BIBLICAL REPERTORY.

Contents of No. II.

[Vol. III.]

ON

THE DIFFICULTY

ATTENDING

THE GRAMMATICAL INTERPRETATION

OF THE

New Testament.

ON THE

Difficulty attending the Grammatical Interpretation

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

[*The author delivered these discourses, with an interval of a year or more between them severally; in consequence of which, he deemed it proper, to recapitulate, in this place, the contents of the preceding discourses. This recapitulation is omitted in the translation as unnecessary.*]

IV.

* * * * * * Having shown the necessity and excellence of grammatical interpretation, and having exposed the folly of those who philosophize, rather than interpret, in expounding the sacred writings; it now remains for us, to speak of the difficulty of this mode of interpretation; —not of that which is common to all books written in languages no longer in common use, and especially the more ancient languages (of which subject I have already treated); but, of that, in particular, which is peculiar to the grammatical interpretation of the New Testament.

V.

And here we are not without our fears, lest some persons should say, we are exceeding the bounds of prudence, in thus undertaking to lay open and to augment the diffi-

culties of this method. which it rather becomes us, by every means within our power, to diminish and to conceal:

> As oft, benign,
> The sapient nurse, when anxious to enforce
> On the pale boy, the wormwood's bitter draught,
> With luscious honey tints the goblet's edge,
> Deceiving thus, while yet unus'd to guile,
> His unsuspecting lip; till deep he drinks,
> And gathers vigour from the venial cheat. *

We are aware, indeed, that many teachers are accustomed to profess, that they have discovered a short and easy way, by which they can conduct to knowledge, those who will receive them as their guides; and, with this bait, they allure the unwary to their own hurt. But we have always been induced to regard these boastful promisers (would I could say *professors*,) as closely resembling those deluded mortals, who promised to communicate to others the art of making gold, while they themselves were suffering from the want of nothing so much as that of gold. For ourselves, we have always looked upon it as worthy of the liberality of a polite scholar, to whet and incite the minds of the gifted and studious, by candidly rehearsing the difficulties of learning, rather than, by concealing and denying the fact, to detain in the pursuit, the more dull and sluggish, who are, however, themselves, sometimes awakened from their slumbers, by reflecting upon the difficulty. We should much prefer to follow the example of *Virtue*, personified by Prodicus as cited by Xenophon, who acknowledged the way which she recommended to Hercules, to be a long and arduous one; rather than the example of *Vice*, personified by the same writer, who endeavoured to deceive Hercules by a delicious preamble of anticipated pleasures.

* Lucret. I. 938. Good's Translation.

VI.

In order, however, that the plan of this whole discussion may be obvious, we shall present, at the outset, a general view, by recounting the several requisites of this mode of interpretation, in all of which, as we shall show, considerable difficulties present themselves. These several requisites are the following: an accurate and cautious judgment, in relation to the various readings; a keenness and acuteness of understanding, by means of which we may discern what we comprehend clearly and what we do not, and discover the difficulties in the way of a clear understanding; an ability to distinguish between the pure Greek and the Hebrew idiom; a skilful investigation of the sense, in either case, by means of the usage of speech and the analogy of languages; an exact knowledge of grammatical rules and observations, and a diligent examination of every thing by them; a careful discrimination between tropical and proper diction; a critical examination of emphases, so as to distinguish the true from the false; and an apposite and natural reconciliation of apparent discrepancies.

VII.

An accurate and cautious judgment, in relation to the reading of each passage, occupies the first place. For, as Quintilian well enjoins, "*the emendation of the reading must precede the interpretation.*" And this is become still more necessary, perhaps, at the present day, than it was formerly, inasmuch as so many massive volumes of various readings have been published, the reading of so many passages has been called in question, and so many conjectures have been offered, concerning the true reading. This judgment constitutes a part of *Criticism*; which, as in every other department of science, so also in Grammar, occu-

pies the first rank, and is styled, for this reason, by the ancients, γραμματικὴ ἀκριβεστέρα *a more exact Grammar.* This part of Grammar, however, is far more difficult than the rest, because it demands, not only an accurate knowledge and application of all those parts, upon which it may be said to rest, as upon a foundation, but also, many and excellent virtues of the mind and heart, without which, it is, in fact, and is justly accounted, *injudiciousness* and *rashness*, rather than *criticism.* But, as every art consists of two things, viz. rules and their application, it would not be easy to decide, which part of this particular art of criticism, so far as it is applicable to the books of the New Testament, is the more difficult and perplexed. In the first place, in regard to rules, by means of which we either decide concerning each individual portion of the critical apparatus, that is, concerning the Greek copies, whether manuscript or printed, concerning the ancient versions, and concerning the commentaries or testimonies of the Fathers, and their authority universally; or else, direct our judgment in the choice of a reading, in particular passages; how great the difficulties are, which present themselves in this part, must be obvious, to every one, who is not grossly ignorant of the writings of the most erudite scholars, down to the present day, or who has, himself, at any time, made the experiment, with care. Indeed, the nature of the thing itself, shows, that the difficulties here are greater than in any human writings. For, in proportion as the number and variety of manuscript and printed copies, of versions, of ancient commentaries, and of other testimonies, increases, the difficulty also increases, of satisfying, (while we endeavour to form rules, pertaining to the variety of readings, and drawn from these sources,) not merely the unskilful, with whom we have here a great and troublesome contention, but even the skilful, intelligent and impartial. And it is a still more perplexing task, to furnish rules for

the choice of a reading. This is owing, as well to other general causes, as, in particular, to the circumstances of the case, and the nature of the diction employed by the inspired writers. We have attempted to show, on another occasion,* that our judgment, in relation to a reading to be chosen, is more uncertain, in the case of writers who, although good writers, are, nevertheless, not tenacious, in every particular, of the laws of accurate speech ; than in the case of the more ancient Greek and Latin writers, in whose age, custom had altered, as yet, nothing of their exquisite style and manner. Owing to this circumstance, we are very frequently unable to decide, in these matters, with confidence. How widely the diction of the New Testament departs from those perfect examples of Grecian diction, viz. Plato, Xenophon, Demosthenes, and the like has been remarked by Origen, Chrysostom and Jerome, not to mention more recent writers; and is perceived, also, by all such as are thoroughly acquainted with the Greek. Accordingly, some canons of criticism, which we adopt in relation to the more ancient, and, in point of style and diction, more approved, human books, have been reversed in their application to these books ; that canon, for example, which we are wont to regard as the most certain ; on the authority of which, very many readings, in other books, both Greek and Latin, have been settled, viz. that *of two readings, the one which is the more correct and refined, is to be preferred to the one which is the more common, and, grammatically speaking, less correct :*—a circumstance which was formerly noticed by Origen and others, who are enumerated at large, by Wetstein (Can. vii.), and by Erasmus (on 1 Cor. xv. 51.), with the approbation of Joh. Gerhard (Loc. Theol. De resurr. mort. § 117.), and after these, lately, by Pfaff and Bengel.

* Praef. Sueton. p. 13.

VIII.

Such being the case, it is not to be wondered at, that we do not possess, as yet, under the head of *Canons of Criticism*, any work, relating to various readings in general, and their selection, in which, the practical and experienced critic will not find many things to be wanting. I shall say nothing of the canons of Mastricht, with which, critics are wont to rest satisfied, although they do not deserve to be counted among the number of rules; so false, vague, and confusedly arranged, are those which pertain to the critical apparatus, while those which pertain to the choice of readings are useless. The late Bengel laboured, with great diligence and modesty, in this preceptive department. He endeavoured, in particular, to define, by rules, the use to be made of the manuscript copies of the Fathers, and of versions; but this excellent man failed when he came to treat of the choice of readings, in the first place, through a veneration for the Alexandrian Manuscript, in which, he was not aware that the Greek context had been, in innumerable passages, altered in conformity to the Latin version; and, in the next place, through a disregard of the subject and the words, directing us to adhere solely to the rules which he had penned concerning the books and their authority; whereas, the antiquity of a reading, without intrinsic goodness, which is to be estimated by a regard to the sense and to grammatical precepts, can, or at least ought to, avail nothing. What shall I say of Wetstein, who, although he aimed to be the first and most powerful in this department, can, by no means, afford satisfaction, I will not say, to the unlearned, and, on account of their ignorance, hostile to this critical method, but, to the intelligent? For, not to mention the paucity of the precepts, and their indistinct arrangement, how vague and indefinite, and, of course,

useless, are the following! *The reading which is shown to be the more ancient, is, ceteris paribus, preferable. The reading presented by the greater number of manuscripts, is, ceteris paribus, preferable.* For, this *ceteris paribus* renders the matter obscure and uncertain; so that, what is said amounts merely to this, *The reading which is the more ancient, and presented by the greater number of manuscripts, is sometimes to be preferred, and sometimes to be rejected.* And what can be more futile? Again, how bold and presumptuous is the following. *Nothing forbids us to receive into the text, a reading, differing from that presented by the printed copies and the one commonly received, not only when it can be established by adequate arguments, but also when it still remains a matter of doubt, which of the two is preferable.* Who does not see, how great a license is here given, in regard to the vulgar text, to the caprice or ignorance of every one;—a license which is not at all granted in human writings?

IX.

Of all with whom we are acquainted, the scholar who has laboured, with the most success, in this department generally,* is C. M. Pfaff, a theologian of distinguished learning. For, he has not only drawn the distinction between the one and the other class of rules, but has furnished. also, sound and useful precepts for the choice of readings. Nevertheless, should any one, who has attained, by exercise, to some skill and readiness in decisions of this nature, endeavour to reduce these rules to practice, he will find himself sometimes at a loss. This is owing to the fact, that the precepts are sometimes not sufficiently definite; which quality, however, in an especial manner, renders rules, in any case, fit

* De Var. Lectt. N. T.

for application. For, it is not universally true, what the very first canon sanctions, that *The reading of the more ancient manuscripts, or of the majority, is to be preferred to that of the more recent, or of the minority.* For, the later manuscripts have sometimes been derived from better copies than the older ones; and particularly in these books, of which we are treating, almost all the most ancient manuscripts of which, have been modelled after the Latin version; and, moreover, in every class of writings, it is frequently the case, that the reading of one manuscript is rightly preferred to that of all the rest, as those are well aware, who have any experience in matters of criticism, and have explored, even in one ancient author, the sources of every reading. Nor is the following rule sufficiently circumscribed: *The apologies of the Fathers, the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, and the Septuagint version, generally exhibit the true reading;* from which, no one, certainly, would venture to decide, with confidence, on any passage. For, we do not find here a sure character of truth, which we may seize upon and turn to account in every passage; but a bare possibility, if I may so speak, of discovering the true reading, by those methods which, in no case, suffice for acting, judging, or deciding. If, indeed, it had pleased J. D. Michaelis, a theologian of the first rank, to undertake and explain this whole subject, we should, perhaps, have been put in possession of a work but little removed from perfection. For, in a treatise* which he gave to the world some seven years since, he has discussed, with so much diligence, that part of the subject which relates to the sources of the various readings, and to the estimation of the value of the single readings; especially in that portion of the treatise which pertains to the manuscripts interpolated from the Latin

* De Var. Lectt. N. T.

version, and to the readings of the versions in general, and particularly to those of the Oriental versions, that he has, unquestionably, excelled all those who have preceded him. But, as he has not touched upon the other and the more difficult preceptive part of this subject, which relates to the comparison of the various classes of readings, and to the judgment and selection necessary in particular passages, from which we might derive assistance in judging of the truth of a reading, and in refuting those who are in error, the business is not completed, even in this work, although a noble one.

X.

But, even admitting that this part of the subject were so carefully and definitely settled, by written rules, that the most competent judges could desire nothing more; still, many and great difficulties would remain, in the application of these rules, which is always a more difficult business than the formation of the rules themselves. For, these rules are still employed in an affair which admits of conjecture, and they do not possess such a necessity, that a departure from them is not sometimes to be made. Besides, in the exercise of this judgment, we need, also, in these sacred writings, as well as in other ancient books, a certain natural sagacity, accompanied with honesty and a love of truth, together with much reading and practice. This same sagacity avails more, in my opinion, than nice and subtile rules. How rarely this valuable quality is found, and by how few, even when it is met with, it is cherished and improved, in the manner I have stated, is known to all. How frequently does some preconceived and false notion occasion difficulty and trouble; and, while men are unwilling to relinquish this, they are either blinded in regard to matters which are clear, or else resort to quibbles, and endeavour, in every way, to accommodate every thing to that

notion ; as we have lately seen in Wetstein, and frequently in others. Most men are also inconsistent with themselves, rejecting, in particular passages, what they had approved in their general rules; or rejecting, in their general rules, what they adopt in many particular passages. From all these considerations, and from many others which might be mentioned, our position is established, that, in no other book is it so difficult to judge accurately concerning the readings, as in these inspired writings.

XI.

