering such objections, he gave plain intimations of Christ's having abolished the ceremonial law. His epistles were read, publicly, in the churches, in the hearing of both Jewish and Gentile converts. This alarmed the Jewish converts; and was, by them, soon noised abroad; 'till it spread among the churches; and, at last, reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem; where, very probably, it occasioned the accusation, [Act xxii. 21.] which we are now considering. But, as has been already observed, the charge was not rightly stated.—St. Paul, by his epistles, and by his whole conduct, gave the
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inquisitive and well-disposed, a key, to open his whole character, and what he himself has said, 1 Cor. ix. 19,—23. is alone sufficient to inform us, upon what principles, and by what rules, he acted.

"Though I am free from all men, (saith he,) I have [voluntarily] made myself a slave to all; that I might gain the more. To the "jews, I have been as a jew; that I might gain the jews. To those "that are under the law [of Moses,] as one under that law; that I "might gain those, who are under that law. To them, that are "without the written, and positive, law [of Moses,] as one, not sub- "ject to that law; (not, indeed, as one free from all law to god. No! "I am, always, subject to the christian law. But, among gentiles, I did not observe the peculiarities of the jewish law;) that I might "gain them, [the gentiles,] who were not under that law. To the "weak, I have behaved as weak; (patiently bearing with their infirmi- "ties; and not offending them, with using, to the uttermost, my chrис- "tian liberty;) that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to all men; that I might, by all means, save some. And this I do, for the gospel's sake; that I, together with you, and many "others, might be a partaker of the glorious reward, which it holds forth unto such as are diligent and faithful, &c."

Surely! no christian can imagine that St. paul speaks of this, his behavior, as false or hypocritical, unlawful or criminal, mean and base; or, any way, unworthy the best and most excellent character. No! he evidently glories in it, as most excellent in itself; and what would, finally, end in an ample, and most glorious, reward.

This, then, is the scriptural account of the matter. Unto St. paul, it was revealed, that the ceremonial law was abolished; that, of itself, no sort of meat or drink, prohibited, by the law of Moses, was unclean: but unto him, who thought it was unclean, to him it was unclean: that the strong stood obliged to bear the infirmities of the weak; and not merely to please himself; but, in some cases, to make compliances and condescensions, to please his neighbors, for their benefit and edification. According to these directions, which he gave to others, St. paul himself acted. And, in the name of god, I desire to know what there was culpable, or unreasonable, in all this.

The conduct of St. peter, in the instance, now before us, was quite different. He knew, very well, that the gentile christians had not the prejudices of education in favor of the ceremonial law; but rather against it. He knew that the gentile christians were not to be brought under subjection to that law. He, himself, had, some time before this, gone into the house of an uncircumcised gentile; and eat
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with the family. And, tho' he had been severely chid for it, he then stood his ground; and silenced the zealous Jewish Christians, who blamed him for it. [Acts xi. 1, &c.] Had he done so, now, again, all had been well. And St. Paul could have had nothing, for which he could have reproved him. He had, after that, in the council, at Jerusalem, had the principal hand, in making the apostolic decree; [Acts xv.] whereby the Gentile converts were declared to be freed from the burdensome yoke of the ceremonial law. Now, for him, after all these things, to act contrary to his own sentiments, to dissemble, and strive to conceal from the zealous Jewish Christians, just come from Jerusalem, that he had, at all, eat promiscuously with the Gentile Christians, at Antioch, of any sort of food, whether clean, or unclean, according to the law of Moses; — was a conduct unworthy of him and his character. It tended, greatly, to betray the liberty of the Gentile converts, and to make them suspect that St. Peter was ashamed of them; and would not regard them, as upon a level with the Jewish Christians; unless they would observe the ceremonial law; and distinguish between meats clean and unclean, as the Jews did. Especially, as St. Peter's great example had drawn in other Jewish Christians; and the infection spread so far, as that Barnabas, also, one of the apostles of the Gentiles, was carried away with the dissimulation. Such a piece of conduct provoked St. Paul; and was a sufficient reason for his honest, free, seasonable, and public, reproof. And St. Peter, by not offering to make any apology, did acknowledge the justness of what St. Paul had said.

St. Paul knew nothing of the unlimited authority of St. Peter; or what later ages have said, concerning his supremacy. No! except his late conversion to Christianity, and his having once persecuted the disciples of Jesus, St. Paul was, in no respect, behind the chief of the apostles; but, as it should seem, rather excelled in divine illumination, miraculous powers, and more abundant labor and success. And, what might have given boldness even to an inferior, to have reproved his superior, he had truth and right on his side; which added invincible force to his reproof.

It has been said, indeed, "that St. Paul must be condemned of the same hypocrisy, with St. Peter, when he made the compliances with the prejudices of the Jews and Jewish Christians, which have been already mentioned. And represented as the greatest immodesty and audaciousness, in Paul, if he did really reprove Peter, so smartly, for practices, of which he himself was, more eminently, guilty."

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But these things have been said very rashly and precipitantly. And there is no just foundation for such a charge. For, when, and where, did St. Paul say, or do, any thing, contrary to his conscience, or to his avowed doctrine? In what instance, did he betray the liberty of the gentile christians? Or do any thing to bring them under the ceremonial law; that heavy and galling yoke of bondage? What was it, that exposed him to such fierce and repeated prosecution, from the Jews and judaizing christians; but his steadiness, zeal, and fortitude, in standing up for the liberty of the gentile christians? Which was, indeed, the distingushing part of his life and labors! Surely! They have not thoroughly considered St. Paul's whole character, who have laid such heavy things to his charge. — I can hardly think of St. Paul without transport. And, the more I consider the temper and conduct of that truly great and good man; the more clearly it appears to me, that his character ought to be dear to all the lovers of truth and goodness.

Before we proceed farther, it may not be improper to observe two things; namely, (1.) That St. Paul let both Jewish and gentile christians know, that the law of Moses condemned all offenders, to death, without mercy: that, by the deeds of the law, no flesh could be justified, in the sight of God: that, therefore, that law, if trusted to, as the method of justification, or acceptance with God, was not only useless, but noxious, to all christians whatever, as well of Jewish, as gentile, extraction. And, (2.) addressing himself to the gentile christians in particular, who had not the prejudices of education in favor of the ceremonial law, he let them know, that their going into such observances would be, in effect, a throwing off the christian religion, or rendering it to them of none effect. For the gospel, alone, and of itself, was sufficient to save them. And the law incapable of effecting their salvation.

After what has been said, it may, to some, seem almost needless to shew, how exactly the scope of this epistle to the Galatians falls in with, and confirms, the account, which has been given. But, as the prejudices of some, and the inattention of others, is surprizingly great; and nothing, that tends to illustrate any passage of scripture, or shew how amiable the character of St. Paul was, can be superfluous, or too minute; I think it not improper to take a summary view of the main scope of this epistle.

St. Paul himself, had preached the gospel, in the country of Galatia. There, he had planted several christian churches; collected, chiefly, from among the idolatrous gentiles. Soon after his departure.
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ture from them; there got in, among them, a judaizing christian; a false apostle; who would have imposed, upon those gentile christians, the observation of the jewish law, as necessary to their salvation. As if christianity alone, and of itself, had been insufficient. To accomplish this, the false apostle represented St. Paul, (who had converted the Galatians; and who had taught them, that they were under no obligation to observe the jewish law: — The false apostle, I say, to carry his point, had represented St. Paul,) as no apostle of Jesus Christ; but an apostle of men onely; who had been sent out, and instructed, by those that were apostles before him: that Peter, and the apostles of the circumcision, were much superior to Paul; and they had never taught such doctrine as he did; and that Paul himself had, sometimes, preached up the necessity of circumcision to gentile converts; and declared that they, also, ought to take upon them the yoke of the jewish law. And other things, to the same purpose, were insinuated, by the false apostle; to take away St. Paul's authority and credit, among the churches of Galatia; and to destroy all the fruits of his labors among them.