Another requisite in a good interpreter, which must also precede the interpretation, is, according to our division, a certain *keenness* and *acuteness of understanding*, whose efficacy is seen in this, that its possessor is not deceived, by supposing that he comprehends what he does not comprehend; but, in every instance, perceives clearly whether he sufficiently understands the words of the sacred writers or not. This quality depends, in part, upon a natural felicity of genius and a promptness of apprehension ; for, just in proportion as any one is more stupid, is he the more ready to suppose that he understands what he does not understand ; and, in part, also, upon diligence, and a habit of discriminating between the sounds of words and their meaning, which cannot be estimated by means of other words, especially by those which are equally obscure, but by a consciousness of the ideas present to the mind. How this keenness and acuteness of understanding, in general, is to be acquired, and by what exercises it can be preserved and improved, we are accustomed to teach in works on Logic. But, in reading books which are written in a language not vernacular, especially an ancient language, and one removed from common use, how we may guard against deception, and know, with certainty, whether we understand the words of the writer or not, although we employ rules

here also, still, we teach it principally by assiduous exercise and by examples,—which is the plainest and surest way. But we are not now engaged in furnishing rules. This clear understanding is, however, by no means, of easy attainment, owing to the difficulty of the exercise itself, which difficulty arises from an inherent fault of the human mind, too prone to recall every thing to sense, as well as from a natural tardiness in withdrawing the mind from sense, and subjecting to its examination the original ideas themselves. Hence the same thing frequently happens, even to the most accomplished scholars, which, as I have elsewhere remarked, happened to Casaubon, who complained of being very often deceived, in this respect. For, those things, which he had regarded as most easy to understand, and as really understood by him, he discovered, upon essaying to explain them to others, in plain and perspicuous terms, were not clearly understood. And if this happens, sometimes, to the most learned and experienced in this department, what shall we expect, in regard to those who are scarcely possessed of moderate learning, and have been but little exercised in this keenness and acuteness?—of which character are the majority of those who come to the business of sacred interpretation. Especially as there is another and a peculiar cause of difficulty, arising from the fact, that, in the case of the inspired writings, we more readily persuade ourselves that we understand what we do not understand, on account of the familiarity which, from infancy, our ears have contracted, with the sounds of the words. The practice, also, of translating the Greek into Latin, word for word, in place of employing a good, that is, a perspicuous, Latin idiom and diction, is exceedingly injurious; which practice, tolerated, formerly, in the Latin versions of the Greek authors, at a time when but few had advanced far in the knowledge of Greek letters, but at the present day entirely discarded, (for who can now bear to hear the

phrases βίην Ἡρακλείην, μέτρα θαλάσσης χλωρὸν ἀδάμαντα, translated *vim Herculanam, mensuras maris, viridem adamanta*, which, with innumerable others of the like kind, were formerly found in the versions,) in translating the sacred books, is, I will not say, merely *tolerated*, but regarded as having become almost *consecrated*. So that, we find it a very difficult matter, to guard against these sources of deception. The truth of this, I have experienced, in innumerable instances, when dealing with youth of approved talents and literary acquirements. Having translated, word for word, some Greek passage, upon the authority of their lexicon, I have directed them, sometimes, to express, in good Latin, what they thought they understood, (and, by the way, there is no surer sign of the words not being well understood, than when any one cannot express their meaning, clearly, in another language, with which he is familiar, —the meaning of a Greek phrase, for example, in intelligible Latin,)* or have applied to their minds the enginery, as it were, of interrogations, and thus I have soon discovered how slowly men are brought, under such circumstances, to feel and acknowledge that they do not understand what they thought they understood perfectly. Certain interpretations, also, of particular passages, which, although not at variance with the sum of christian doctrine, are still false and inaccurate, have become so current, that a doubt is seldom admitted into the minds of men, that they understand them perfectly. It is difficult, indeed, for such persons to become aware of their ignorance of the true sense. It could, however, easily be done, provided it were easy to liberate the mind from the shackles of this inveterate habit.

* Castellio shrewdly observes, on 1 Pet. iv. 6.—*This passage I do not understand, and therefore I have translated it word for word.*

XII.

The next requisite in a good interpreter, is *the faculty of distinguishing the pure Greek, from that which is tinctured with the Hebrew idiom and usage, whether in detached words or in phrases, and in the whole structure of the discourse.* For, the fact, that the language employed in the books of the New Testament, is a mixture of pure Greek and of words and forms of speech very closely resembling the Hebrew, is so manifest to all who are sufficiently acquainted with the Greek, that those persons who maintain, that every thing, in these books, is pure Greek, are clearly worthy of our commiseration. The necessity of this qualification is greater than is generally supposed. For, not to insist, that the judgment, in relation to the readings, of which I have already spoken, cannot be rightly exercised, without the aid of this judgment and discrimination, of which I am now speaking;* strange, distorted, and even prejudicial interpretations frequently arise, in consequence of understanding and illustrating, from the Greek, what was originally derived and spoken from the Herew usage; as Werenfels † was well aware, a theologian lately of Basil, and a man of very elegant learning. In a former discourse I offered some strictures upon a commentator, who expounded, from the Institutes of Justinian, the phrase δοῦλον Ἰησοῦ

* C. M. Pfaff (de Var. Lect. N. T. p. 196,) in order to illustrate the following canon: *The reading, which the context requires, is to be received*, adduces an example from Matth. v. 47. ἐὰν ἀσπάσησθε τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὑμῶν μόνον, in which passage, some copies read φίλους. He decides in favour of ἀδελφοὺς, and correctly too. But he gives as a reason, that the love of friends had already been spoken of, in vs. 46, and therefore, φίλους could not be admitted here; whereas, he might have said that the reading φίλους savoured of the gloss of some one who aimed to interpret the word ἀδελφοὺς in a Hebrew sense.

† Opp. Theol. p. 358.

Χριστοῦ *a servant of Jesus Christ:* whereas, it signifies *a minister, an ambassador of Christ*, by a Hebraism, in accordance with which, *leaders in war*, and *commanders*, the *counsellors* of princes and of kings, are styled their *servants:* and, in my *Anti-Muratorius*, * also, I ventured to criticize those who received the word φόβος in a Greek sense, where it was spoken, according to the Hebrew usage, of *reverence* and *modesty*. If the words ἀδελφῆς γυναικὸς, which occur in 1 Cor. ix. 5., had been understood, from the Hebrew usage, to denote *a christian wife*, what a world of evil might have been avoided! The Greeks, however, having interpreted it in conformity with the usage of their own language,† as was the case, also, with the Latins, the συνείσακτοι, notwithstanding the opposition of good men, (of the author, for example, of the treatise *De Singularitate Clericorum*, which is published among the works of Cyprian) came into vogue, and perverted the name of *brother* and *sister*, for the purpose of concealing their lusts; which abuse, strengthened also by the decrees of councils, was at length, not a great while since, suppressed. On this subject, consult Dodwell,‡ who has treated it at large; and Muratori, in a special dissertation, in his *Anecdota Graeca;* which latter author rightly conjectures, that the above mentioned abuse originated from the faulty exposition of this passage of Paul. Of this kind, also, are many interpretations, which we are prevented from enumerating, out of regard to our proposed plan, which calls upon us to illustrate the *difficulty* of the thing,

* *Anti-Muratorius sive Confutatio Muratorianae Disputationis de Rebus Liturgicis*, published by Ernesti in his *Opuscula Theologica* Lips. 1773. (Tr.)

† Clem. Alexandr. Strom. III. p. 448.

‡ Diss. Cyprianic. III.

and not its necessity. It will suffice, therefore, to have thrown out a warning in this place.

XIII.

But the exercise of this discrimination is a very difficult matter, for two reasons especially. The one is, that very few possess so intimate an acquaintance with the Greek language, as to be competent to determine what is pure Greek and what is not. Nor is this competency of such a character, that it can be acquired from that brief, and, for the most part, inaccurate instruction, which our youth receive in those lower schools, from which they come up to the study of the most difficult and important sciences. In this degree of proficiency, however, the majority are disposed to acquiesce. A familiarity with the Greek writers, and that, too, an intimate one, must, of necessity, be contracted, which opens the way to a thorough perception and understanding of the genius of that language, in regard both to the structure of detached members, and the composition and connexion of the several members among themselves. How much time and study is requisite, for the attainment of this familiarity, is well known to all those who really possess it. But, admitting the acquisition, in an eminent degree, of this familiar acquaintance with the Greek, still, a considerable difficulty remains. from the second cause, adverted to above. The greatest proficients in Hebrew and Greek learning, in the ancient church, were, as is known to all, Origen and Jerome. But, neither Origen nor Jerome possessed much of this acute discrimination, as is abundantly manifest from their respective annotations; from the old scholia upon the New Testament, which were drawn, for the most part, from the σημειώσεις *remarks* of Origen, which were merely short notes, pertaining to the explanation of the literal sense; and, also, from the annotations of Chrysostom, derived, without

doubt, from the same source: in all of which, many things are explained from the Greek usage, whose explanation should rather have been sought for from the Hebrew. How many scholars, since the revival of letters, and the publication of the books of the New Testament by means of the press, have laboured to explain, in treatises and commentaries, every thing pertaining to the words and the forms of speech, which has been drawn from the Hebrew? In which respect, Drusius, Grotius, Gataker, Vorstius, and others are thought to have exceeded, sometimes, the proper bounds, in referring to the Hebrew idiom, what was pure Greek, and had been employed by competent authorities. Notwithstanding this, the subject is, in the estimation of the most learned men, not yet exhausted;* and many things still remain, which are explained from the Greek, whose explanation is rather to be sought for from the Hebrew. Even Castellio himself, an eminent Hebrew, Greek, and Latin scholar, who formerly brought upon himself so much odium, by preserving a pure latinity, in expressing the sense of the books of the New Testament, and is thought, even now, to have exceeded, sometimes, the proper limits, in the preservation of this purity, has expressed, nevertheless, in more than one instance, the Greek sense of the words in place of the Hebrew; and that, too, where neither the novelty of the subject, nor the preservation of the style, nor the nature of the argument, demanded it; as in the words κόσμος, εἰρήνη, φόβος σὰρξ, πνεῦμα, ἐκλογή, and numerous others. This thing, we believe to have happened, both to him and to others, solely from the long continued practice of reading the ancient Latin translation, and the works written by the older as well as the later theologians. "*So great is the force of habit,*" says Au-

* See Werenfels as above cited.

gustine,* when delivering rules concerning the obscure words and phrases of the sacred writings, "*that those who are nourished, as it were, and educated, in the phraseology of the sacred Scriptures;* (he speaks here of the Latin translation,) *regard, as more strange, the expressions they meet with elsewhere, and esteem them as less purely Latin, than those which they have learnt from the Scriptures, and which are not to be found in the approved writers of the Latin language.*" This same habit prevents us from easily detecting, in very many words, the existence of a Hebraism, unless we give our closest attention, and come to the business with much experience; nor do we conceive clearly, or, at least, express in Latin terms, what was present to the minds of the inspired writers, and to their first readers, but what was present to the minds of Greeks, unskilled in Hebrew. This gives rise, not unfrequently, to obscurity, or, at least, a profitless ambiguity, as was correctly remarked by Augustine, in the excellent treatise above cited;†—a consequence, against which the good interpreter should especially guard.

XIV.

From this difficulty, we proceed now, in order, to another, and that, too, a very considerable one, which presents itself when the interpreter undertakes to investigate the true force and meaning of words and phrases, of both the above-mentioned classes, viz. the pure Greek and the Hebrew-Greek, by the aid of the usage of speech, the analogy of languages, or other grammatical arts. And, as this method, in all its parts, may be included under the investigation of the usage of speech, which depends upon observations almost innumerable, it is manifest, without further en-

* De Doctr. Christ. ii. 13, 14.

† De Doctr. Christ. ii. 14.

largement, how great a difficulty is here proposed to all interpreters of ancient books. But our business here is with the interpretation of the New Testament. It is unnecessary to say much, in relation to the expressions which are pure Greek, the understanding of which, is not so very difficult, for him who has obtained a suitable knowledge of that language. Besides, there are not very many things, belonging to this class, that have not been explained and illustrated by the diligent study of interpreters and philologists, provided only we can exercise judgment, and separate the good from the bad. For it is not to be denied, that, among all those who have attempted to throw light upon the books of the New Testament, from the Greek writers, there are very few who are truly excellent in this department—very few who are even comparable with the diligent and judicious Raphelius, among whose observations, however, are many things which I do not approve. The greater number of those who have approached this department, either were not sufficiently learned, or could not, with sufficient discernment, decide what was useful to be understood and what was not; what was consistent with the words of the sacred writers, and what was not; but presented, in their commentaries, every thing that had any possible connexion with any word or form of speech; so that, it has often been my lot, after plodding through entire volumes, even those of Elsner, to perceive that I had met with very few observations which really answered the purpose of illustration, while the remainder were of such a character, that they deserved rather to be thrown together into a lexicon, than to be set forth as interpretations, or as observations calculated to promote the understanding or interpretation of the sacred writers. While engaged in writing this, and consulting, for some reason or other, Wetstein's Various Readings, on 1 Pet. iii 20., there met my eye, an observation upon the following clause of the pre-

ceding verse, εἰς ἣν (κιβωτὸν) ὀλίγαι ψυχαὶ διεσώθησαν. The philologist gives us a good long note, in explanation of these words, in which note, he cites a large number of passages, in which the following form occurs :—διασώζεσθαι εἰς τόπον τινά,—all of which are foreign and irrelevant. For, the sense of this phrase is, *to come into some place after being delivered from danger*, whereas, the words of Peter denote, *in which (ark), a very few persons were saved.* Examples, almost innumerable, of this kind, I have noticed in that work, and in others of a similar nature. So that, in this part of the subject, a greater difficulty seems to arise, to the future interpreter, from the misapplied diligence of commentators, than from the language itself of the inspired writers. As there is some advantage expected, too, from the use of the ancient glossaries, a certain degree of difficulty springs from this source also; and, as in the interpretation of all ancient books, so also in that of the New Testament, we have need of many and great cautions, in the use of these glossaries. As enough, however, has been said already, in my "*Essay on the legitimate use of the Greek glossaries, in the interpretation of the New Testament,*" it would be out of place to discuss the subject here. But the difficulties attending the investigation of the sense of those words and phrases, which are not pure Greek, whose force and signification should be sought, generally, from the Hebrew, are both greater and more numerous.

XV.

The most obvious method of thus investigating the sense, and the first, also, in importance, is that which employs the diligent comparison of the Greek version of the Old Testament, which we denominate the *Alexandrian.* For, we ascertain, generally, by means of this comparison, by what Greek words and phrases, men of the Hebrew nation

and religion, were accustomed to convey the sense of the Hebrew words and phrases, which occur in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament Accordingly, the most learned men profess to think, and endeavour to prove, that, from this source, especially, is to be derived a knowledge of the diction employed in the New Testament. And it cannot be denied, that, from the time that the understanding and interpretation of the books of the New Testament, began to be sought from this quarter, very much light was poured upon it. In this respect, Grotius has received a merited share of praise, and, indeed, in this requisite of a good interpreter, he far surpassed all his predecessors. In this method, however, various difficulties present themselves, especially at the commencement; particularly, if any one be but little experienced in such matters, in interpreting and exploring the meaning of words, or approaches with a desire of defending some opinion, or imbued with some preconceived notions. Accordingly, we find that men of the greatest learning have frequently, and, sometimes, shamefully, erred in the application of this method of obtaining the sense. Salmasius* has shown, by many examples, at which, frequently, we can scarcely restrain our laughter, how repeatedly this was the case with Dan. Heinsius, in his *Exercitationes Sacræ;* as also the competent reader will himself have observed. This Heinsius was a man of eminent learning, but possessed of a harsh and difficult genius, of which all his interpretations savour, exhibiting something or other distorted, which has frequently offended even my eyes while reading. But I have observed that the same things, although more rarely, have happened to those also, who, in other respects, have employed this method aright.

* De Fœnore Trapezitico, p. 805.

XVI.

Of this thing, many and various causes might be mentioned. One is, that no one has, as yet, explained, with clearness and definiteness, the manner of conducting this comparison, the method of eliciting the significations, the laws to which it is subjected, and the cautions it demands. For, although it must be confessed, that men of extraordinary genius, and of much exercise and experience in the business of interpretation, need not the assistance of rules; still, those of more moderate gifts, and whose exercise and experience in this business, have necessarily been very limited, stand in very great need of them. In saying this, however, I am well aware, that, in the works of those scholars who have employed this method, particularly in the illustrious work of Gataker against Pfochen, to which special praise is due in this department of study, some observations are met with, exceedingly correct and useful, to which, I cheerfully acknowledge myself to have been indebted for assistance; but they are still insufficient, and have not yet been collected into one general view, and presented to the public with the necessary additions. For, those who have spoken of the advantages and necessity of that version, for the understanding of the diction of the New Testament,—as Pearson, for example, in his introductory remarks, prefixed to the English edition of the Alexandrian version; Keuchen, in the Preface to his notes upon the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles; the late Michaelis, or Henke, in a special Academical essay; and others, with whom, indeed, I have been acquainted,—have done nothing else than evince, by certain examples, the utility of this comparison. But few, however, possess the ability to reduce examples to the accuracy and subtilty of rules, and collect from them a universal method of proceed-

ing, in relation to this business. Perhaps this may be said to be a common fault of the hermeneutical productions of our times, that they present us with doctrines concerning the nature and signification of words in general, rather than rules for discovering and determining the sense; or else endeavour to disentangle the matter, by means of examples, which, however, afford but little satisfaction, without clear and definite rules. So that, we trust we shall deserve well of those who are devoted to sacred letters, if we can present this subject in a more definite and satisfactory form. This we design to do, in *An Introduction to the Interpretation of the New Testament*, which, with leave of Providence, we purpose to publish.

XVII.

Another circumstance, which renders this comparison an exceedingly delicate and difficult business, is, *the mode of interpretation* which these Alexandrian translators adopted; *the errors*, also, derived, originally, either from the variety of readings exhibited by their manuscripts, or existing in their own minds, or else from ignorance. Those who have carefully compared the Alexandrian version with the Hebrew original, must be aware, that the translators have frequently expressed, in a vague manner, the meaning of the Hebrew words, satisfied with having furnished, in some sort, the general sense. This circumstance has, again and again, deceived many persons while making this comparison, and studying to ascertain, by this means, the usage of the New Testament. Hence have originated violent and spiritless interpretations, which can, by no means, meet our approbation. Into these interpretations, all are the more prone to fall, in proportion as they are the more desirous of employing this method, and of illustrating the diction of the New Testament,—like the fond huntsman,

who, when unable to hunt wild beasts, set traps for flies. Keuchen has frequently erred, in this respect, and affords us examples, for purposes of illustration. The form סָגַר בְּיָד or סָגַר, is rendered, by the Septuagint translators, at one time, συγκλείειν ἐν χειρὶ *to shut up in the hand*, and at another, παραδιδόναι εἰς χεῖρας *to deliver into the hands.* What use, then, does the commentator just mentioned, make of this fact? The verb παραδιδόναι, forsooth, in Acts viii. 3., παρεδίδου εἰς φυλακὴν, denotes,not only *to deliver*, but also *to shut up, to confine.* The phrase מִשֹּׁד *from desolation*, Job v. 21., these translators render ἀπὸ κακῶν, employing the general term instead of a more specific one. Accordingly, in the phrase ὅσα κακα ἐποίησε τοῖς ἁγίοις, in Acts ix. 13., the word κακὰ denotes *desolation.* In Ps. xliv. 27., חַסְדֶּךָ *(thy mercy)* is translated ὄνομά σου, and in Is. xlii. 4. לתורתו *(for his law)* is translated ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ. What then? The phrase ὄνομα θεοῦ, forsooth, in Acts ix. 15, 16., xxvi. 9., denotes *the divine benignity and compassion, the worship and service of God, the doctrine proceeding from God, the Gospel.* For the phrase יַמְלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ *they made him king*, in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1., we find, in this version, καὶ ἔχρισαν αὐτὸν καὶ κατέστησαν αὐτὸν εἰς βασιλέα *and they anointed him and constituted him king.* From this, our commentator took occasion to furnish a strange comment, upon the words Χριστὸν αὐτὸν ἐποίησε, in Acts ii. 36. The word Χριστὸς, says he, denotes *raised to the highest* (that is, *regal.*) *dignity.* He was deceived, however, in this instance, through a neglect to compare the different manuscripts; which comparison clearly proves, that the reading of the passage is doubtful. The Alexandrian manuscript has merely ἔχρισαν αὐτὸν εἰς βασιλέα. The ancient copies seem to have been divided between the two readings ἔχρισαν and κατέστησαν. Hence it came to pass, that both readings came into the text. This kind of reading, which we denominate διττογραφούμενον, is of frequent occurrence, in

ancient books ; and also in this version, in which, a two-fold and different interpretation of an entire verse, is sometimes found. And, I would add, in passing, that many have been strangely deceived, in this matter, from a neglect to examine a variety of examples. The Septuagint translators frequently render עֵמֶק and בִּקְעָה by πεδίον. Accordingly, Keuchen would have us believe, that the phrase τόπον πεδινὸν, in Luke vi. 17., denotes *a valley ;* which sense, the phrase admits, indeed, but it is not necessary here ; nor does the mode of rendering of the Septuagint translators, furnish a sufficient argument, since every *valley* may be πεδίον, but it does not therefore follow, thatt every πεδίον is *a valley.* Let us cite one more example from Eccles. vii. 17., where סָכָל is rendered, by these Greek translators, σκληρὸς. In this, however, they have erred ; for, the whole context demands the notion of *folly* and *stupidity ;* the clause *neither be thou foolish,* responding to the clause which preceedes, *neither make thyself over-wise ;*—unless, perhaps, we can suppose σκληρὸς to have been written for μωρὸς, by a mistake of the transcriber. Our commentator, upon the strength of this passage, concludes, that, in Matth. xxv. 24., where the servant styles his master σκληρὸν ἄνθρωπον *an hard man,* the idea of *folly* also is included. Indeed, this Keuchen, as is manifest from the preface of his work, had a general view of this way of proceeding, but had not learned to be on his guard against the numerous and deceitful by-paths which lead from it ; and, perhaps, his talents were inferior to the task. Very frequent mistakes, of this kind, I have observed also in Heinsius, of whom I have before spoken, and in others.

XVIII.

And if, in passages that are unexceptionable, and preserve, in the main, the sense of the Hebrew, ignorance of the manner of translation, pursued by these interpreters, mis-

leads and deceives us, what shall we expect, in the case of those passages, in which the interpretation, from whatever cause, departs from the Hebrew original?—which takes place, in very many passages, as every one knows, who is not a mere novice in these matters. And this difficulty is still further augmented by the *Concordances*, as they are styled, of this Greek version; such, for example, as we possess, from the labours of Kircher and Tromm, who profess, also, to have engaged in these labours, for the express purpose of affording assistance, in the use of that version in the interpretation of the New Testament. For, they have acted very unwisely, in introducing, into these *Concordances*, all the errors, before alluded to, of the translators; which should have been either laid aside altogether, or else collected together, and placed apart, by themselves, lest they should mislead those who, for the purposes of information and assistance, might consult these works. This fault is the less excusable in Tromm, inasmuch as he professes, in the preface p. 5., to have passed by, as irrelevant, those expressions which evidently had nothing to do with the Hebrew, but were either mere paraphrases, or clearly established another sense; by which profession, how easily may those be ensnared, who are less exercised and experienced, since innumerable such objectionable things are, nevertheless, found in his work; for example, under the word ἀδίκως, תָּמִים צַדִּיק, בְּלִי לְבוּשׁ; under τὸ ἄδικον, דָּבָר (the passage in Gen. xix. 8. should have been translated *you shall do nothing at all to these men*, but the Septuagint translators, following the sense, have rendered it μὴ ποιήσητε ἄδικον *do no injustice*); under ματαίως, לְחִי; whereas, the Greek word answers to the Hebrew one, in place, merely, and not in sense; and the translator had, doubtless, before him, a different Hebrew word, either in some manuscript, or in his own mind, or wished to present the sense merely; or else the transcriber

himself added it for the purpose of explanation, from other passages of the Psalms,* or from a note in the margin. I have noticed, moreover, that some very learned men, whom it is unnecessary to name, have been led astray by such and other errors of the Concordance of Kircher, by the errors, for example, of the Frankfurdt Edition.

XIX.

I have noticed. also, that some excellent men have been, at times, disconcerted, by the want of uniformity in the mode of interpretation. The inconsistency of these translators betrays itself in this, that, in some instances, they have given the force of the Hebrew, by means of expressions purely Greek, while in others, they have adopted a literal translation, that is, they have employed such Greek expressions as seemed directly and formally to correspond with those of the original Hebrew; for example, as the Greek word δικαιοσύνη was that which, in a general sense, corresponded with the Hebrew word צְדָקָה, these translators employed the Greek term in passages where the Hebrew term was used in a different sense;—concerning which two-fold mode of interpretation, we have already spoken, in our remarks upon *The difficulties attending the right interpretation of the New Testament.* It is no easy matter, for most persons, to distinguish, critically, these two modes of interpretation Hence, they adopt the Greek sense of the word δικαιοσύνη, for example, in passages where the Hebrew sense viz. *benignity*, *kindness*, was demanded. So that, according to the difficulty attending the comparison of this version, for the better understanding of the diction of the New Testament, will be the

* This word לְחִי *a cheek-bone*, occurs in Ps. iii. 8., where the Septuagint version exhibits ματαιως. (Tr.)

number and nature of the mistakes, occasioned, sometimes, in the interpretation of the New Testament, by that mode of handling this Greek word. I feel disposed to adduce another example, in which, however, there is no trace of the Hebrew usage, with the hope that I may be enabled to throw some light upon a remarkable passage. The words in 1 Cor. xv. 55. ποῦ σου, θανατε, το κέντρον ; ποῦ σου, ᾅδη, το νῖκος : which are taken from Hos. xiii 14., have strangely perplexed interpreter , because they have not, with sufficient accuracy, compared them with the Hebrew usage, in connexion with the Greek usage of the Alexandrian translators. I shall confine my remarks to the word κέντρον alone, which, from the usage of the pure Greek, is commonly rendered *sting;* whereas, from the usage of the Alexandrian translators, it should have been rendered *pestilence, destruction.* For, it answers, in Hosea, to the word קֶטֶב, which has this force. And, in the same Prophet v. 12., the same word answers to רֶקֶב, which, properly, denotes *rotteness ;* where the context clearly evinces, that it is spoken of *a wasting, incurable disease,* and is therefore, in that passage, spoken of *a pestilence,* or some such thing. Moreover, to κέντρον in vs. 12., answers ὀδύνη, in the verse immediately following, where we find, in the Hebrew, מַזּוֹר *a mattery and incurable wound* or *sore.* The word קֶטֶב is elsewhere Deut. xxxii. 24. rendered *an incurable disease,* which translation is adopted by the Vulgate also, in Hosea, at the word κέντρον. Again, in Acts xv 2., we find the words στάσις and συζήτησις conjointly. The Septuagint translators might here have afforded assistance, who. sometimes, express the Hebrew רִיב by στάσις. But, so long as the word was received in a pure Greek sense, it availed nothing. Accordingly, the manuscript of Beza, and the Vulgate version, evidently omit the latter part of the clause καὶ συζητήσεως, because *disputation* was supposed not to consist with *sedition.* Had the word

στάσις, however, been received in a Hebrew sense, for *altercation*, the whole difficulty would have vanished.

XX.

Indeed, in availing ourselves of this comparison, there is, after all, but one method,—a very direct and obvious one, but demanding numerous auxiliaries. It is not, however, allowable, to investigate, by this method, every thing which cannot be explained from the pure Greek. Accordingly, the Jewish books, especially the more ancient and approved, began to be employed, with the design of collecting out of them, whatever might answer the purposes of illustration. But, the very distinguished scholars who have laboured in this department, at the head of whom stand, undoubtedly, Lightfoot and Schoetgen, while collecting together every thing, indiscriminately, have perplexed the business. And, indeed, it is not every one, at random, who can engage, with success, in this selection. The Oriental versions, also, have been consulted, for this same purpose,—by Louis de Dieu, for example, in his *Critica Sacra*, and by others. How difficult this comparison of the versions is, the nature of the thing itself, and the disagreement of the learned, sufficiently evince. In the works of the more ancient Greek Fathers, also, we find some things, scattered here and there, which furnish the illustrations we seek; of which kind, the learned Grotius, who was accomplished in all the arts of interpretation, has interspersed examples throughout his commentaries. For, during those early ages of the Church, while, as yet, the books of the New Testament were generally understood, certain forms of speech and the manner of using certain words, which prevailed in these books, came into vogue with others also, and were adopted by writers, and sometimes, too, in such a connexion, that the true sense may be elicited.