Greatly provoked at such treatment, St. Paul wrote the epistle to the churches of Galatia; declaring "that he was not an apostle of men, but of Jesus Christ; that he had not learned the christian doctrine, from those that were apostles before him; but from Jesus Christ himself: that, when he went up to Jerusalem, he took Titus, a gentile convert, along with him. But he was so far from betraying the liberty of the gentile christians, that he would not suffer Titus to be circumcised, though he was much urged to consent thereto; that there were, indeed, judaizing christians, false brethren, crept in, unawares, into that christian church, at Jerusalem, to watch St. Paul, and spy out the liberty of the gentile christians, and impose upon them the yoke of the law. But he would not give place, by subjection, to them; no, not for one hour; that the truth and purity of the gospel might be preserved, among the Galatians, and other gentile converts. — And, as to James, Peter, and John, the three most renowned apostles of the circumcision, whom he acknowledged to be pillars in the christian church; — they could teach him nothing, but what he had been taught before: that they readily gave, unto him and Barnabas, the right-hand of fellowship, acknowledging them for true apostles, as much as themselves; onely they were apostles to the gentile world, as the other three were to the Jews. But St. Paul lets the Galatians know that, so far was he from allowing " the
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the supremacy of St. Peter, or taking his instructions and directions, from him; that, on the contrary, when he saw St. Peter behaving in a wrong manner; and acting so, as tended to betray the liberty of the gentile converts; he reproved him, to his face; and that publicly. And Peter had nothing to say, in his own defence.

There is no occasion to proceed, as the whole epistle has been already abridged, in the second volume of this history. But whoever looks into the remaining part of the epistle to the Galatians, will find, how exactly this interpretation falls in with the design of that epistle.

S E C T. V.

Upon what has been said, I would make the following remarks.

(1.) The ceremonial law was abolished, by the death of Christ, and the consequent erecting of his kingdom. That is, by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, he so pleased his father, that, as a noble and glorious reward, all power was given unto him, both in heaven and upon earth; and, particularly, power to erect a kingdom, purely to promote truth and righteousness in the earth. The law of his kingdom is all contained in the new testament. And, as a part of it, he did not retain, or adopt, the ceremonial law. Consequently, there is no obligation, upon his disciples, to observe the ceremonial law. And it would be legal preaching, for the ministers of Christ to declare, that all christians are obliged to observe the jewifh, as well as the christian, law.

(2.) How astonishing is the wisdom and goodness of God, in all his dealings with the children of men!

He bore with the prejudices of the well-minded jewifh christians, which were almost invincible; and, for a time, indulged them in the observation of the jewifh law. And there was this to be alleged in their favor; namely, that the law of Moses was of divine original. The jewifh christians, also, had been trained up, from their infancy, in the highest veneration for it; and taught that it was to abide for ever. — But the gentile christians could not plead the prejudices of education, in favor of the jewifh law. Indeed, formerly, they had had no divine revelation. Their idolatry, with all it’s rites and ceremonies, were, entirely, of mere human invention; the contriveance of weak and superstitious, or of crafty and designing, men. They, therefore, were absolutely forbid to observe them. Though all just and equi-
table allowances were made, for such particular persons, among them, as were weak, if sincere. — Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and goodness of God! How kindly, and with what condescension, does the father of the universe treat his frail creatures; compassionates their infirmities, and lays no more upon them than they are able to bear!

(3.) Let us attentively observe the fortitude of St. Paul; and his care and fidelity, in preserving the purity of the gospel; and, more especially, the liberty of the gentile converts.

He was, indeed, a later convert to Christianity, than St. Peter. But, notwithstanding that, he could not bear to see him dissemble his real sentiments, or do a thing that tended to betray the freedom of the gentile Christians from the ceremonial law. He loved his brother apostle, and valued his friend; but he loved truth more than his dearest friend; and knew no authority, above that of truth and right. If St. Paul had been a temporizer, and time-server, as some have represented him, he would not have acted as he did; but have dissembled with the rest. If he had had less fortitude, he would not have dared to have reproved one of the leading apostles of the circumcision. But have only grieved, inwardly, at what he dared not publicly to reprove and condemn.

We are of the race of the gentiles. And are free from all obligation to observe the ceremonial law. But it is principally owing to the great apostle of the gentiles, that our liberty from that heavy yoke of bondage is so thoroughly established, and so well understood. The character of so good a man, and so great a benefactor, ought to be treated with reverence and an high regard.

(4.) The honesty, also, and humility, of St. Peter should not be overlooked; notwithstanding one or two foibles in his great character.

He was, naturally, of a warm and sanguine temper. And the fear of some Jewish bigots made him act a timorous and unworthy part, in this particular instance. But, in his prevailing temper and habitual conduct, St. Peter was a good man. It is acknowledged that, in this instance, he did wrong. But he had a faithful friend in St. Paul. And we do not find that he offered to apologize, for his rash conduct; but seems patiently to have fallen under the reproof, and to have received instruction thereby. This appears highly probable, not only from the silence of St. Paul, concerning St. Peter's attempting to make a defence; but, by St. Peter's own speaking, many years after this, with the highest respect, of his beloved...
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Loved brother Paul; and recommending all his epistles; of which, this to the Galatians is not the least.

St. Peter's rash and sanguine temper had, before this, led him, out of a like spirit of fear, to deny his lord and master, three times; and that with great aggravations. But he repented of that unworthy conduct; and, from that time, acted like the faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. But men's natural temper is not easily conquered. To keep it under proper restraints, and regulations, at all times, and in all places, requires constant watchfulness and care. And great allowances must be made for what is constitutional. He preached the gospel, honestly, for a number of years, amidst fierce opposition and violent persecutions: even though his great lord and master had foretold his dying a violent death: and he knew what his end would be. Few of those, who cavil at him, and insult his character and memory, with such a prospect before them, would so steadfastly adhere to their own sentiments, and seal the truth of their doctrine with their own blood. Considering these things, no Christian, no good man; no one, who knows the infirmities of human nature, and how to compassionately the foibles and infirmities of the great and good, will bear hard upon the character of this excellent apostle. Our great lord and master was, indeed, wholly without fault. But the greatest and best of his disciples were not so. And one or two rash and unguarded actions ought not to blast the reputation of one, that was otherwise prevailing virtuous and good. I wish those, who are inclined to be severe upon this part of St. Peter's conduct, would look more narrowly into their own hearts; and reflect upon all their own past conduct. And, perhaps, they may see reason to blush at the measure, which they have meted to a much better man than themselves.

(5.) What a plain proof, of the frankness of the writers of the new testament, have we here before us!

They did not scruple to acquaint the world with the faults, or foibles, of their own friends and associates. Men of the same party do, generally, most industriously conceal the faults of their friends; and greatly magnifie their virtues. If the apostles and evangelists had been acted, by the same spirit; they would have hid the faults, and extolled the virtues, of their friends, and fellow-laborers; representing them, to the world, as absolutely perfect, without spot and blemish. But the writers of the sacred books of the new testament scorned to disguise the characters of the disciples, and even apostles, of our blessed lord. They had nothing in view, but truth and virtue.
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tue; the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind. They, therefore, applauded what was right, and condemned what was wrong, in the best and dearest of their friends. — Porphyry, the apostate, of old; and men of a like stamp, in later ages; have been very severe upon the conduct of the two apostles, Peter and Paul, for their behavior, in this particular instance. But how would they have known any thing of the matter, if St. Paul had not left it upon record, and conveyed it down to future ages? And the publishing a faithful account of this affair, is a mark of the greatest frankness and honesty.

(6.) From this piece of history, we may learn that St. Peter and St. Paul were not of different opinions, with respect to the gentile christians being free from the ceremonial law.

St. Peter did not act, as he did, at Antioch, from his ignorance of the liberty of the gentile converts; or from his being of a different opinion from St. Paul, in that particular; but from his timorousness, or through fear of the displeasure of the warm, zealous, jewish, christians. This is, evidently, St. Paul's account of the matter. And we have no reason to doubt of the truth of his account.

(7.) The greatest and best of men have not been, altogether, without fault; and yet they have been accepted of God.

If all the faults of the good men, mentioned in scripture, had been industriously concealed; and their virtues, only, left upon record, unto all succeeding generations; we should have been ready to have fate down in anxiety and despair; as imagining that it was impossible for us to attain to such heights of virtue; and concluding that men, encompassed with so many infirmities, could never obtain mercy. But, now, we learn that the saints, in former ages, were not altogether without faults; that it is a possible thing for us to attain to a like character; and that the prevailingly holy have no reason to despair.

(8.) St. Paul's compliance, in some few instances, with the prejudices of the jews, was not criminal; but will rather exalt his character with the thinking and benevolent part of mankind.