We have noticed, in the course of our reading, some instances of this kind, in Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Hippolytus, Theophylus, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Cyril of Alexandria, and others. Let us be contented with one example. Peter, in his second Epistle iii. 10. 12., speaks of the στοιχεῖα as about to melt away with fervent heat, at the consummation of all things. This word, in obedience to the lexicon, was translated *elementa, elements.* Grotius explains the word, as denoting, more definitely and specifically, *the stars* and *water.* Calovius, however, demands, by what arguments it can be shown, that στοιχεῖα denotes *the stars.*

would not, indeed, venture to decide, whether Grotius was led, by conjecture, to adopt this interpretation, out of regard, to wit, to the context and the nature of things, or whether he was induced to do so, by a regard to the usage of speech ;—which latter supposition, however, I deem the more probable. These great men have enough to do, to communicate what they perceive to be right and true, without accompanying this communication with a citation of authorities and testimonies. There are, however, passages, which have, since his time, been cited by others, which I, also, myself, have frequently noticed, from which it is manifest, that the word στοιχεῖα was formerly spoken of *the stars ;* and this use of the word was derived, undoubtedly, from the above-mentioned passage of Peter. Both Chrysostom and Theophylact, when commenting upon Gal. iv. 3. and Col. ii. 8., regard, as I am well aware, the phrase στοιχεῖα κόσμου, as denoting *the stars,* but this is not the meaning in those passages. Justin the Martyr, employs the phrases οὐράνια στοιχεῖα* and τὰ στοιχεῖα οὐκ ἀργεῖ, &c.† But, in these and in other passages, interpreters have translated unskilfully. In Theophylus‡

* Apoll. ii. p. ii. † Dial. p. 241. ‡ Ad. Autol. i. p. 22.

we find these words στοιχεῖα θεοῦ εἰς σημεῖα καὶ εἰς καιροὺς καὶ εἰς ἡμέρας καὶ εἰς ἐνιαυτοὺς γεγονότα, and shortly after, the sun is styled ἐλαχιστον στοιχεῖον; and elsewhere, are passages of a similar import. Eusebius,* also, denominates illustrious Doctors of the Church, στοιχεῖα μεγάλα. Jerome† cites a similar passage of Eusebius in his *Polycrates*, and employs, in the same sense, the word *elementa*, following the usage of the Latin version of the New Testament, which mode of proceeding, the late Fabricius, in his notes on the passage, regards with disaprobation. Others, who were unacquainted with this usage, and with the ecclesiastical latinity, were disposed to find here the *elements* spoken of in the schools of philosophy. Various reasons are given by Fabricius and Valesius, why *the stars* were called στοιχεῖα; with whose opinions, however, I am not satisfied. Why may we not suppose, that Peter had in mind, in writing this passage, the words which occur in 2 Sam. xxii. 8. מוֹסְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם which I understand of *the heavens* themselves, and the οὐράνια στοιχεῖα or *stars*, and not of *the earth* and *the mountains*, with the Vulgate, nor of *the air*, with Cocceius, which last sense, the connected idea of *shaking* does not seem to favour. The word מוֹסְדוֹת denotes, in my opinion, *those things by which any thing consists, the essential constituents of any thing.* The מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ which God is said to have appointed ,Prov. viii. 29., are *the constituent parts of the earth. of which it consists;* and in Ps lxxxii. 5., the מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ are said to be *out of course*, that is, *those things, upon which the existence and safety of the state essentially depended, were unsettled.* The Jewish teachers, also, denote *the elements* of the schools, and *the first principles of things*, by means of words, de-

* Histor. Eccles. iii. 31. (on which passage consult Valesius) and v. 24.

† De Virr. Illustr. c. 45.

rived from the same root as the word just cited; for example, יְסוֹד and יְסֹד from the root יָסַד. But, in reference to such observations in general, there is need of much and attentive reading of the Fathers. They are not such as to meet, at once, the eye of the negligent reader,—one who has not his eyes and mind intent on every thing. How few, indeed, at the present day, have any desire to peruse the Fathers, especially for the sake of a better understanding of the sacred books!

XXI.

Among the methods of investigating the signification of words and of forms of speech, I am accustomed earnestly to recommend, and freely to employ, in the business of interpretation, *the analogy of languages;* in relation to which, although no rules, as far, at least, as I am acquainted, have been given, still, examples of its use, by distinguished interpreters of divine and human books, are extant. It employs, in regard to those words and constructions which either are in themselves doubtful and ambiguous, or, through the mistakes and ignorance of interpreters, and the perverseness of human opinions, have contracted a degree of ambiguity and obscurity, a comparison, in the first place, of similar forms, in the same language; then in languages which have a mutual resemblance, and are, as it were, cognate; and finally, in the other languages. In every language, the same thought is expressed in a variety of ways, both in detached words,—especially those by which the attributes of things, actions, and the like, are designated,—and also in forms of speech. Although there is not, in these kindred modes of expression, a perfect tautology, still, the diversity of meaning is so slight, that scarcely any account is made of it, and it is of no importance in relation to the main point. It is obvious, therefore,

to all, that the comparison of such examples, proffers much assistance to the interpreter, when expressions, ambiguous in themselves or from their collocation, are compared with others, which are clear and certain; and when passages of authors are compared with one another, in which, as the subject itself and the rest of the discourse evince, the same thing is done, or the same thing is said, in other words, or in other forms of speech. There are, besides, certain classes, as it were, of words, by means of which, not the same things, indeed, are denoted, but similar modes of being and of acting. It behoves us to have these classes distinctly marked, and particularly, if any doubt occurs in regard to any word, to refer it to the form of its own class, lest we should attach to a word a false, inapposite, violent, or absurd sense, as has frequently been the case in the Greek language, in words compounded of the prepositions ἀνὰ, σὺν, πρὸ, περὶ, ἐκ, &c.; or lest we fall into an inconsistency, by adopting, in similar classes, a different mode of interpretation; in which respect, even good interpreters often err. Of this kind, are many things in every language. It becomes our duty, therefore, sometimes, in interpreting, to examine words and investigate their meaning, by means of this *analogy*, for the purpose of discovering the true sense, or of illustrating and confirming it.

XXII.

But, the analogy which subsists between different languages, and their mutual comparison, affords, as I have said, assistance in interpretation. For, a view of the thing itself, and experience, have led me to believe, that no one can be employed, with eminent skill and success, in any ancient language, differing widely from his own vernacular tongue, unless he shall have added a competent knowledge of one and another ancient language. The reason why, as

it seems to me, so very few have attained, at any time, to a tolerable acquaintance with the Hebrew, for example, or have engaged, with unequivocal success, in the business of interpretation, is simply this, that the greater number have either entirely neglected, or have glanced at, in a superficial manner, not only its kindred dialects, but also Greek and Latin letters. For, these persons depend entirely upon their dictionaries, and are wont to compare the Hebrew, a scanty knowledge of which they have obtained from this source, with their vernacular tongue, and hence give birth to wonderful interpretations, and especially to unnatural emphases. Cocceius, as is manifest from his commentaries, and even from the brief notes, introduced, from his work, into the edition of Josephus by Havercamp; and Schultens, who lately stood first in the department of oriental literature, were eminently skilled in Greek letters. We drop this remark, however, in passing, for the purpose of admonishing the young. I have elsewhere* shown, that the phrase סור מִבֵּין רַגְלַיִם is clearly understood, when we compare it with the Greek phrase ἐκ ποδῶν γεγονέναι or ἀπιέναι, of whose meaning no one entertains a doubt, and with the Latin *e medio discedere.* What is meant by the term πύργος, in Matth. xxi. 33., different from what is conveyed by the corresponding term in our vernacular tongue, will be clearly seen by any one, who may have compared it with the Latin *turris* in Livy xxxiii. 48., although it might be understood, also, from Lucian, who, in his *Pseudologista* c. 19., numbers the πυργίον among the κτήματα *possessions.* In regard to the word πεπραμένος, in Rom. vii. 18., the adversary would be silent, and the doubting, confirmed, if it were compared with the Latin *addictus*, which is properly spoken of him who is sold to another, whether by his own act or that of another, and then of one who

* De Vestigiis Hebr. Linguæ in Ling. Graeca.

is obnoxious to another, from whatever cause, so that he is harassed by him. The difficulty, however, in regard to this word, might also have been relieved by a comparison of the Hebrew. What is meant by the phrase ὡς διὰ πυρὸς, will be obvious by comparing it with the Latin *ambustus*, which is frequently met with in Cicero, in a similar connexion. Words and phrases of this kind, are found, in great numbers, in the languages, and admit of being clearly understood and satisfactorily illustrated, by such a comparison ; and I have noticed, also, that Schultens has employed this method, with eminent success, in illustrating the Hebrew expressions, in his admirable commentaries on Job, and on the Proverbs, and elsewhere.

XXIII.

So far, we have seen that the method of investigation receives assistance from the resemblance of words and of tropes. There is still, however, another method, more subtile, indeed, but necessary, sometimes, and exceedingly useful,—especially when other methods fail to conduct us to the sense. It cannot be doubted, that many things, whatever may be their character, may affect the minds of men in the same manner, so as to lead them to think, and judge, and act alike, —as we see to be the fact in the daily affairs of ordinary life. But, in expressing these, they are wont to differ, not merely in style, which might naturally be expected, but in the expressions they employ, so as to use words and forms of speech which have but little correspondence with one another. So that, if any one should attempt to express them, literally, in another language, he would suppose that things entirely different were indicated. That this frequently happens, may be seen even from what I have before said. In such a case, there cannot remain a doubt, that the interpreter may be greatly assisted, if, when some obscurity

or ambiguity arises, owing to too great a difference from our vernacular idiom, we examine what the authors in other languages have said concerning those same things and times, in order that, if these last speak more plainly, or more consistently with our vernacular language, we may hence understand and explain the things which are more obscure. There are very many things in the Greek, which have been understood, in this manner, by a comparison with the Latin, and *vice versa;* and not a few among the Hebraisms, have been understood by such a comparison with the Greek, or the Latin, or some other language. And this comparison can no where be more advantageous, in my opinion, than in the oriental languages, and in the Greek, particularly so far as it resembles the Hebrew; because, the manner in which these express their thoughts, differs widely from that which the people use who are found nearer to the West and the North. This latter mode of comparison, however, as well as those before-mentioned, requires much circumspection and judgment, together with much reading and exercise, in order that fit subjects of comparison may be at hand, lest we be deceived by some trivial resemblance, or compare things entirely dissimilar, and thus wander from the true sense.

XXIV.

So far, we have attempted to show how numerous and how great difficulties present themselves, in the investigation of the sense of words, by means of observations on the usage of speech. It now devolves on us, in pursuance of our plan, to speak of *grammatical rules*, properly so called; although these rules are, also, themselves, founded upon observations, drawn from the usage of speech. Hence we become acquainted with the force and use of the tenses, moods, inflexions, articles and particles; and then the con-

nexions of words, and the forms of speech. Without this, neither the judgment, pertaining to the various readings, of which I have treated above, can be exercised; nor the pure Greek be distinguished from that which is tinctured with the Hebrew idiom; nor the sense be satisfactorily investigated; because, an interpretation which is repugnant to these precepts of Grammarians, can, by no means, be approved as true. The number, however, of these precepts and observations is so great, that it becomes a very difficult matter to form an acquaintance with them all; and a still more difficult thing, to have them always at hand, so that they may suggest themselves, readily, in our reading and interpreting, and remind us of what demands attention and judgment. And this requires a great amount of exercise and much practice; especially, when we consider, that the most of them are minute, and are occupied about little matters, about syllables, and, we might almost say, about single letters, and are easily forgotten, and escape us, at the very time when we most need their presence,—when we are caught by the novelty of the interpretation of another, or are charmed by the deceitful flattery of our own. Accordingly, great and eminent scholars have, not unfrequently, been deceived, in this particular. We shall present a few examples, that the student may be reminded of the imbecility of man, and learn to be on his guard. Erasmus was the first to explore that noble passage in Rom. ix. 5., —a powerful passage, also, for asserting the divinity of Christ. The same thing happened to him, in this case, which happens, ordinarily, to all those who undertake to refine in things plain and easy, whether it proceed from a certain captiousness of spirit or from some other cause. In his opinion, if Paul had designed to convey the meaning commonly received, he would have said ὅς ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς for ὅς ἐστι επὶ πάντων θεὸς; which mode of expression, as he himself, indeed, was well aware, contradicts the first

principles of grammar, and that universal precept, which teaches, that when the finite verb is converted into a participle, the relative ὅς is always changed into the article ὁ. We can say μακάριος ὅς τηρεῖ πάντα ταῦτα; but, when the change above-mentioned takes place, we must say μακάριος ὁ τηρῶν and not ὅς τηρῶν. But I have elsewhere* said enough concerning this passage, in opposition to the views both of this scholar and of Wetstein. In the passage 1 Cor. v. 12. οὐχὶ τοὺς ἔσω ὑμεῖς κρίνετε; the Syriac translator received the word κρίνετε as an imperative mood, in which he was followed by others. Hence it came to pass, that the word ἐξαρεῖτε, which occurs in the sequel, was changed, in some copies, into the imperative ἐξαιρετε or ἐξάρατε; although, it must be conceded, this reading may have been derived, originally, from the Latin version. In this instance, the translator did not recollect, that the particle οὐχὶ does not admit such a construction, inasmuch as it has a negative force, either simply, as in v. 2., or with an interrogation. In the same manner, also, our countryman G. Olearius, who certainly understood these matters, has erred, in translating the words of our Saviour in Matth. xxiv. 2. οὐ βλέπετε πάντα ταῦτα; which he renders *nolite hæc mirari;* which translation, while it flattered by its congruity with the context and its goodness, did not permit him to recollect, that it required μὴ βλέπετε in place of οὐ βλέπετε. Heumann,† also, has run into an error of the same kind, in translating ἔστε, in 1 Thess. v. 4., as an imperative. In the Epistle to the Corinthians above cited, x 30., in the phrase εἰ ἐγὼ χάριτι μετέχω, τί βλασφημοῦμαι, ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐγὼ εὐχαριστῶ; some eminently learned men have connected χάριτι with μετέχω in the construction, and translate the clause thus; *if I am a partaker of grace,—of the divine goodness;* differing wide-

* Acta Erudit. for the year 1754.

† Progr. Pasch. for the year 1756.

ly from Grotius, L. Bos, and J. Alberti,* who understand the word χάριτι to denote, absolutely, *by grace,—through the goodness of God.* But, in the former construction, those learned men forgot that the form would necessarily be μετέχω χάριτος. In Acts iii. 21., the words ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν μὲν δέξασθαι are considered, by some men of learning, as having reference to the celestial kingdom, obtained by Christ, on his ascension into the heavens; which sense, to say nothing of other difficulties, would demand, according to the rules of grammar, ὃν ἔδει οὐρανὸν μὲν δέξασθαι, as in the passage in Luke xxiv. 26., ταῦτα ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν χριστόν. Again, in Acts vii. 14., in the words ἐν ψυχαῖς ἑβδομήκοντα πέντε, Corn. Bertram, desirous of conforming the number here specified to the reading of the Hebrew copy, conjectured that πάντες should be read for πέντε. He had in his mind the elegant classical Greek form, in which, πᾶς is subjoined to a word denoting number, in order that a definite number may be understood; as in the following passage of Callimachus; πέντ' ἔσαν αἱ πᾶσαι *there were five in all.* Theod. Beza, a scholar eminently skilled in Greek letters, approved this emendation and our countryman Glass† deemed it well worthy of regard, adding, "*where the thing itself appears to be so clear, and the correction drawn from the Hebrew original of the Old Testament is so obvious, who would be so superstitiously cautious, as to apprehend, that, from this one or another such error, the integrity or authority of the entire reading of the New Testament is destroyed?*" In truth, the proposed emendation ought to be rejected as useless, because it stands in opposition to the most common rules of Grammar, which require the form ἐν ψυχαῖς ἑβδομήκοντα πάσαις; and this departs still further from the common reading. And, indeed, there is nothing

* Glossar. Gr. in N. T.

† Philol. Sacr. Lib. i. Tr. ii. n. 10.

which I have more frequently noticed than this fact, that the most erudite scholars are, occasionally, misled by some nice and ingenious observation; and, whilst they are endeavouring, by means of it, to correct or explain something, they offend, grievously, against the best established rules. It is easy, then, to see, how great is the difficulty which presents itself, both in learning and in applying this method. We stand in need, particularly, of much and accurate exercise, in diligently examining whatever we may read, by these grammatical rules, and in ascertaining what they demand, and what, in consistency with them, we may conclude in relation to the sense of the words.

XXV.

Among the offices of a good interpreter, I specified also *the careful discrimination between proper and tropical diction* This discrimination has, as is manifest, been rendered especially necessary, by certain controversies about the Lord's Supper, about the Character of Christ, &c. In other writings, a doubt or a controversy of this kind, rarely occurs. So that, among the numerous commentaries and books of observations, and of various readings, which have come into my hands, I do not recollect to have met with any thing on the subject of this discrimination between tropical and proper diction. The matter is judged of, here, by common sense, which is deemed entirely competent. It would suffice in the sacred writings also, if we read and examined them with the same unbiassed judgment. Other writings are approached with minds free from preconceived opinions, while the majority of those who approach the sacred records, come with minds prepossessed, beforehand, in regard to what they ought to seek and find in them. It is not surprising, therefore, that tropes also are sought for and found where none exist, and where the sound and unpreju-

diced reader,—who is prepared to receive whatever he may find, and regards and follows nothing but the usage of speech, and the spirit of the language,—never once dreams of a trope. But, as in other matters, the more difficult things more easily admit an explanation, than those which are very easy and simple ;—inasmuch as, in these, we are under the necessity of searching for the thing to be explained, whereas, in those, the matter and things to be explained, readily suggest themselves,—so also, this matter, of which we are treating, otherwise easy and simple, is rendered perplexed and difficult by this very facility itself. There was need of rules, which would furnish us with indubitable marks, by whose presence the genuine tropes might be recognised, and by whose absence the false tropes might be detected. The rules, however, pertaining to this department, which are met with in hermeneutical treatises, will be found, by the accurate student, to be too indefinite. Take, for example, the following: *we ought not readily* (*non facile*) *to depart from the proper sense of words:* of which precept, at the present day, amid so much knowledge, every one should be ashamed, who wishes to be numbered among the learned. For, this injunction—a very ancient and correct one, undoubtedly,—has regard, not to tropes but to allegories ; and the *proper sense*, here spoken of, is that which, at the present day, is denominated the *literal.* How very ambiguous and indefinite, also, is the phrase *non facile!** If it be understood in the sense of *very rarely*, in accordance with the usage of the Latin language, the precept will be found to be false, for there is scarcely a page in the sacred

* J. F. Gronovius, in his note upon Tacit. Ann. I. 72. cites the following words of a jurist : *nec lubricum linguae ad pœnam facile trahendum est ;* upon which he remarks: "but the ambiguity is in the phrase *non facile.*"

writings, in which instances of tropical diction do not occur; and Glass has filled a considerable portion of his work with examples of figurative expressions. Nor is the exposition of Danhauer,* Tarnow,† and others, a more satisfactory one, who understand the precept as enjoining, that a trope is not to be admitted *without an obvious reason and necessity.* For, the precept is still unfit for use, inasmuch as no certain marks of an obvious reason and necessity are furnished, certainly not from nature, and the analogy of languages, which was especially to be regarded.‡ Calovius§ has treated this subject with more accuracy and subtilty; more like a metaphysician, however, and logician, than a grammarian. It is not surprising, therefore, if the student meets with considerable difficulty, in the discussions concerning tropical and figurative expressions in the language of the inspired writers. Nor is it to be wondered at, that, sometimes, if not in those passages whose acceptation is settled in the systems of doctrine, at least, in others, where the judgment is left free, he should suffer himself to be im-

* Idea Boni Interpretis p. 85. Hermeneut. Sacr. p. 259.

† Exercitt. Biblic.

‡ Turretin (*De Interpret. S. S. p.* 201.), teaching how *tropical* diction may be distinguished from *proper*, recommends attention to the nature of the subject. "*If the thing*," says he, "*understood according to the literal sense, seems to be impossible, the expression ought, in that case, to be regarded as figurative*" In the first place, we may remark that this *seems* is ambiguous and fallacious; and, in the next place, it is a matter of investigation and dispute whether the thing be impossible or not. He adds further; "*we are to decide in the same manner, when any thing is commanded which seems cruel and impious*," and makes an application of this to the Eucharist. Again he introduces this indefinite phrase *seems*. Besides, if Abraham had wished to conform to this rule, he certainly ought to have understood the command of God, concerning the sacrifice of his son, in a figurative sense.

§ De Persona Christi. p. 547.

posed upon by those who inconsiderately introduce tropes and figures. The rule—so he styles it,—which Le Clerc furnishes, is altogether useless; *the proper sense is not to be confounded with the metaphorical.* The examples, which he cites, are still more futile, and quite unnecessary in a thing which every boy is acquainted with, and has never been called in question by any one.

XXVI.

A still greater difficulty presents itself in relation to *emphases.* For, this part also of the general subject, has never been sufficiently defined, and illustrated by means of precise rules, which might assist and direct the inquiring mind, in exploring and estimating the emphatic expressions. The treatises on interpretation, now in circulation, contain scarcely any thing beyond what is comprised in such rules as the following: *genuine emphases are not to be rejected: false emphases are not to be admitted:* which canons are wont to be illustrated, in the schools, solely by examples, as they may appear to each one to be genuine or false. No one, indeed, questions the correctness of these precepts; nor does any one approve an emphasis which he supposes to be unsound, or not entirely consistent with truth. For, who is there that does not regard his own views and conclusions on this subject, as the best? We needed rather to have been taught what are the infallible marks of a true emphasis, on the discovery of which, it may be understood that an expression is really emphatic. This instruction must be in keeping with the usage of speech of good writers, and enable us to decide, in what passages, and in what manner, in every language, the use of emphases obtains. Finally, the minds of the learners are to be exercised, by suitable examples, in reference to this faculty of judging. This is the more necessary, the more prone

the weaker sort—those unskilled in the languages, and less exercised in interpretation,—are to create emphases from etymologies, from prepositions, from tropes of every kind, or, as Erasmus remarks, on 1 Cor. vi. 1., to trifle in serious matters. I have known some eminently learned men to trifle egregiously in interpreting human writings, both Greek and Latin, by doing violence to words in the matter of emphases. What can we expect, then, in the case of the inspired writings, in which the reverence itself which they deservedly command, can easily persuade us, that more is meant by the words than the Holy Spirit designed to convey? The Jews, as we well know, were, in this manner, in former times, deceived; and, in the last century, Cocceius also, and his emulators, who were resolved to render the sacred books, because they were divine, as significant as possible. In a certain sense, this was right; that is, with the understanding, *as much as possible, in consistency with the genius of the language, and the usage of speech;* but those persons, having adopted the principle without any limitation or modification, discovered every where in the words, not only emphases, but also allegories, and prophecies, no one of which had ever entered into the minds of the inspired writers. This mode of proceeding was deservedly censured by learned and pious theologians, who thought that the Scriptures were rather trifled with, than honoured, by this treatment. The language, also, of the inspired writers, so far as it conforms to the Hebrew usage, may easily mislead the unwary, and such as are not sufficiently skilled and exercised in the legitimate method; because, the Hebrew idiom differs widely, in many respects, from the genius and idiom of our own and also of the Latin language. Accordingly, those who compare the Hebrew forms of speech which occur in the New Testament, with those of the Latin or of their vernacular tongue, under the guidance of the common dictionaries, without considering the spirit of the Hebrew language, are easily deceived by

empty notions of emphases, of which the divine oracles stand in no need; for example, where the *abstract* is placed for the *concrete*,—a mode of expression common in the Hebrew; where tropes occur, and where numbers are specified. Le Clerc, in his work which he is pleased to style "*Ars Critica*," sets forth the following *rule*, as he calls it (although it is any thing but a *rule*, which may assist us in understanding or judging in these matters): *many things seem to be emphatic in the versions, which, in the originals themselves, are devoid of emphasis;* and, having cited examples illustrative, as he supposes, of this position, of which examples it does not become me now to speak, he then presents, at the close §. 15., the following canon: *although the words of the ancient writers should seem to be emphatic, still, it is sufficient to interpret them in a plainer and weaker sense, provided, by pressing it, we involve ourselves in some absurdity.* If such an absurdity really follows, I acknowledge the rule to be sound and true. But the canon is, correctly speaking, applicable to but one example of all which he has cited, viz. the one from Exod. iv. 21., and that, too, is an instance rather of a tropical diction, than of an emphasis. And what becomes of all the other false emphases? For it is by no means true, that all of them embrace an absurdity. They present, more frequently, a probable sense, adapted to the popular harangue, employed in exhorting, terrifying, and admonishing;—pious emphases, we may call them, but still inaccurate. What shall we say of an eminent critic, disciplined in the school of logical subtilty? What kind of rules does he furnish, for the ascertaining and judging of good and legitimate emphases? Is it really less censurable to diminish, in his zeal for rejecting false emphases, the real force of the divinely inspired writers? His critical acumen seems to fail him here. Nay, he convinces us, by many examples, that he could not see and judge, with acuteness, in this matter of *emphasis*. He denies, for ex-

ample, that the words of Christ in Matth. vi. μὴ μεριμνήσητε, were spoken with emphasis, as those would have us suppose, who assert that the perfect Christian ought to part with all his possessions, and be fed from the tables of others. But these short sighted persons did not discern and understand the emphasis in these words. They thought simply of *care*, when they ought to have understood *anxious, solicitous, assiduous care.* But, even admitting that laws and rules for judging of emphases were furnished, in a written treatise, with diligence and perspicuity, and in a form which adapts itself to use,—which we shall, at some future day, with leave of Providence, attempt to do,—still, much labour would remain. For, this matter demands an accurate knowledge of languages, much and curious reading, together with exercise; and it stands in need of these more than of the subtilty of rules, by which, indeed, the way merely is pointed out. It is one thing, however, to know the way; and another, to arrive, by actually travelling it, at the point at which you aim.

XXVII.

The reconciliation of apparent discrepancies, concerning which it now remains for us to speak, in accordance with the proposed plan, although it very much needs a knowledge of things, demands, also, the aid of Grammar, which, as we have seen, is not very easily procured or applied. For, in the first place, there is much need of that nice and accurate judgment, of which we treated at the commencement, at least so far as not to permit ourselves to be deceived by those who endeavour, by means of conjectures, to settle the matter in regard to the reading. Again, should the discrepancy be of a doctrinal character, although the analogy of the faith affords assistance, still it is by no means sufficient. We ought to have in readiness, also, observations concerning the force of words, derived especi-

ally from the Hebrew usage, between which and the usage of the occidental languages there exists a wide difference, and also from the analog of languages; by which means, the thing is generally satisfactorily composed. In this mode of proceeding, what difficulties occur, has been stated above. When the discrepancy is of a historical character, inasmuch as the names of persons, of places, and of times, and also numbers, attributes, and predicates, differ, the usage of historians should be ascertained, in respect of the variety of narration without a real disagreement, and also in respect of the manner of speaking which they frequently employ, agreeably to the nature of their plan, and not reducible to extreme accuracy and precision. In such comparisons, we should endeavour to ascertain, which one of two passages should be accommodated to the other; of which one of two historians the narrative should be accommodated to that of the other. The former is an acquisition beyond the reach of any one, who has not been much and accurately employed, in the reading and comparison of the historians; the latter demands a judgment corrected by a familiarity with many examples, and exercise regulated in conformity with them. It is likewise profitable to have read the commentaries and remarks of critics, in which they have succeeded in reconciling apparently discrepant passages in ancient historians, by means of those observations which I have alluded to, concerning the manner of narrating and of speaking. But all are undoubtedly aware, how much labour, study, care, and judgment these things demand; nor will any one hesitate to acknowledge, that this portion of grammatical interpretation is by far the most difficult.