He gave up his own liberty, or denied himself, for the public good. Being strong, he bore the infirmities of the weak; and fought not his own pleasure; but to please his neighbor, for his benefit and edification. He did all that he, lawfully and honestly, could, to unite the jewish and gentile churches, as one flock, under the one great shepherd and lord of all. As far as conscience would permit,
permit, he became all things to all men; that he might, by all means, save some.

(9, last.) From what has been said, we may learn the nature of the apostolic inspiration.

This has been considered more at large, in the Essay on inspiration, annexed to 1 Timothy. But, with respect to the present subject, it may be observed, that all the twelve apostles of the circumcision; and Paul and Barnabas, the two apostles of the gentile world; received the plan of the gospel, by immediate inspiration. And, though they could not work miracles, when they pleased; yet the spirit abode with them, and led them into all truth, relating to the christian doctrine. But the spirit did not, irresistibly, force them to right action. In that sense, they were not infallible, nor impeccable. Neither was it necessary, to the discharge of their apostolic office, that they should be so.

The apostles of our lord had two principles of action. The one was their own understanding, or conscience. A principle common to other men. The other was, the inspiration of the spirit: which distinguished them from other men, and rendered them much superior. Accordingly; St. Paul and his companions intended to have gone, and preached the gospel, in such or such a place. But the spirit suffered them not. And the same apostle, elsewhere, declares, "Thus say I, and not the lord. And thus saith the lord: and not I." St. Peter was so far under the constant guidance of the spirit, as perfectly well to know what was the christian doctrine, which he was to teach to others; and according to which, he was to form his own temper and life. — He was not ignorant that the gentile christians were upon a level, with the converts, from among the jews, without any obligation to observe the ceremonial law. Of this, he was fully convinced, in his own mind. But, though he clearly knew what was right, in this particular; yet, through fear and precipitancy of mind, he was, for a little while, hurried into what was wrong. The divine illumination was, indeed, granted him, not only to enable him to understand the plan of the gospel, and to publish it unto the world; but he ought, also, to have regarded it, as a constant monitor and guide; to regulate his own conduct. And this he generally did, in the habit of his temper and life. But the divine impulse was not irresistible. The spirit of the prophets was subject to the prophets. They had liberty of action; that is, power to follow, or not to follow, that divine guidance, as they themselves chose. Just as mankind, in general, have power to follow,
follow, or not to follow, the direction of their own consciences. St. Peter did, generally, follow the guidance of the Spirit. But that did not force him to act right: any more than the knowledge of the mind of the Spirit, which we learn, from the gospel, forces us to act, always, agreeably thereto: Though, therefore, St. Peter, in all cases, knew what the Christian law required; yet he, sometimes, through surprise and infirmity, was hurried into a different conduct. However; such was the prevailing goodness of his heart, that he soon recovered, and returned to what was his duty. From the time, that he received the Spirit, he was constantly illuminated with the knowledge of the Christian doctrine, as far as he had occasion to teach it, or write concerning it; and sufficient, also, to regulate his own conduct. But his practice was not, in some few instances, conformable to that knowledge. In one word, he always saw what was right. But sometimes, though very rarely, acted wrong. In such cases, he quenched the Spirit. If he had done so, in all cases, or habitually and prevalingly, I doubt not but he would have entirely quenched the Spirit; and the spiritual gifts and miraculous powers would have been all taken from him. But, in his habitual disposition and common conduct, St. Peter was a very good man. He had the mind of Christ. And what he taught, concerning the Christian doctrine, is all true, and may be depended upon. He honestly acknowledged his faults; and taught the way of truth uprightly. He did not follow cunningly devised fables, when he made known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. But clearly understood the truth, and had full and satisfactorie evidence of it. In the midst of much ill treatment, he persevered, in teaching, and preaching, the things, which concerned the Christian revelation. And, after he had labored in this work, and suffered a great deal, he bravely died a martyr, and gloriously sealed the truth of his doctrine with his own blood. — The doctrine, which he taught, is confirmed, by the preaching, and writings, of the other apostles. Which, the more they are studied, appear the more excellent. And, notwithstanding the misinterpretation of professed friends, and the bold and insolent attacks of open or secret enemies, they will stand the test, and indure throughout all generations. And the glorious names of St. Peter and St. Paul continue to be had in the highest esteem, and in everlasting rememberance, when the names of the wicked shall rot.

The end of the dissertation.

APPEND-
APPENDIX

NUMB. IV.

A DISSERTATION on John xix. 14. with a view to reconcile what St. John has there said, of it’s being the sixth hour, when our Lord stood before Pontius Pilate, with what the other evangelists have said, of it’s being the third hour, when he was crucified.

SECT. I.

IN Dr. Conyers Middleton’s miscellaneous tracts, which were published after his death, there are not onely,

I. Cursory reflections on (what he calls) the dispute, or dissension, between the apostles, Peter and Paul: mentioned Galat. ii. 11, &c. But there follow,

II. Reflections on the variations, or inconsistencies, which are found, among the four evangelists, in their different accounts of the same facts.

Upon the cursory reflections, &c. I have treated, more largely, in the foregoing dissertation. — But, concerning the variations, or inconsistencies, among the four evangelists, I do not design to inlarge. I would onely propose a specimen, to my readers, of reconciling the four evangelists, in one instance, where Dr. Middleton has represented them, as irreconcileable, or directly contradicting one another.

After several passages, which the Doctor has objected to, with great spirit and vivacity, and in a very peremptory manner; he goes on, thus;

We find, likewise, an irreconcileable difference, or contradiction, between Mark and John, concerning the time of the day, when Jesus

Jesus was crucified. Mark saith expressly, that it was but the third hour, or nine of the clock, in the morning, when they had actually fixed him on the cross. [Mark xv. 25.] John saith, that it was about the sixth hour, or twelve of the clock, when he was yet under examination, before Pilate. [John xix. 14.] Peter, bishop of Alexandria, who lived in the third century, declares, "that, in both these gospels, the third hour was written; as it might be seen, in the very original exemplar of St. John's gospel; which was preserved to his time, in the church of Ephesus." But this is looked upon, by the generality of the critics, as an undoubted forgery, either of bishop Peter, or some transcriber of his works, contrived, for the sake of reconciling the two evangelists.

St. Jerome, who lived about a century later, tells us just the contrary. "That the sixth hour was written, originally, in both the gospels. But that the transcribers, instead of transcribing the word at length, put for it the mark ς, which commonly signified the number six; but was mistaken, by other transcribers, for the letter Γ, the numeral mark for three. Whence the mistake was propagated into all the later copies." But this solution is clogged, likewise, with insuperable difficulties. And rejected, therefore, by the critics; who find that such abbreviations, or numeral marks, were not commonly used, in those early ages: since none of them are to be met with, in the oldest of those manuscripts, which still remain. Nor is it possible, that the accidental mistakes of one or two transcribers could be transferred, universally, into all the later copies.

St. Austin gives us a third solution, much more subtile and refined; namely, "that Mark, who saith, they crucified him at the third hour, is not to be understood to denote the time of being nailed to the cross; but of that clamor, which was made, against him, by the Jews, whilest he was still before Pilate; when they cried out, Crucifex him, crucifex him; designing to infinuate there-

thereby, that the Jews, who made that out-cry for his crucifixion, were, more properly, the authors of it, than those ministers, who executed the command of their superiors; and that he was, more truly, crucified, at the third hour, by the tongues of the Jews, than at the sixth, by the hands of the soldiers. If you do not like my explication, sais he, show me how it is possible to solve the contradiction.

The modern expositors, therefore, rejecting all the solutions just mentioned, have hit upon another, somewhat more plausible; in which they, generally, follow each other; namely, "that the day, among the Jews, beginning, from six in the morning, was divided into four equal portions, of three hours, each; called the third, the ninth, and the twelfth hours. The three first were the stated hours of public prayer, in the temple; and proclaimed, to the people, by the sound of a trumpet. As the third hour, then, was supposed to continue, till the next sounding of the trumpet, at the sixth hour; so whatever was transacted, within that interval, how near soever to the beginning of the next division, was said, in the common way of speech, to happen, in the third hour." But, though this would bring the evangelists nearer to each other, yet it will not reconcile them: since Mark expressly affirms, that Jesus was actually crucified before that hour, in which John saith, as expressly, that Pilate was still sitting in judgement upon him. Nor is the notion itself true, that such a gross division of the day was in use, among the Jews; as may be shown, from many passages of the new testament. For, though the third, sixth, and ninth hours, as being the solemn hours of religious worship, were more remarkable than the rest; and, for that reason, are more frequently mentioned, by the sacred writers; yet we find that their day, like to that of the Babylonians, from whom they, probably, learned the division of it; as the Greeks, also, did, was divided into twelve hours. Are there not twelve hours of the day? saith our Lord. And, in other places, mention is made, of the seventh, tenth, and the eleventh hour, &c. So that, on the whole, we must be forced, at last, with several of Vol. III. G

the

the critics, to leave the difficulty, just as we found it, chargeable with all the consequences of a manifest inconsistency.