XXVIII.

We have now brought to a close, the discussion concerning the difficulties attending the successful interpretation of

the New Testament. This discussion was undertaken, solely with the design of eradicating from the minds of the young, who betake themselves to the study of theology, the notion,—prejudicial to the interests of theology itself, and, especially, to the study of the languages,—that a very moderate, and, indeed, scarcely any knowledge of the languages, particularly of the Greek, is requisite to enable us to understand thoroughly, and interpret successfully, the books of the New Testament. This notion has operated, also, to exclude the majority from the opportunities of attaining to this ability. We indulged the hope, moreover, that we might whet and incite the minds of the young, to a desire of cultivating a familiarity, both with useful letters, and with the inspired books. Nothing sooner renders complicated and difficult, even those things which are in themselves easy, than a notion of their easiness; much more is this the fact, in regard to such as present many and weighty difficulties. For, it begets negligence and sloth, which forbid any attainments in a noble pursuit. Indeed, if any thing deserves the most vigorous efforts of the mind, it is, certainly, the inspired volume, to the correct and profound understanding of which, it becomes Christians to devote their study and care,—those Christians, especially, who profess to be disciples and followers of Luther, whose theological information was manifestly derived from that familiarity with sacred things, for which he was indebted to the study of the languages. We see how much care and labour are bestowed, in accurately understanding and interpreting the other authors, both Greek and Latin, by those who profess to be interpreters of them; how carefully, also, they examine, not only every thing and every word, but even single letters, in order that nothing may be left unscrutinized and unexplored. And does it not become those, who aim to become the professed interpreters of the sacred writings, to bestow upon them

an equal and even a greater amount of study and diligence? We are just now preparing our minds for the celebration of the memory of the Imperial Peace, by means of which, that most delightful and precious blessing, Religious Liberty, was either obtained or secured to us. We do not mean, by this, a licentiousness in the treatment of divine things This deserves, on the contrary, any name but that most attractive one of *Liberty*. As civil liberty is entirely subjected to laws, on the removal of which, either licentiousness or slavery is the consequence; so this liberty in sacred matters, is discerned in this, that we are not constrained to form our opinions of divine things, from the arbitrary will and command of any one, but we may listen to the voice of the inspired volume alone, as to that of an only and most authoritative law, and render obedience to it. Those, therefore, who profess to be the friends and defenders of this liberty, ought to embrace and observe this law, and to occupy themselves with it, to examine it, and meditate upon it, by night, and by day. And this liberty cannot even be maintained, without that desire and diligence, of which I have spoken, in understanding the inspired books, by the assistance of useful learning It was this that formerly prepared the way for seeking and obtaining religious liberty; and should this be again withdrawn or despised, liberty will also be withdrawn and perish; and that barbarism will again return, which once invaded sacred letters and the minds of men, and subjected the whole church to the domination of Rome. Ye, then, who love our religion; ye, especially, who are devoted to theology, to whom is entrusted the guardianship and defence of this religious liberty, guard, I beseech you, against such a consequence, and consult for the accurate study of all useful letters, and of the inspired writings, for the purity and liberty of sacred things, and also for your own praise and glory, to which, in this department of study, there is no other way of access, than the one I have recommended.

ON ORIGEN,

THE FATHER OF THE GRAMMATICAL INTERPRETATION

OF

The Scriptures.

On Origen,

THE FATHER OF THE GRAMMATICAL INTERPRETATION

OF THE SCRIPTURES.

I.

The merits of Origen—a man who stands conspicuous amongst a few,—have been, in every age, a subject of controversy. Some have not known how to set bounds to their admiration, and others, to their censures. In regard, however, to his method of proceeding and his skill, in handling the sacred writings, he is more uniformly and correctly praised. Jerome, with whom no one, in the Latin Church, can be compared, for learning, and, especially, for sacred learning, and not very friendly to the allegorical method of interpretation, nevertheless, *desired to possess, even with the odium of the name of Origen, his knowledge of the Scriptures.** Masius, also, an excellent interpreter, according to the grammatical method, declares that *he knows not whether, from the time of our Saviour, any one has flourished, either superior in talents, or more exercised in sacred letters, than Origen.*† And it would be easy, to adduce, from every age, testimonies of the same favourable character. But this renown is tarnished and almost obliterated, by his fondness for the allegorical mode of interpretation; in which, beyond a doubt, he exceeded the proper limits, much to the prejudice of di-

* Questt. sup. Gen. † In his note upon Joshua i. 2

vine truth. For, as the mind of man, owing to a certain natural feeling of envy toward men of eminence, is more prone to censure than to praise, and discovers, with more acuteness, faults and blemishes, than virtues and excellencies; so also, in this case, the above-mentioned fault of Origen, occupied the attention of most persons, and led them to disregard his excellencies, and his distinguished merits, in the same department. Accordingly, we may see those who have undertaken to write upon the abilities of Origen as an interpreter, dwelling largely and diligently on the allegorical method, but extremely sparing and negligent in regard to the grammatical. We, who are accustomed to search out and praise the virtues of eminent men, rather than to inquire after and censure their faults,—for, this mode of proceeding, both conduces more liberally to the enjoyment of the mind itself, and is more fruitful in the benefits of imitation,—we, therefore, have rather endeavoured to ascertain the merits of Origen, in the grammatical interpretation of the inspired writings. In pursuing this inquiry, we arrived at the conclusion,—which, at the present time, we design to establish,—that Origen was the first to devote his mind, to the treatment of the sacred writings, after the manner of the grammarians; and that, whatsoever advances, in this respect, particularly as it regards the books of the New Testament, were made by the ancient Christian Church, are nearly all to be traced, originally, from Origen. In this discussion, we shall consider, first of all, the arguments which possess a conjectural probability; through which, the minds of our readers may be enabled to approach the other class of arguments, which rest upon the faith of history and facts.

II.

In the infancy of Christianity, while, as yet, each of the inspired books was recent, or was used only by those of the

same country with their respective authors; while the language, in which they were written, was not yet removed from common use, or much altered, and the original condition of things was not yet changed; there was no need of grammatical interpretation, nor of grammatical or historical commentaries. Interpretation was busied entirely about things, and not about words. This mode of interpretation, moreover, was in vogue, in my opinion, in the most remote ages, before the birth of Christ, among *the prophets*,—men inspired by the Spirit of God,—whose disciples and schools are commemorated in the sacred volume. For, I am induced to believe, that what interpreters, when expounding the passage 2 Kings ii. 2., are wont to consider as the specific duty discharged in these schools of the prophets, was not the only one; but, that the interpretation of the divine oracles, constituted another and a prominent duty. The scope of this interpretation was two-fold. The first, and, indeed, the principal one, was, the understanding of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and of the figures and types, by which the kingdom of Christ, with its blessings, was shadowed forth. The other was, to enable them to collect and apply every thing that had been said and done, for the purposes of doctrine, instruction, correction, reproof, and consolation; and, also, to expound the law of God, and to apply it, in the cases which, from time to time, presented themselves. For this opinion, I think I have sufficient support. It is abundantly manifest, that the most ancient of the Jews, did refer to Christ, prophecies, which the event has clearly proved to us, did actually pertain to him. If they did not thus refer all the prophecies to Christ, they did so, with the majority, at least, and the more important ones, as has been shown by the most eminent scholars. Now, it appears to me, that these Jews could not, in any manner, have done this, by their own unassisted powers. For, it is very

clear, and approves itself even to common sense, that, in those prophecies, in which there was nothing definite concerning persons, places, and times, the human powers could attain to no certainty; and if any one laboured to interpret them, he could furnish nothing but conjectures,—pious, perhaps, and harmless, but still mere conjectures. So that, it ought not to be a matter of doubt, that the ancient Jews received their views of such prophecies from the prophets themselves;—not from those very prophets who originally pronounced them, as Schoetgen* thinks, (for this supposition is not necessary,) but, from those, to whomsoever God had granted this faculty of interpretation. For, in the early ages of the Christian church, also, among the miraculous powers conferred of God, was the interpretation of the prophets; and our Saviour himself, the first and the greatest of all prophets, by expounding the prophecies which had long before been delivered concerning himself, rendered them intelligible to the Apostles.† Prudent theologians, indeed, are willing to admit among the number of types, such, alone, as the Holy Spirit designed to be indicative of future things; because, it cannot be determined, with certainty, unless by the judgment of the Holy Spirit himself. Accordingly, they are unwilling to recognise other types, than those which Christ and the Apostles have declared to be such. It is not, however, to be believed, that the ancient Israelites had no certain knowledge of types; nay, consistently with the analogy of the faith, it cannot be doubted, that they were aware, of what thing, the victims, the paschal lamb, the brazen serpent, and others, were types. Hence, in this matter, also, the prophets instructed their disciples. And now, in relation to the other object, which the prophets kept in view, in their

* Horae Talmud. ii. Praef. § 3.

† Luke xxiv. 27.

interpretations, as we have before stated, I apprehend that no one will even entertain a doubt.

III.

After the Babylonian captivity, when the gift of prophecy had ceased,—by which, I do not mean to intimate, that there were no prophets at all, but, that they were more rarely met with,—schools were established, which took the place of the prophets, in which schools, the same things were treated of, but indirectly, and from tradition (for, the instructions of the prophets had not been entirely lost), and according to the ability of each one, acquired by reading, thought, and exercise. These schools were denominated בָּתֵּי־הַמִּדְרָשׁוֹת *houses of study.* As they here exercised their inventive faculties,—keen, indeed, but neither enlightened from above, nor disciplined by sound philosophy and elegant learning, and much too exuberant, —there arose, besides other corruptions, of which it is unnecessary here to speak particularly, the allegorical mode of interpretation, which, losing sight of the grammatical sense, converted more things into allegories and figures, than was necessary or permitted by the thing itself. Accordingly, the interpretation in vogue among the learned men in those times, was mixed and compounded of sound traditions, those, to wit, which were traceable to a period of antiquity and to the prophets themselves, and of a larger number of things which were supplied by their own invention; not to be despised, indeed, but demanding great judgment in their selection. In regard to those things which we meet with in Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, belonging to the typical and allegorical method, although I would not venture to say, that all of them were derived from the instructions of Gamaliel, and other Jewish teachers, and collected with judgment,—in which respect, he

had been enlightened by the Holy Spirit; still, we may gather from those things which he has in common with Philo of Alexandria, already noticed by scholars, that certain things were first known by the inspired Apostle, from that source. For, that Philo had been read by Paul, as some suppose, which supposition seems probable to Wetstein also,* and that those things which he has in common, were drawn from that writer, seems improbable for many reasons, which I shall specify elsewhere. He may have received them from that source; but, still, they could not be approved by the Holy Spirit, and submitted to Paul, unless they had originally proceeded from Itself, and from those ancient sources of which I have already spoken. Such a mode of interpretation, therefore, was, at the birth of Christ, in vogue among the Jews.

IV.

At the time when the books of the Evangelists and of the Apostles were first written, there was, evidently, no need of grammatical interpreters, because the authors employed a language which was familiar to those to whom and for whose sake those books were written; and those to whom they wrote were, also, in possession of knowledge, derived immediately from the instructions of the Apostles. The things "*hard to be understood,*" of Paul, and other things in the inspired writings, which Peter† informs us, were "*wrested*" by "*the unstable and unlearned,*" were owing to the sublimity and novelty of the subject, rather than to the difficulty of the words. And the phrase ἐν οἷς *in which*, relates, not to the *Epistles*, but to ταῦτα *these things*, concerning which, Peter himself had before spo-

* Nov. Test. Vol. ii. p. 384. † 2 Pet. iii. 16.

ken. So that, in those primitive times, no one thought of commentaries, especially of historical and grammatical commentaries, the necessity and desire of which, as in other books, so here also, are occasioned by time, and changes, and the transmission of the books themselves to other nations; from which causes alone, an obscurity in regard to certain words is wont to arise, without any fault or error of the authors, and we are not permitted to think of any other difficulty in the inspired writings, than what has proceeded from this source. Besides this, there were still living holy men, who proceeded from the school of the Apostles, who could be consulted, in case of doubt or ambiguity. The exposition of *things* was all that remained for them; and this was resorted to, for the purpose of edification, in meetings for the purposes of religion, and also in books, which explained and illustrated the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, and kept alive and confirmed the faith, by exhorting, provoking, and consoling: which mode of interpretation is employed, at the present day, by masters of schools, by popular preachers, and by the authors of devotional books. In this mode of interpretation, indeed, the use of allegories was always found; moderate, however, and not calculated to prejudice that mode of interpretation which is properly called grammatical; until Origen, imbued with Jewish learning and Grecian philosophy, and possessed, himself, of talents, having advanced further, pursued, too far, the allegorical method, and sometimes to the detriment, and, almost, the destruction, of the grammatical sense; and, in this manner, brought the allegorical method into contempt, not, however, in such a sense, that it was not employed, by those very persons, who, on this pretext, loaded Origen with censures; by Jerome, for example, Augustine, and others, in commentaries written for the instruction of the people, and in sermons addressed to popular audiences, but still

with greater moderation by those who were more learned and skilful.

V.