SECT. II.

That I might not misrepresent Dr. Middleton, I have, in the foregoing section, given the reader, all, that he hath said, concerning this subject, and that in his own words.

Before I proceed to make any remarks upon what has been said, I would make all due concessions; and rather strengthen the Doctor's objections; than, in the least, weaken, or misrepresent, them. To which purpose, I would make the two following observations,

(1.) I acknowledge that St. Matthew and St. Luke followed the same manner of reckoning the hours of the day, with St. Mark. For all these three evangelists assert that the darkness, which happened, when our lord hung upon the cross, came on, at, or about, the sixth hour; that is, about three hours after he was nailed to the cross. [See Matt. xxvii. 45. Mark xv. 33. Luke xxiii. 44.] And both St. Matthew and St. Mark represent our lord, as expiring about the ninth hour. [Matt. xxvii. 46, &c. Mark xv. 34, &c.] St. John's account, therefore, differs as much from that of St. Matthew, and St. Luke, as it does from that of St. Mark.

(2.) Though there is such a various reading, mentioned, John xix. 14. and Mark xv. 25. as would make the account of the different evangelists accord, yet I lay no stress upon that; because I look upon the common reading, in both the evangelists, to be the genuine reading.

Having made these two concessions; I would attempt to solve the difficulty, or reconcile the account of this matter, given by the different evangelists; and that, under the following heads.

I. It is generally agreed, both among the antients, and moderns, that the three former evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, wrote their gospels, some years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

II. St. John wrote his gospel, at Ephesus, in his extreme old age; that is, after he returned from his banishment, in the island

Ego ampliandum censeo. Nam & illi & hi non satis probarunt mihi dictas sua. Nihil dicit, qui non probat quod dicit. Ego experientia didici, sese deceptos esse, qui nimium crediderunt viris doctis, etiam theologis, aliquid afferentibus, sine tete. Drusius in Marc. xv. 25.

island Patmos; in the year of our lord, 97. a little before his own death

III. As the history of our lord had an inseparable connection with that of the jewifh nation, and the three former evangelists wrote, before the destruction of Jerusalem, and while the jews continued to be a nation; they followed the jewifh computation of the hours of the day; that is, they begun, at sun-setting, and reckoned to sun-rising. Then they begun, again, at sun-rising, and reckoned to sun-setting. And each of those periods they divided into twelve hours. Thus, according to the jewifh phraseology, the evening and the morning were the first, second, or third day, &c b.

IV. If no particular reason induce one to do otherwise; it is natural to reckon the days of the year, and the hours of the day, according to the common computation of the age, and nation, where anything is committed to writing. A man, formerly, residing in Holland, or France, or in any other country, where they computed the days of the year, according to the new style, would naturally have followed that computation. But, in England, before the year, 1752, he would, as naturally, have reckoned by the old style; which, till that year, was in common use among us. Since the style is now altered, by act of parliament, we as commonly reckon according to the new style; without giving notice, of that alteration.

St. Matthew is reckoned to have wrote his gospel, in Jerusalem, or in some part of Judea; and more immediately for the use of the jewifh christians. No wonder, therefore, that he followed the jewifh computation. And, though St. Mark and St. Luke are reckoned to have wrote their gospels out of Judea; yet they have followed the same computation. For the reason, I suppose, that has been already hinted; namely, because they wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem, and while the jews continued to be a nation. — But the case was altered, when St. John wrote his gospel. Jerusalem


b See Gen. i. 5; 8; 13; 19; 23; 31. Lev. xxiii. 32.

Jersalem was destroyed, and the Jews ceased from being any longer a nation. As, therefore, he wrote his gospel, at Ephesus, in a country far remote from Judea, and under the Roman government, it was natural, for him, to follow the Roman computation of the hours of the day; which is the same, that is, now, in use, among us; namely, to begin to reckon from midnight, and to continue it for twelve hours; and then begin again, at noon, or midday, and reckon twelve hours more.

St. John had read the other three gospels; and could easily have followed the Jewish computation, as he saw they had done. Or he could have given express notice that he followed the Roman computation. [John xix. 14.] And so have taken away all appearance of inconsistency with the three former evangelists. But he knew that he had truth on his side; and that he wrote according to truth. And, therefore, he did not confound his little precautions.

There are two passages, in his gospel, which plainly show, that St. John followed the Roman computation.

(1.) John i. 40. John the Baptist saw Jesus walking by; and pointed him out, as the lamb of God. By which, I suppose, his disciples understood him to mean the Messiah. Two of John the Baptist's disciples hearing their master make that declaration, followed after Jesus. He saw them following him; and turned about, and asked them what they wanted? They intimated that they wanted to have some conversation with him; and said unto him, Rabbi, where do you live? He let them know, that, if they would go along with him, he would show them the place, and there admit them to familiar conversation with him. Upon that, they went along with him. And they continued with him that day. Now, it was about the tenth hour; when they first saw, and followed, Jesus. In other words, they spent the day with him; that is, from ten in the morning, till about six, in the afternoon. And, in those eight hours, they may be supposed to have received very considerable evidence of his divine mission. But they could scarcely have been said to spend the day with him, or to have had such a fair opportunity to have satisfied themselves, by conversing with him; if we were to interpret that passage, according to the Jewish computation; and suppose that, by the tenth hour, was to be understood, four of the clock in the afternoon; when no more than about two hours of the Jewish day remained.

(2.) John xx. 19. We have a yet more evident proof that St. John followed the Roman method of reckoning the hours of the day.

For, speaking of that very day, on which our blessed lord arose from the dead, he first mentions his appearing to Mary Magdalene; and then intimates, that he appeared to other of his disciples, that same day. But his words are very remarkable, [The same day, when it was evening, being the first day of the week; and the disciples had bolted the doors, for fear of the Jews; then came Jesus, and stood in the midst of them, &c.] Now, no Jew would have used that language. No! When the evening was come, they would have called it the second day of the week. — St. John, therefore, in this place, hath, in effect, (though not in express words,) told his attentive readers, that he has followed the roman computation of the hours of the day. For, according to that, it was still the first day of the week; and the same day, on which our lord arose: notwithstanding, the sun was set, and the evening come; and the Jews would, unquestionably, have reckoned it the second day of the week.

V, lastly. From the foregoing observations, taken together, the reader may easily perceive that there is no manner of inconsistency, or contradiction, between the history of the three former evangelists, and that of St. John, concerning the time of the day, when Jesus stood before Pilate, or when he was nailed to the cross, or how long he hung upon it. According to St. John, [chap. xix. 14.] at six of the clock, in the morning, Jesus was standing before Pilate. According to St. Mark, [chap. xv. 25.] it was the third hour, when he was nailed to the cross. That was according to the Jewish computation. But, by the roman way of reckoning, it was the ninth hour; or nine a clock, in the morning. After he had hung three hours upon the cross, then came on the gloomy and unusual darkness; that is, at six a clock, with the Jews; and at twelve a clock, or mid-day, with the Romans. Three hours after that, he expired: that is, at the ninth hour of the Jewish day; or, with the Romans, at three a clock, in the afternoon. — In other words, “the Jews and the Romans computed the hours of the day, after a different manner. The three former evangelists followed the Jewish computation. St. John saw reason, in his situation, to follow the Roman computation. But, when one compares the accounts, they perfectly coincide.”

Thus this mighty difficulty, absurdity, and contradiction; which Dr. Middleton, after a long and critical examination, roundly declares to be a manifest inconstancy, turns out to be no inconstancy at all.