But, after that the inspired writings had contracted some degree of age, and had come, together with the Christian religion, to those who were unacquainted with the Hebrew language, and differed, very much, from the Jews, in their manner of speaking, who did not, ordinarily, understand the Greek words, used in a Hebrew sense; the necessity of grammatical interpretation first began to exist, and learned men, also, began, after the manner of the grammarians, to write commentaries upon the inspired books. That the Greeks led the way in this, cannot be doubted by any one who is well versed in the monuments, of antiquity, and has been correctly observed, also, by the Benedictine monks, in the Preface to the commentary on Matthew by Hilary of Poictiers. For, as Rome, the mistress of the world, was not ashamed, at a period long before, to ask of Greece instruction in all the arts; so also, in these later times, the Latin church derived all their knowledge from the Greek church. But, among the Greeks, Origen was the first who introduced this study of grammatical interpretation, and the interpretation itself; and furnished, also, an example of the management of it, which was followed by others; for, he was the first in the Greek church, and also the last, in whom were found all things which furnish a competent ability for such an undertaking. This, then, will be the first argument, by means of which, we shall endeavour to establish our position assumed at the outset.

VI.

The original principles of all sciences lie concealed in the human mind, as those of all fruits lie concealed in the

earth. Still, *non omnis fert omnia tellus, every soil does not produce all kinds of fruits.* So, the genius, also, of every individual or nation, is not adapted to produce the fruits of every art. It was given to the Greeks to be the originators of all the arts which depend upon genius; the hope and renown of imitation, was left to the other nations. Accordingly, both the universal doctrine of grammar, and the art of interpretation, were introduced by the Greeks, and disseminated, from them, to other nations; nor is there known to have existed, in ancient times, a single good interpreter, who either was not a Greek, or had not acquired his ability by imitating the Greek examples. As to the Jews, indeed, it is abundantly manifest, that they could boast of no grammatical interpreters of the sacred books, before they had begun to avail themselves of Grecian examples, if not of Grecian learning; nor is there extant a grammatical commentary upon the inspired writings, of a more ancient date than the twelfth century; at which time, the Jews, who were residing among the Arabians, followed their example in their study of Grecian learning. It need not excite surprise, therefore, if it be found, that the grammatical interpretation of the sacred writings, among Christians, may be traced to the Greeks. But, merely to be a Grecian, was not sufficient: it behoved him, who first desired to profess himself a grammatical interpreter, and to engage in this business, with success and renown, to understand, thoroughly, the arts of the Greek interpreters, and to be familiar with them by much exercise. In addition to this, he must, necessarily, have possessed no ordinary readiness and skill in the use of Greek and Hebrew letters. Origen, however, was the first among the Doctors of the Greek church, who possessed all these qualifications; for, Clement, the erudite master of Origen, was unacquainted with Hebrew letters, and inexperienced in this mode of interpretation.

VII.

That Origen was well versed in the grammatical arts both of writing and of interpreting, who can entertain a doubt, after the concordant testimony of the ancients, that he not only, from childhood to his last days, cultivated polite letters, with the greatest zeal ;* but, also, had lived in the capacity of a grammarian, prior to his attempt at sacred interpretation and his profession of the same; on which account, also, he was wont to be censured by the envious and illiterate herd of the clergy, who could not endure the splendour and renown of his learning; while he himself, meanwhile, was grieved at their ignorance of the great necessity and utility of this learning, in sacred interpretation.† In regard to what Eusebius says,‡ that Origen, having entered upon the office of instructer, in a school at Alexandria, *renounced the profession of grammatical learning, as useless, and adverse to piety*, it is the silly and ridiculous interpretation, either of Eusebius himself, or of some other, from whom, as a compiler, he drew his remarks, desirous of imitating the example of good historians, who add, from conjecture, the reasons and motives of every thing which they relate; which interpretation, he himself confutes, in the sequel c. 18., where he relates, that Origen, to the very last, continued to cultivate and to teach polite letters, mathematical science, and philosophy, for the reason stated above. What progress he made in the science of interpretation, is proved by the fact, that he attained to the summit of grammatical learning, viz. the art of criticism; of the accurate use of which, in the sacred books, from the instructions of the Greeks, he was

* Eusebius Histor. Eccles. vi. 1.

† Eusebius Ibid. vi. 18. ‡ Ibid. vi. 3.

the first, undoubtedly, to furnish an example, as we shall prove in the sequel.

VIII.

That Origen was well versed in Hebrew letters, is attested by Jerome* and by the *Hexapla*, a work of Origen, in which he presented the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, written both in the Hebrew and the Greek characters; in which he corrected, also, by the Hebrew text, and completed, the whole version of the Septuagint translators: which, certainly, is not the work of a man unacquainted with the Hebrew language. Huet† denies, that any person, who is familiar with the writings of Origen, can believe this knowledge of his to have been extraordinary, inasmuch as many things are met with, in those writings, inconsistent with a familiar acquaintance with the Hebrew. I must acknowledge myself, however, to be but little moved by this argument, especially when I find the examples adduced in confirmation of it, pertaining, for the most part, to the derivations of words; in which re-

* De Scriptt. Eccles. 54. "*Contra aetatis gentisque suae naturam edidicerat*" "*he had acquired this knowledge, contrary to the disposition of his age and nation.*" The word *aetas* I translate, neither with Trithemius, *old age*, nor with Huet (Orig. i. 2, 3.), *manhood*; although Sophronius translates it ἡλικία, and renders the phrase *gentis natura*, by οἰκεία φύσις. Jerome, however, meant to say, that *in the age of Origen, it had not yet become customary, for the Greek Christians, to acquire a knowledge of the Hebrew; resting satisfied with their own language, and the Greek version of the old Testament.* Thus I understood his words, when I first read them; and I find that the celebrated Fabricius (Biblioth. Eccles. Hieron. as above cited, and Biblioth. Graec. v. p. 224.) has understood them in the same manner.

† ii. 1. 2.

spect, mistakes are by no means uncommon, even with those who are eminently skilled in any language. Varro, for example, a profound Latin scholar, fails to afford satisfaction in this department, even to us, who are far removed from his knowledge of the Latin. Besides, as Casaubon* correctly observes, it was customary among the ancients, to indulge in a subtile but misapplied inquisitiveness; so that, in the case of foreign words, of whose derivation they were ignorant, they set themselves about inventing something, which they accommodated to the signification of those words. In the same manner, the Fathers invent Greek, or even Latin, etymologies of Hebrew words; not because they are ignorant of the true derivation, as many, at the present day, persuade themselves, but purely from that inquisitiveness of which I have just spoken. Examples of this kind, he cites, also, in the same work. For, the distinction which Origen makes, in a certain passage of his commentary,† between οὐρανὸς and οὐρανοὶ, is introduced by him, when writing to the Greeks, in a popular style, in accommodation to their own language, and to the opinion concerning the three heavens, which was then prevalent; just as, in Rom. xii. 1., he affirmed οἰκτιρμοὶ to mean something more than οἰκτιρμὸς, saying nothing about the Hebraism, by which this plural is used in the sense of *beneficence;* because he had to do with Greeks, unacquainted with the Hebraism, and his business was not so much to elicit the grammatical sense of the words, as to exhort the common people, or the unlearned reader, to the dicharge of duty. Many such things, I have met with, myself, in the writings of Origen, so far as they have been read by me; still, I have not, on this account, entertained a doubt of his familiarity with Hebrew letters, which Jerome expressly attributes to him.

* Adv. Baron. Exercitatt. xvi. n. ii.

† Matth. xviii. 18. p. 336.

IX.

Learned men have been much too severe, in this judgment concerning the knowledge of Hebrew letters among ancient writers. I shall say nothing of Josephus, who, although he lived in the midst of Palestine, and professes to have written Hebrew books, and to have drawn his *Antiquities* from the original inspired volume, nevertheless, is charged with ignorance in this department of learning. And, how few there are who do not attribute ignorance of the Hebrew language to Philo,—who is still more closely connected with the cause of Origen,—who was very diligent in cultivating an acquaintance with the Jewish law and history. *No one*, says Scaliger,* *who has read Philo, can fail to discover, that he was very ignorant of the Hebrew.* And why? Because, in his etymological efforts, he wanders from the truth, and interprets Greek expressions, in a Greek sense, even where they depart from the Hebrew usage, and tortures them into allegories. Scholars certainly do not sufficiently regard, either the age in which these men flourished, or the character of their productions, when they judge thus severely of their merits. When we inquire concerning the proficiency in Hebrew learning, of Philo, Origen, and Jerome (to the last named person, also, the late Loescher,† with Le Clerc and others, attributes but a moderate share of knowledge in this department), we certainly do not inquire for that knowledge which is rigidly conformed to grammatical accuracy; such as we now demand in him who professes an acquaintance with Hebrew letters. This precise knowledge had no existence in those times; not even among Jewish Doctors, who had been born and educated among

* Castigatt. in Euseb. Chronic. p. 7.

† De Causs. Ling. Ebr. p. 96.

Jews, and employed the Hebrew tongue, such as it then was, and had schools in the midst of Palestine ; inasmuch as the Hebrew language had not yet, after the manner of the Greeks, been subjected accurately to grammatical research, nor had the analogy of the language been thoroughly investigated by means of nice observation, and embraced and defined by perspicuous rules. So that, even those who were accounted especially skilful in this respect, nevertheless, as is the case with our own countrymen, in their vernacular tongue, were now and then put to a stand, or wandered from the truth, particularly in the case of the expressions of a more ancient character, and removed from common use, and of the derivations of words ; and a competent knowledge of a language, so far as it serves the purpose of interpretation, neither can nor ought to be denied to any one, because of such mistakes. As to the character of their productions, on the other hand, it was not the design of Philo to write a grammatical commentary upon the books of Moses ; of which, at that time, as I have before said, there was no example. He wished, rather, to display his talents, by inventing allegories, new and fraught with Grecian philosophy ; to show his wisdom, derived, chiefly, from an acquaintance with Greek letters ; and, also, to exercise and display his eloquence ; diligently enriching his works, with all the elegancies of exquisite expression, and refined sentiment, especially those of Plato and Demosthenes ; imitating, also, the most beautiful diction of the latter, which had been noticed and lauded by the Grecian rhetoricians. Every one must be aware of this, who comes to the perusal of the works of Philo, from that of Plato and Demosthenes ; and, indeed, this is the only legitimate way of access to the full understanding of Philo, and the full perception of his beauties. He did not write, therefore, for his countrymen of the common sort, and unacquainted with the Grecian philosophy and eloquence,

who were unable to understand and appreciate such things; —what would they suppose, for example, was meant by the words ἐπεντρώσεις and ἐπεντρώματα,* which even Casaubon† did not comprehend; by ἀγαλματοφορεῖν,‡ also, which no one of his interpreters understood; and other words, drawn from the more remote portions of the language;—but for Jews, instructed after the manner of the Greeks, such as Josephus and a few others, and for the Greeks themselves. The words of the Greek interpretation were, of course, to be regarded in consistency with this design of the writer; nor was there any necessity of conforming the discussion to Hebrew accuracy, which as he well knew, the readers, whom he desired to have, for the most part either were ignorant of, or cared little about. Although I would concede, that Origen was less infected with this affectation in his manner of writing, and, while he did not spurn the praise of learning and eloquence, had more particular reference to the benefit of his readers; still, when he wrote his commentaries and his homilies,—and that, too, to Greeks, utterly unacquainted with the Hebrew idiom, and for the purpose of edification,—he did not consider it necessary to adhere, in every instance, to the strict letter of the Hebrew: and, if he sometimes departs from it, he is not, on this account, to be charged with ignorance of the Hebrew, any more than our preachers are to be charged with ignorance both of the Hebrew and of the Greek, because, frequently, in accommodation to the capacity of the common people, as it seems to me, in their arguments, monitions, and exhortations, they follow their vernacular version, rather than adhere, with fidelity, to the original Hebrew or Greek. And, indeed, Origen himself seems to hint at this same thing, in a remarkable passage,§—not noticed, so far as I know, by writers on this subject of allegorical interpreta-

* Allegorr. Leg. ii. p. 87. † Athen. xiii. p. 546.
‡ De Opif. Mund. p. 4. § Commentt. in Matth. p. 571

tion,—where he denies that he wished to insist upon three kinds of *eunuchism*, pertaining to the body, lest, discoursing *for the sake of exercise* (γυμνασίας εἵνεκεν), he might afford an occasion of wresting the whole precept of Christ concerning *eunuchism*, to another sense. Those commentaries, therefore, have some regard to *exercise*, not that which is useless to the reader, but that in which truth, neither in the words nor the matter, is pruned and scrutinized too closely. We may style them, in the words of Thucydides,* ἀγωνίσματα μᾶλλον εἰς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν, ἢ κτήματα ἐς ἀεί: *contests, adapted to promote the present pleasure and admiration of the hearer and reader, rather than lasting monuments, about to confer true glory and durable benefit.*

X.