This

This solution had been mentioned, by some commentators, or critics, before Dr. Middleton wrote. I will not suppose that he knew of it, and designdly concealed it. But how careful should men be, again and again, to examine the grounds, which they go upon; especially when they treat of matters of religion! And modesty is never more becoming, than when authors give their opinion upon such sacred and important subjects. A clear and masterly style; a bold and confident manner of deciding the point in controversy; and, without hesitation, pronouncing, that it is thus or thus; will run away with the generality of readers; — who have neither the leisure, nor inclination, to re-examine, what an agreeable and entertaining writer has already decided. — But all are not carried along with the stream. And it is possible that a spritely and agreeable writer may be a very hasty one: and that some of his arguments, upon a cool and deliberate examination, may be shown to be groundless and inconclusive. Such writers, therefore, above all others, should be read with great caution.

I leave it to those, who have health and leisure, to re-examine the other passages of the four gospels, which Dr. Middleton has so freely charged with contradiction and inconsistency. But this specimen may, I suppose, plainly show, that he is, by far, too positive and dogmatical.

The end of the dissertation.

APPEND-
A P P E N D I X

N U M B. V.

A POSTSCRIPT to the LETTER, at the end of the second volume; concerning the persons, to whom St. Paul writ, what is commonly called, The epistle to the Ephesians.

SINCE this letter was published, a learned writer has offered some objections to the emendation of a passage in Ignatius’s epistle to the Ephesians proposed therein*, which very well deserve to be considered. And therefore the author of the letter thought it incumbent upon him to return the following answer to them, in support of that emendation.

It is said in the first place, “That Valesius follows the other interpretation of εν ἀνδρὶ ἀληθῷ, as also Bishop Pearson, who has more fully defended it, in his Vindiciae Ignatianae.” It is true, indeed, that the bishop, in his Vindiciae Ignat. c. x. p. 387. has produced several passages from greek and latin writers, wherein ως and omnis are used for ολός and totus. And this the author of the letter had also observed, with respect to ως, in such things; of which there is but one of a sort, or at least where there can be no ambiguity. But can it be said, there is no ambiguity here? Ignatius very frequently uses the words of the new testament, and applies them in the same sense. Thus in the passage referred to, there is ἡγιασμένεις, sanctified, μεμυρτομένα, of good report, ἀχμ. ἀπεί, or pattern, ἅπτομαι, obtain, or injoy. So that almost the whole sentence appears to be made up of scripture phraseology. And can it well be doubted, but the like was intended as to μνημονεύειν? Which verb often occurs in the new testament, where it always signifies to remember, call to mind, or be mindful of. But in that sense it seems a very unusual expression to say

A postscript to the letter,

say, of any one, He remembers, or is mindful of you, in a whole epistle.

And therefore, to avoid this, a different signification has been here given to μνημώνεων, namely, to praise greatly, always to commend, as the apostle never blames the Ephesians. But no authority is produced for that sense, either from the new testament, or any other writer. And St. Paul himself, both in that epistle, chap. ii. ver. 11. and writing to the Colossians, chap. iv. ver. 18. uses that verb in the common signification, to remember. Besides, how does he more commend the persons written to, in that epistle, than, agreeably to his usual manner, he does any other body of gentile christians, to whom he was not personally known, in writing to them; or indeed than he has commended the Colossians? For, as to the gentile converts in that church, Mr. Peirce has observed, that he all along commends them, without passing the least cenfure upon them. Though, in chap. ii. ver. 20, applying himself to the j ewish converts, he blames them for attempting to subject the gentiles to the Mosaic ordinances. But a particular application of this sort might not be thought so requisite, in a more general epistle, addressed to the gentile churches, as the author of the letter supposes that epistle to have been.

Another reason assigned against the emendation, is this: "That in all the editions of Ignatius's epistles, as also in the old latin version, and interpolated epistles, the verb is in the third person. And, as to the interpolated epistles, ὃς πάντες ἐν ταῖς δέσμευσις αὐτῶν μνημώνεω, is said to be the true reading, and not ἔμοι, as in the letter; it being supposed that a reference is there made to Eph. i. 16." The author of the letter copied that passage from the edition of Ittigius, which was the only one he had by him. But by what bishop Pearson has said, in defence of the other reading, he thinks it better supported. However, he does not perceive, that what he has offered, is any way affected by it; since he is so far from denying that the author of the interpolated epistles, thought Ignatius designed to tell the Ephesians, that St. Paul had written an epistle to them; that he immediately produces another passage, from him, to prove the contrary. But though the interpolator's copy might read the verb in the third person, as well as all those hither to collated by our modern critics: yet it does not from thence necessarily follow, that this is the true reading. There are some passages even of the new testament, in which all the copies agree; and yet the best commentators are not satisfied, that the present reading is genuine.
at the end of the second volume.

It is further objected: "That, if Ignatius intended to say, that he mentioned the Ephesians in all his epistles, he would have added, "As I do also the church of Antioch in Syria, of which I am not worthy." But why it should be supposed, that he would say this to the Ephesians, seems not so plain to conceive. Though, in a letter to the church of Antioch, he might perhaps have chosen to acquaint them with such an instance of his affection and regard for them.

But the greatest stress seems to be laid upon the manner of expression: "Which is said to agree with the style of Ignatius, in other places, where two or more members of a sentence are carried on, by the relative δέ, respecting the same subject, or preceding noun. And instances of this are cited from his epistles Ad Magnes. § viii. Philadelph. § i. and §. xi." This form of construction indeed often occurs in Ignatius, and may seem to have risen more especially from his imitation of St. Paul, with whom it is not uncommon. Examples of this may be seen, in Ephes. ii. 20,—22; and iv. 15, 16. Coloss. i. 27, 28; and ii. 10, 11, to name no more. However, both St. Paul and Ignatius, like other writers, frequently refer the relative to some subsequent noun, which is not the principal subject of the sentence; as Ephes. i. 12,—14. Coloss. i. 12,—14. And in Ephes. i. 6,—8, there are three relatives in one sentence, the first and third of which respect the same substantive, and the second another, which intervenes. It would be needless to produce examples from Ignatius, which are obvious in all his epistles. Nay, the last instance in the objection, Ad Philadelph. § xi. is of that kind; where the first δέ respects φίλαυμα, and the second Περ. A parallel example to which may be seen Coloss. iv. 7,—9.

It is further objected: "That, if after having spoken of Paul, Ignatius had said any thing of himself, particularly that he mentioned them in all his epistles; he would have said, Καύω, as indeed the nature of the thing requires he should." What is here said, is true, where the former sense is complete, and the subject is changed. So this writer, after speaking of other persons in § xi. ad Philadelph. when he comes to speak of himself, introduces it by the words, Καύω τῷ Θεῷ ευχαριστῶ. But in the passage ad Ephes. the sentence is not complete, but continued by δέ, which therefore could not consistently have been changed into καύω. Though he might have introduced it before, by dividing the sentence, and instead of δέ νομο τοίς, saying, Καύω ευχαριστῶ, &c. But that would no way affect the following member now under consideration.

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Should what has been offered not prove satisfactory, the difficulty will still remain, how to reconcile the present reading, in Ignatius, with Dr. Mill's reasons against St. Paul's epistle being written to the Ephesians. Particularly chap. i. ver. 15. when compared with Coloss. chap. i. ver. 4. The most plausible solution of which seems to be that in Mr. Locke, taken from Grotius, who explains those words, After I heard of your faith, when spoken to the Ephesians, by After I heard of the continuance of your faith. But, as the same expression, when used to the Colossians, is by all interpreters taken in the obvious meaning, as spoken to persons, whom the apostle had never seen; is it reasonable to imagine, that he would have used it, in so different a sense, in two epistles, which were both before him at the same time; were both to be carried by the same messenger; and, as the author of the letter supposes, were to be interchanged, and read by both the churches, to whom they were first delivered?

The end of the postscript.

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The apostles, elders, and brethren, met about the question. After a free debate, they agreed to send a letter to the christians, who had been uncircumcised proselytes; wherein they insisted upon their observing onely those parts of the law of Moses, which they had formerly been obliged to observe, as they were proselytes of the gate. Acts xv. 5, 29. p. 54.

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This is the third and last period of the conversion of the idolatrous gentiles. Wherein it was known to all the elders of the Christian church, at Jerusalem, that the gospel was preached among the idolatrous gentiles.

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tiles. The zealous jewish christians accuse St. Paul. He makes all lawful condescensions, in order to remove their prejudices; and particularly takes upon him the nazarene's vow. The apostle of the gentiles vindicated in so doing. Acts xxii. 17.—26. pag. 224.

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V. A postscript to the letter, at the end of the second volume; concerning the persons, to whom St. Paul writ, what is commonly called, The epistle to the Ephesians.

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Concerning the INDEXES.

In all the following indexes; p. stands for page; a, for volume first; b, for volume second; and c, for volume third.

When any passage, related in the Acts of the Apostles, is wanted, the reader may take his new testament; and find out the chapter and verse, in the Acts of the Apostles: and then he will easily find out the same passage, in this history: by looking in the margin, at the top of any page. Consulting the contents will, also, readily direct to any part of the history.

When a text, in the Acts of the apostles, is referred to, the reader is to consult the history, or notes, upon that place.

N.B. As the pages, in the first and second edition of this history, differ but a little, the contents and indexes, may, in a great measure, serve for both editions.

I. An INDEX of the hebrew words, explained, or quoted, in these three VOLUMES.

אביו אל abi-ijota, father-fire, a. p. 137.
אמר akaree cheen, after these things; the same as [in the last days.] Acts ii. 17.
זְעָר בָּל-קיוונ Bal-kium, the same with Vulcan. a. p. 137.
בַּרְנָבִי Barnabi, the son of a prophet. Acts iv. 36. and xi. 22.
 י vau. The particle, י vau, must be, sometimes, transposed in the translation, b. p. 9.
רְבִיס מִמַּשְׁיָר verabbim mishane adamah habar, &c. And, as to the multitude, who sleep, in the dust of the earth, &c. the nominative case absolute. Acts vii. 40.
לעך זָעַם, impurity, or lewdness. Acts ii. 224.
לִשְׁנֵב lerush bajom, in the wind of the day. a. p. 32.
שְׁמַע לְמִכְבָּה macchab, to imitate so as to kill. Acts vii. 24.
אֵלֶּה עַפָּרָתָא Eglab, a calf. Acts ix. 36.
רָוֹחַ, raithi, seeing I have seen. Or, I have assuredly seen. Acts vii. 34.
רְאָלָה רַאִיתָל rachel, which signifies a sleep. Acts ix. 36.
Rachel, which signifies a sleep. Acts ix. 36.

II. An
II. An index of the Greek words, explained in these three volumes.

A.

*Aγγελός* an angel, which commonly signifies an intelligent being; of an order superior to the human race; do sometimes, signifies a man, sent, as a messenger, Acts xvii. 15. See also, b, p. 9.

*Aγίος* an assembly, or the place of assembling.

*Aγίος* a person, belonging to the forum, or place of public concourse. Acts xvii. 5. and xix. 38.

*Aκαίριον* a crime, cognizeable by the civil magistrate. Acts xxiv. 20, 21.

*Αἰωνίον* the age to come, or the gospel-age. Acts iii. 21.

*Αματολοί* fineers, or vicious persons, applied to the wicked gentiles. See on Acts ii. 23.

*Αμανθισμός* to stir a fire, or blow up the flame; applied to stirring up the gifts of the spirit. a, p. 34.

*Αμαρτάσας* the resurrection; might, perhaps, by the Athenians, be taken for a godlike. Acts xvii. 18.

*Αμαρτία* having raised up Jesus, (not from the dead, but) as a prophet. Acts iii. 26.

*Αμφίεσθαι* men, brethren, no hebraism. Acts i. 16.


*Αμφόσιμος* not a prætor, but a proconsul. Acts xiii. 7. and xix. 38.

*Αμφίωσις* fineers among the gentiles. See on Acts ii. 23.

*Αμφίωσις* see above; immediately after aιωνίον.

*Ανάφηκας* the first fruits. Acts xi. 30.

*Ανακλησίν* the lost, or abandoned, Acts ii. 47.

*Αναπληράσκεσθαι* a jewiš shekel; the value of it, in our english coin. Acts xix. 19.

*Αναρρήτος* ungodly, or an idolator. See on Acts ii. 23. and vii. 2.

*Αροτρία* without strength. See on Acts ii. 23.


*Γίνομαι* that is, new, or sweet wine. Acts ii. 13.

*Γνώσις* knowledge; a spiritual gift. a, p. 44.

*Διακόνος* deacon, or ministry, applied to various things. Acts xi. 30. and xii. 25.

*Διασκορπίζω* sometimes signifies a dialect; sometimes a different language. Acts ii. 8.


*Διαφέρω* the image, which fell down from Jupiter. Acts xix. 35.

*Δαίμων* answering to the hebrew word, Tobitha; signifies a ree, or wild-goat. But, according to Dr. Shaw, the gazelle, or antelope. Acts ix. 36.

*Διανομή* miraculous power. a, p. 37; 39.

E.

*Εἰς* concerning. Acts ii. 25.


*Έμεν* to Zuχîk. Emmer the father of Sîcbem. So father, mother, brother, son, are often left-out, and to be supplied. Acts vii. 16.
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**INDEX.**

IV. An index of texts, explained, or quoted.

_N. B._ As to any text, in the Acts of the Apostles, see upon the text itself; where the subject, treated of, may be easily found, by consulting the place.

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L Philem.
V. An index of the principal matters contained in these three volumes.

A

ABRAHAM: The youngest son of Terab. His age, when he left Charan, and when his father died, p. 126. He was in high esteem among the Jews; and the apostles began with him, in preaching to Jews.

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Aegyptian: The Egyptian imposter, who deluded, and ruined, many of the Jews.

Aelian: referred to.

Agra: The vulgar Christian era begins too late, by four, or five, years, a. p. 17.

Agnellus: referred to.

Agrippa: See Herod.

Agrippina: her character. She was second wife of Claudius Caesar, and mother of Nero; had a great ascendancy over Claudius; and, at last, poisoned him. Instead of Britannicus, the son of Claudius, she got her son, Nero, advanced to be emperor, b. p. 153. At first, Agrippina ruled the empire, b. p. 154. [See Nero.]

Ainsworth: quoted, or referred to.

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Angel:] An angel spoke to Cornelius: but our lord Jesus Christ, himself, appeared to the apostle Peter. a, p. 225, &c.

The angel of the covenant delivered the law, from Mount Sinai; attended by troops of inferior angels, a, p. 140.

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Antiochus Epiphanes:] the grand persecutor of the jews, died a remarkable death; like Herod Agrippa, the persecutor of the christians. a, p. 289.

Antipatris, described. b, p. 245.

Antonia:] The tower of Antonia, described. b, p. 233, &c.

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Ephraim: An araban word, which signifies the magician, or forcerer. b, p. 27.

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Filled with the holy spirit:] That phrase explained. b, p. 39.

First day of the week. [See Lord's day.]

Fiver thousand, converted to Christianity, some time after the three thousand. c, p. 3. [See Three thousand.]

Flaccus Avilius; president of Egypt, governed well, for some time. Afterwards, he behaved, in a vile manner. And, by the infligation of the people of Alexandria, he used the Jews with great cruelty. a, p. 209, &c. By Caligula's order, he was apprehended, and sent to Rome: where he was tried for male-administration; found guilty; first banished; and, afterwards, put to death. a, p. 209, &c.

Florus [Lucius;] referred to. a, p. 88; 101.

Fornication:] prohibited to all christians, as well as to such as had been devout gentiles. b, p. 64, &c. 67.

Fortitude:] one of the miraculous powers, a, p. 60. not peculiar to apostles; tho' they had it, in a superior degree. a, p. 72.

France:] The christians, in France (or Gaul,) suffered a most grievous persecution; in the year of Christ 177. b, p. 329.

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Friend:] A friend to christianity, the only person, that can be supposed to have wrote such an history, as the Acts of the apostles; supposing the facts to be true. b, p. 337, &c.

Fuller miscellanea sacra:] referred to, a, p. 168.

Fund:] A common fund raised, by the three thousand; and renewed, by the five thousand; — to support the numerous converts, whilet they continued together, at Jerusalem. But not designed, as a pattern, for christians, in common cases. a, p. 84, &c. c, p. 314, 5.

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Gallio:] Seneca's brother, proconsul of Abasis: his character. b, p. 144, &c.

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Herod Agrippa major; An account of him; his conduct, and the various turns in his life. a, p. 207, &c. Affronted at Alexandria. a, p. 216. Advanced to extensive dominion; which greatly incensed his father, Herod; and proved his ruine, and the ruine of her husband, Herod Antipas. a, p. 265.
Herod Agrippa accused his brother-in-law, Herod Antipas, to Caligula, of a conspiracy; got him deposed, and banished; and had part of his dominions. a, p. 266. When Caligula had resolved to set up his image, in the temple, or destroy the jewi/h nation; Herod Agrippa interceded, with Caligula, for them. a, p. 267, &c. Herod Agrippa major helped Claudius Cæsar, in attaining the imperial dignity, and was rewarded for it. a, p. 281. He procured, from Claudius, an edict, in favor of the jews; with liberty, throughout the empire, to live according to their own laws. a, p. 282.
When Herod Agrippa, after his advancement by Claudius Cæsar, came to settle, at Jerusalem, he often transferred the high-priesthood, from one to another. a, p. 283. He revived the persecution against the christians. Acts xii. 1, &c. His speech at Cesarea, and remarkable death. Acts xii. 21, &c.
Some of his subjects, after his death, insulted his name and family. b, p. 73.
Herod Agrippa minor; was son of Herod Agrippa major. b, p. 73; 256. After the father's death, the kingdom was turned into a province; and Claudius, the emperor, sent Cæsius Fadus, as procurator, into Judæa. b, p. 74. Herod, king of Chalcis, died; and Claudius Cæsar conferred his kingdom, on his nephew, Herod Agrippa minor. b, p. 76. Afterwards, Claudius took that kingdom from him, and gave him a larger. b, p. 78. Herod Agrippa minor and the jews quarrelled, about a wall, which they built, to obstruct that prince's view of what was done in the temple. b, p. 267.
Herod Antipas, displeased Vitellius; married the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia. And, during her life, he married
married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; whilst his brother was alive. He cut off John the baptist's head. a, p. 197. Herodias proved the ruine of Herod Antipas. a, p. 265, &c.

Herodias, a wicked woman, left her first husband, Philip; and married his brother, Herod Antipas. She was the ruine of her second husband, and the cause of cutting off John the baptist's head. a, p. 197; 265, 266.

Herodian;] quoted, or referred to. b, p. 91; 183.

Herodotus;] quoted, or referred to. a, p. 156; 137; 138; 238; 262; 289. b, p. 26; 84; 105; 179; 217. c, p. 49.

High-places, among the jews, under the old testament; what they were. b, p. 90.

High-priest, among the jews, many of them deposed; and others put in their places. b, p. 74, 75; 268.

The high priest's robes, upon some disgust, were ordered, by the roman emperor, to be taken out of the custody of the jews, and deposited in the tower of Antonia, as formerly: but that order was reversed, at the request of Herod Agrippa minor. b, p. 74.

Hippocrates, prince of the physicians; borne in the island Cos, or Cos. b, p. 221.

History;] The general division of this history. a, p. 23.

History of the epistle of St. James; referred to. b, p. 261.

Holy spirit. [See under the words spirit, gifts, apostles.] The holy spirit conferred what gifts and powers he saw proper. a, p. 63. The holy spirit was imparted to jewish christians, after baptism. a, p. 179. conferred on many christians, where it is not taken notice of, in the Acts of the apostles. b, p. 100. The holy spirit chose, from among the elders, particular persons to be bishops. a, p. 48; 68. b, p. 219.

Homeric notes;] quoted, or referred to. a, p. 112; 137. b, p. 110; 113. Hudson's note on Iosephus;] quoted, or referred to. a, p. 194; 251. b, p. 32; 76.
by the direction of his father, and trained them up, for their work. a, p. 5. the doctrines, which Jesus taught, a, p. 6. The miracles, which Jesus worked, and the divine testimonies, in his favor. a, p. 7; 11. The prophecies of Jesus; he mendeth out the twelve apostles, upon their first expedition. After them, the seventy. The excellent temper and behavior of Jesus, a, p. 8. He gave his apostles a second and final commission; took his leave of them, in a very affectionate and solemn manner; instituted the Lord's supper, a, p. 9. Jesus went up to Jerusalem; though he foresew they would crucifie him. He freely reproved the wicked Jews, for their vices; who, therefore, put him to death. a, p. 10. The persons, to whom Jesus appeared, after his resurrection; and the order, in which he appeared to them. a, p. 12. The evidence of the truth of his resurrection, a, p. 13. Why Jesus was baptized, a, p. 35, 36. Jesus himself appeared to an apostle; but an angel was sent to Cornelius. a, p. 235. b, p. 243. Jesus was no contemptible person; though he was educated at Nazareth, a, p. 239. His kingdom was not of this world, b, p. 102. At first, Jesus gave his apostles their commission, in general terms; and explained it, more particularly, afterwards, b, p. 262. Jesus began his reformation, among the Jews; who had, then, the best notions of God and religion, b, p. 334. After his departure from our world, he sent out his apostles to convert the gentiles, b, p. 335. Five instances of Jesus his not working miracles, when desired. The reasons for such refusals, c, p. 11, &c.

Jesus, the son of Ananus; a very remarkable person, who prophesied dreadful things, against Jerusalem, for about seven years, before the Jewish wars broke out, b, p. 269.

Jews] numerous, at Damascus. a, p. 171. They had great favors, from Claudius Cæsar, by means of Herod Agrippa. a, p. 283, &c. The Jews divided the law, into fifty-three, or fifty-four, sections; and the prophets, into as many: and they read them through, in the synagogue, once a year. b, p. 29. They had no procurator, in Judæa; nor any person reposing, among them, with the power of life and death; from the removal of Pontius Pilate, to the accession of Herod Agrippa. a, p. 195. The Jews highly valued the keeping the high-priest's vestments, a, p. 196. They were under the most terrible conteremn, when Caligula sent Patronius, to set up his image, in the temple, at Jerusalem; or destroy the Jews nation, if they opposed it, a, p. 213. The Jews greatly prejudiced against the devout gentiles, b, p. 49. They had a very high veneration for the temple, and the law of Moses, b, p. 75, 76; 232. In giving the genealogy of a very considerable person, the Jews used to begin with the person himself, and went back to his progenitors. But, if the ancestors of the person were very considerable, they began with them, a, p. 262. The Jews of Alexandria had other enemies, besides Flaccus, a, p. 271. The Jews made insurrections, b, p. 74. The Jews chose to worship, by the side of a river, or lake; or by the sea-side. Accordingly, their places of worship were built, in such places, b, p. 89, 90, 91; 222. In some places, the Jews had houses, near their synagogues, for the entertainment of strangers, or travellers, b, p. 118. The affairs of the Jews, under Nero, b, p. 155, &c. 267. Many of the Jews deluded, and ruined, by the Egyptian impostor, b, p. 156, &c. The Jews greatly prejudiced against the gentiles, b, p. 237. Great tumults and commotions, among the priests, in Judæa, b, p. 253; 268. The great quarrel between the Jews and Samaritans, a, p. 149; 154. The Jews persecuted the Christians, at Tarsus, b, p. 101. They quarrelled with Ephesus, for building his house so high, as that he could see what was done in the temple, b, p. 267, &c. The Jews
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Lord's day: the first day of the week; observed, by the primitive Christians, as holy. That observation, introduced, by example, rather than command. a, p. 26. b, p. 216.

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Lyfios, the Roman tribune, behaved well, towards his prisoner, the apostle Paul. b, p. 244; &c.

Magians, or Magi: Who, or what, they were. Simon Magus, one of them. a, p. 161. b, p. 26.

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Marcion, the antient heretic, referred to. b, p. 344; &c. 348. He is thought to have had a copy of the epistle to the Ephesians, or Laodicæans, without the words, [in Ephesus,] in the first verse of that epistle. b, p. 290; 295; &c.

Mark: An account of John Mark, nephew to Barnabas. b, p. 23; 26; 29. He deserted Paul and Barnabas; and caused them to separate. b, p. 79; but, afterwards, they were all reconciled. b, p. 80; 286; 306. St. Mark reckoned the hours of the day, in the same manner, that St. Matthew, and St. Luke, did. He wrote his gospel, some years, before the destruction of Jerusalem. c, p. 50.

Marxius,] referred to. b, p. 161.

Marmar, [Sir John,] referred to. b, p. 31.

Marcus: See Vibius.

Mary: See virgin Mary.

Matthew, the apostle and evangelist: An account of him. a, p. 253; &c. preached to Jews and devout Gentiles, within the borders of Palestine: After that, wrote his gospel, in Judea, the first of the four gospels. The time of writing St. Matthew's gospel, considered. a, p. 254; &c. In what language,
In the gaige, St. Matthew wrote, a, p. 256, &e. The beginning of his gospel, genuine. His account of our Lord's genealogy, reconciled with that in St. Luke, a, p. 258, &c. St. Matthew wrote his gospel, more immediately, for the use of Jewish Christians. And, therefore, gave our Lord's genealogy, by the father's side, a, p. 261, &c. In what manner, he wrote his gospel, a, p. 257; 263, &c. He reckoned the hours of the day, in the same manner, that St. Mark and St. Luke did: as he, also, wrote, some years before the destruction of Jerusalem, c, p. 50. He wrote, in Jerusalem, or some part of Judea, c, p. 51.

Maundrell's travels;] quoted, or referred to, a, p. 19; 153; 156; 158; b, p. 221; 222.

Mead, [Richard, M. D.] his Medica sacra, referred to, a, p. 289.

Mead, [Mr. Joseph;] his works, referred to, b, p. 106.

Melita:] An account of that island, b, p. 276.

Men, with human infirmities, accepted of God, c, p. 44.

Menander, quoted, by St. Paul, a, p. 145.

Messalina;] first wife of Claudius Caesar; married Caesar Silius, publicly, while Claudius was alive. Caesar Silius, and Messalina, both put to death, b, p. 150.

Middleton [Dr. Conyers;] Animadversions on his cursory reflections upon Galat. ii., 11, &c. c, p. 23, &c. Animadversions upon his reflections on the variations, or incon sistencies, which are found among the four evangelists, in their different accounts of the same facts. c, p. 47, &c.

Milt [Dr. John;] in his new testament, folio, with the various readings; mentions a various reading, at the conclusion of St. Matthew's gospel, a, p. 154, and other various readings, Mark xv. 25; John xix, 14, c, p. 48. Various readings, mentioned, by Dr. Mill, in the Acts of the apostles. Acts i. 2. and ii. 1; 31. and iii. 20, 21. and iv. 27. and v. 36. and vi. 7. 8. and viii. 36; 39. and ix. 20, and x. 33. and xi. 1; Vol. III.

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sicellana sacra, [by the late Lord Barrington,] quoted, or referred to. a, p. 27; 39; 224. b, p. 81; 85; 118; 189. The plan of this history, and many other things, therein, taken from Lord Barrington's Miscellanea sacra. [See the preface to the first volume of this history.]

Mythen;] the chief city of the island Lefkos, famous for the birth of several eminent persons. b, p. 217.

Moore [Mr. Thomas;] referred to. a, p. 122.

Morris [Mr. Joseph;] his sermons referred to. a, p. 154.

Mother church:; See Jerusalem and Antioch.

Moyle [Walter Esq.;] thought that Cornelius, upon becoming a christian, was obliged to quit the roman army, because of the idolatrous rites, there practised. a, p. 242. he corrects a mistake of Dr. Prideaux, with respect to the posterity of Octavianus never enjoying the empire. a, p. 272.

Moyle's works, referred to. b, p. 26.

Mysteries;] revealed to apostles only. a, p. 41.

Mythology;] Letters on mythology, published by Dr. Blackwall, principal of the college, at Aberdeen; largely quoted. a, p. 137.

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Nome;] The jews phantied that miracles were worked, by invoking a name; the name of some man, or some angel. a, p. 96.

Narcissus;] the freed-man of Claudius Caesar, got Mussalina put to death. b, p. 150. He was one of the richest and most powerful subjects of the roman empire: Agrippina got him murdered: his character. b, p. 152.

Nexorite's vow;] St. Paul took it upon himself. It was to be fulfilled in Judea. b, p. 147. St. Paul took that vow, upon him, a second time. That apostle, vindicated, in so doing. b, p. 227, &c. c, p. 34, &c.

Napoli, or Naples;] An account of that town. b, p. 279.

Nero;] the sixth of the twelve Cæsars; he began to reign very well, under the influence of Seneca, his præceptor. b, p. 153, &c. gave Claudius a magnificent funeral; he himself speaking the funeral-oration: had Claudius intoned among the gods: for some time, left the government to his mother Agrippina. b, p. 154. Nero lived in great voluptuousness; then fell into extravagance; and, after that, into great cruelty. He first poisoned Britannicus; and then murdered his own mother. The infamous Otho was his favorite; and Nero lived in adultery with Otho's wife. After his mother was murdered, by his order, Nero went; and, very curiously, viewed her naked body. He bribed the guards to do whatever he pleased; and the romans congratulated him, upon his mother's death. But his own conscience filled him with the utmost anguish. b, p. 265, &c. After that, he put to death his wife Otavia: And was, in short, one of the greatest monsters, that ever lived, for lust, cruelty, and extravagance. b, p. 267. Several of Nero's guards, and domeline servants, were, by St. Paul, converted to the christian faith. b, p. 284. The affairs of the jews, under Nero. b, p. 155, &c.

Newton [Sir Isaac;] referred to. a, p. 122; 151.

Nicolas, the deacon;] the head of the sect of the Nicolaitans. a, p. 49; 121.

Nidria;] one kind of excommunication, among the jews. b, p. 130.

Noah; [the great patriarch;] The seven precepts of Noah. b, p. 60; 68.

Nominative case absolute;] a, p. 135. The nominative case, sometimes, follows its verb. b, p. 35.

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Oecumenius;] referred to. a, p. 245; 246.

Omphamus;] the slave of Philemon, converted to the christian faith, at Rome. by St. Paul. b, p. 284.

Order;]
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Order:] The order, in which, St. Paul wrote his four epistles, from Rome; namely, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippian. b, p. 289.

Ordination:] In what sense, the ministers of the gospel may be ordained, now-a-days. b, p. 25; 46; 80; 84. Some of the elders, or first converts, chosen to be bishops and deacons; and ordained, in the apostolic age. b, p. 187.

Origen; [an antient father:] An account of him. b, p. 324. quoted, or referred to. a, p. 112; 254; 256; 262. b, p. 282; 324; 325; c, p. 9.

Orobio; the jew, (in his friendly conference with Limborch) insinuated, that the apostles were influenced by worldly motives. But his insinuations were unjust. a, p. 102.

Orosius; referred to. a, p. 194; 251.

Osiris; an Egyptiangod. a, p. 110.

Pallas; The freedman of Claudius Caesar, a favorite of Agrippina. b, p. 154.

Papias; Who he was: a remarkable passage of his, quoted. b, p. 328.

Patriarchs; their bones buried, together with the bones of Joseph. a, p. 129.

Patrick [Bishop] referred to. a, p. 127.

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Sykes, [Dr. Arthur Delzey] referred to. a, p. 225. b, p. 337.

Synagogue: At the desire, or permission, of the rulers of the synagogues, any jew might read the scriptures, publicly. The law, and the prophets, in the synagogues of the jews, were read through, once every year. b, p. 29, 30. How a synagogue differed from a prosyucha. b, p. 90.

Syrian version of the new testament: quoted, or referred to. a, p. 105; 284; 289. b, p. 89; 89; 325.

Syrians: A quarrel between the jews and syrians, at Caesarea, about the rights and privileges of that city. The jews severely punished for it, by Felix, the governor. b, p. 249.

Tacitus: quoted, or referred to. a, p. 74; 79; 191; 195; 197. b, p. 74; 76; 77; 78; 148; 149; 150; 151; 153; 238; 257; 280; 284.

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Targum of Jonathan: referred to. b, p. 69.

Taylor, [Mr. John, of Norwich] referred to. a, p. 225.

Temple: The worship of god, at the temple, in Jerusalem, daily frequented by the apostles. a, p. 84; 88. Watch, kept, in the temple, every night, in twenty-four places. a, p. 109. The high regard, which the jews had for the temple. b, p. 75, 76; 232. A description of the beautiful gate of the temple. a, p. 88. A temple, built, by the samaritans, upon mount Gerizim. a, p. 151. demolished by John Hyrcanus. a, p. 157. The samaritans still continue to worship, in that place. a, p. 157. A temple, built, in the town of Samaria; but not valued by the samaritans. a, p. 157. A temple, built, by some of the jews, in Egypt. a, p. 153. A description of the magnificent temple of Diana, at Ephesus. Some of the ruins thereof still remain. b, p. 179, &c.

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