On this subject, however, Huet exhibits but little acuteness, when, among the examples which clearly evince an ignorance of the Hebrew, he places the following also, which is cited, in the same commentary on Matthew, out of Nehem. i. 11., ii. 1. 6., ἤμην εὐνοῦχος τῷ βασιλεῖ: instead of which, he thinks he would have adopted, from the Hebrew text, οἰνοχόος, *if he had been at all skilled in the Hebrew tongue;* because, the corresponding Hebrew phrase is מַשְׁקֶה לַמֶּלֶךְ; unless we may suppose him to have introduced, of his own accord, into the Greek text, the word εὐνοῦχος, while all the copies of the Alexandrian version exhibited, as they do at the present day, οἰνοχόος. For myself, I should rather have expected, if the reading of the copies of the Alexandrian version had been, in his day, εὐνοῦχος, that he would have corrected it, in the *Hexapla*, from the Hebrew text, with the addition of the usual mark of emendation; than that he would have changed οἰνοχόος into εὐνοῦχος. But the very learned editor of Ori-

* Lib. i. 22.

gen, did not understand his manner of discussion, and of citing a passage from the Scriptures. Origen was desirous of making mention of *eunuchs*, from the sacred books, in a mystical sense of the word, which he himself may have invented; not, by the way, a sense which belonged to it, by the design of the Holy Spirit, but one which presented itself to his own mind. He produces, in the first place, from Gen. xl. 1., the cup-bearer and the baker of Pharaoh, whom he styles *eunuchs*, *castrated* in order that they might hold that office;—not because Moses styles them thus, nor because it is clearly evident that they were castrated; but from conjecture, drawn from a royal custom in the East, in after times. He then adds Nehemiah, the royal cup-bearer, and styles him, also, an *eunuch* in accommodation to the drift of the discussion, placing the generic for the specific denomination, εὐνοῦχος ἤμην τῷ βασιλεῖ. Shall we collect from this, that he supposed the Hebrew word מַשְׁקֶה was properly translated εὐνοῦχος, or, that he found it thus written in the copies of the Septuagint version; and, therefore, that this word is to be received as a various reading, in that passage? By no means. Many such things are found in the writings of the Greek and Latin Fathers, which are not accurately cited from the sacred books, conformably to the reading of the Greek and Latin copies, but consistently with the general sense, and in accommodation to the design of the discussion. In these cases, it sometimes happens, that the more careless and inattentive receive them as various readings of the Greek and Latin manuscripts, as the venerable Michaelis correctly observes.* But, concerning the proficiency of Origen in Hebrew letters, we have said enough, and, perhaps, more than enough.

* De Var. Lectt. Nov. Test. § 15.

XI.

The sum of what we have hitherto advanced, is this: That Origen was deficient in none of those things, which ought to be found in one who was desirous of being the first to open and prepare the way, for the correct use of grammatical interpretation, in the sacred writings; and to furnish an example for the imitation of others. For, in the first place,—a thing which is necessary for all who would undertake, with a prospect of success, any thing, in a department entirely new,—he had conceived, in his mind, an idea of the art, derived from approved books and examples of the Greek grammatical interpreters; to which idea, he conformed himself, in endeavouring to cope with them, in this new description of composition: and, in the next place, by interpreting Greek books, and by exercising the arts of the grammarians while this was his profession, he had acquired a good share of experience in the use of those methods which avail in interpretation, without which, precepts, however good, can profit us nothing. He was eminently versed, not only in the Greek,—which proficiency was common to him with some other older Doctors of the Church,—but, also, in the Hebrew, if not to the degree which, at the present day, is demanded of the accomplished grammarian, at least, to the degree which suffices for the interpretation of the books of the Old and New Testaments. For, in Homer, also, are words, whose signification and force are understood by interpreters, but whose derivation and philological character, are either manifestly unknown to the more ancient as well as the more modern interpreters, or are dwelt upon, sometimes, with little satisfaction, and evidently in discordance with the analogy of the language; as those are aware, who have even superficially examined the commentary of Eustathius. What more can be desired? What need, however, of ar-

guments, where we have the testimony of facts? Let us, then, advert to these.

XII.

That the truly erudite interpretation, should commence with an attention and judgment bestowed upon the emendation of the reading, is manifest of itself, and has lately been shown by us. It was, therefore, a matter of diligent attention and care with Origen, to peruse the Hebrew and the Greek writings of the Old and the New Testament, with the correct readings; and it may be said, with truth, that by him a commencement was made, and an example furnished, of sacred criticism, which was cultivated, afterwards, by some few Doctors of the Greek and the Latin Church, by Jerome, for example, Isidore of Pelusium, and others. For,—to begin with the books of the Old Testament,—he composed, with immense labour and diligence, the famous *Hexapla*, upon which, as upon a foundation, the whole superstructure of *Hermeneutics* was raised. For, in that work, he proposed to himself two things: first, to furnish a most accurate and approved copy of the divine writings, in either language, from which, as from an exemplar, good and unexceptionable copies might be transcribed; and secondly, to assist in the understanding of the Hebrew original, by a variety of versions. Concerning the latter, we shall speak presently: to the former, let us now devote a few moments. It is abundantly manifest, that, in this work, the Hebrew text occupied the first column of each page; and there cannot be a doubt, that he formed it from the best copies, to which he had access, and that he regulated it according to the authority of the greater number. This must have been an easy matter, in those times, for one living in the midst of Palestine, and enjoying the friendship of learned Jews, and amply supplied with the necessary pecuniary means, by

Ambrose, a man of great wealth, and an encourager of the work. On this subject, however, we may listen to his own words; for, in his Epistle to Africanus,* he professes to have compared the Greek with the Hebrew copies (Ἑβραϊκοῖς ἀντιγράφοις). And this itself affords us good ground to believe, that, if the Hebrew manuscripts had exhibited the minute system of vowel-points which now obtains, Origen would have used such a manuscript. For, it would have indicated a great want of skill and attention, in an editor and a critic, not to avail himself of the best copy, in such a business; nor, is it at all to the point, what Carpzov,† with others, who maintain the antiquity of those points, replies to those opponents who objected to him the silence of Origen: *there existed, indeed, at that time, manuscripts furnished with the points; but, inasmuch as they were sold at a very high price, they were not so common that a copy could be in the hands of every one:*—which remark, however, he makes, without support from any ancient authority or testimony. This one thing, indeed, is certain, that Origen did not write the Hebrew with those vowel-points. For, both Eusebius—an eye witness, who was bishop of Cesarea, at which place the autographical work of Origen was preserved, in the library of the Cathedral,—and Epiphanius,‡ make mention of the στοιχεῖα alone, which are the *elements* or *letters*; otherwise, it would have been unnecessary to present, in another column, the Hebrew words expressed by means of Greek characters, which served the purpose of indicating the vowel sounds, and animated, as it were, those lifeless στοιχεῖα or Hebrew *elements*. This, however, does not furnish, perhaps, a satisfactory argument to such as deny that those points were then in use. For, Origen might have prefer-

* p. 13. B. T. I. Opp. Edition of Ruaeus.

† Crit. Sacr. p. 271. ‡ De Pond. et Mens. c. 7.

red to express the vowels, by means of letters, in order to prevent a fluctuation in the reading, and that he might make it manifest, from the authority of ancient and approved manuscripts, what was the proper reading, in each passage; especially in such as were ambiguous owing to the resemblance of the letters, or to the context; and, in this manner, the genuine reading, fastened, as it were, with such bonds, might become certain and unalterable. In this, he must be acknowledged to have acted the part of a good and prudent critic, and to have ingeniously devised that method of expressing the Hebrew words by Greek letters. This praise, indeed, still belongs to Origen, even if the above conjecture should not meet the approbation of those, who prefer to adopt the opinion, either of Capellus, Simon, Morinus, and others, who suppose that the Hebrew words were written again in Greek characters, in accordance with the traditionary pronunciation of the Jews, or with the manner, then in vogue, of writing each word; or else, of the great Schultens,* and his followers, who maintain that the vowel points were in use at the time of Origen and before, but not that refined and minute system which now obtains. But the discussion concerning the points does not belong to this place. The inquiry is, whether Origen has discharged the duty of a good biblical critic, in editing the Hebrew text; which, we trust, we shall be able to prove to our readers.

XIII.

One thing, indeed, I would assert, without hesitation; that those readings, which are found, at the present day, in the margin of the Hebrew copies, were absent, both from the Hexapla,—no traces of them, not even the slightest,

* Comment. in Proverbb. Sal. Praef.

occurring among ancient writers, who, certainly, would not have passed over, in silence, this part of the labour of criticism, especially as they mention the *obeli* and the asterisks of the Greek version,—but also from the Hebrew books then extant. For, it cannot be believed,—if it had been manifest, among the Jewish teachers, that those readings were derived and noted, I will not say, from inspired men, from Moses, for example, Ezra, and others, which is, indeed, the absurd opinion of some, but from ancient and approved manuscripts, possessing an authority equal to that of the rest, or, at least, worthy of our regard;—that Origen would have omitted them, especially when we consider that they might have gradually taken the place of glosses, and, so far, have afforded assistance to the student; when we consider, also, that he added, immediately succeeding in order, the version of Aquila, for no other reason, but that he might assist in the understanding of the Hebrew words, particularly the more rare and difficult.

XIV.

The Hexapla furnish us with another proof of the exercise of *criticism*, viz. the Greek version of the Alexandrian translators. For, the other translations, inasmuch as they were of recent date, and not of equal authority in the Church, did not call for a critical castigation. Concerning this particular proof, we may speak with the more confidence, since the ancient writers plainly and accurately speak of the necessary helps and the operation of this critical castigation. The copies which were in common use, at that time, varied so much, and were so manifestly corrupted by the subduction, addition, and alteration of words, that a castigation seemed necessary. Accordingly, three persons conceived, almost simultaneously, the design of accomplishing this work; viz. Origen in Palestine, Lucian

in Syria, and Hesychius in Egypt. In consequence of this, three revised copies of this version were produced, differing considerably from one another. Each Church zealously adopted and maintained the benefit which originated among themselves, and was conferred first upon them. *Alexandria and Egypt*, says Jerome,* *cite Hesychius, as the parent of their copies of the Septuagint; Constantinople and the district of country as far as Antioch, approve the copy of Lucian the Martyr; and the intermediate provinces adopt the Palestine manuscripts, formed by the labour and revision of Origen, and published by Eusebius and Pamphilus.* And here it becomes us to acknowledge, in passing, the justice or the good sense of the Doctors of the ancient Church, who, although they generally regarded this version as divinely inspired, or, at least, placed it on a footing with the Hebrew original; still, permitted criticism to be exercised upon it, and those copies which they had had in their hands, and to which they had been long accustomed, not only to fall into disuse, and that, too, without complaining of any wrong, but also supposed that a benefit had been conferred upon themselves and upon the Church, and both availed themselves of it and permitted others to do so. But, the correct study of letters was not yet banished from among the Greeks; and, among the Doctors, there were not wanting those who were well furnished with useful learning, who were well aware of the necessity and utility of just criticism; while the rest had not learned to despise, through arrogance, what they themselves, owing to their dulness or sloth, had never learned.

XV.

In regard to Hesychius and Lucian, we do not find any certain information, as to what assistance they received

* Preface to the Books of Chronicles.

from manuscripts, and the mode of correction they pursued; nor, does it belong to our plan to push this inquiry, or to speak of their respective revisions. In this one respect, however, their mode of proceeding differed from that of Origen, that they consulted, in pursuance of their design, only the Greek manuscripts, while Origen called to his aid both the Greek and the Hebrew; whence it came to pass, that the revision of Origen corresponded more closely with the readings of the Hebrew, than that of Lucian or Hesychius. By this mark, we may recognise the origin of those copies which are now extant, either manuscript or printed, as is correctly remarked by Morinus, in his letter to Jun. Patricius,* in which he treats of the Alexandrian Copy. Origen, on the other hand, as is very generally related, undertook this critical castigation, after having, first of all, procured the best manuscripts he could find, and among these, that most noble copy which was preserved in the temple of Serapis at Alexandria, by many incorrectly supposed to be the autograph copy of the Septuagint. This, however, is of little importance. It is sufficient that he gave his attention to the collating of the most ancient manuscripts then in existence, which, in every revision of an ancient author, is accounted the first praise and commendation. Indeed, as it is agreed among those acquainted with the art, that the genuine reading can sometimes be either explored or confirmed, from the versions of ancient writings; how much more is it to be supposed, that the errors of the versions can be detected and corrected by the aid of the original. So that, Origen proceeded correctly and orderly, when he approached the Hebrew original, and undertook to derive from this source a more correct reading; especially when we consider that there was, as I have said, a coincident opinion of Jews and

* Antiqq. Eccles. Orient.

Christians, that that version, from whatever cause, was corrupted; and the greatest part of the corruption necessarily consisted in its departure from the Hebrew copies, excepting those instances in which the translators had wandered, either through negligence or ignorance of the ancient language.

XVI.

But, in this very thing, Origen is charged with a want of discernment by J. Morinus, I Voss, and others, who think that the Hebrew should have been corrected from the Greek, rather than the Greek from the Hebrew; and deny that any thing should have been added to or taken from the Greek version, without the concurrence of manuscripts; but that Origen, on the contrary, had marked with *obeli*, the Greek expressions which were not found in the Hebrew, while he had added such as were not in the Greek, but were exhibited in the Hebrew. In the first place, Origen, who followed the Hebrew original, did not introduce corrections without the concurrence of manuscripts; and, in the next place, both the Greeks, even those who were unacquainted with the Hebrew, and could not have been deceived by Jewish teachers; and the Jews, who held that version in high estimation, nevertheless, agreed in considering it as exceedingly vitiated; which opinion was strengthened by the great variation in the copies. No suspicion, however, was ever harboured, concerning the integrity of the Hebrew books; nor, indeed, is any trace of such a suspicion to be met with in the writings of those times. Origen even asserts the Hebrew copies to be καθαρὰ καὶ μηδὲν πλάσμα ἔχοντα, *pure and unadulterated*, and exhorts* Christians to lay aside their Greek copies, and to elicit, even by flattery, from the Jews,

* Ad African. p. 16.

uncorrupted manuscripts. Why, then, should it not appear befitting, to correct the Greek from the Hebrew, rather than the Hebrew from the Greek; provided only, where Greek manuscripts afford no assistance, a certain moderation were used? It is clear that this moderation was used by Origen. For, he has marked with the asterisk, whatever he had added from the Hebrew, lest they should be confounded with those things which rested upon the authority of the Greek manuscripts; and whatever was not found in the Hebrew, he did not remove from the the Greek text, nor did he wish to do so, contrary to the manuscripts; but, by the addition of an *obelus*, he has indicated that they were not found in the Hebrew copies. He thus reminds the student, that if they should light upon some ancient and approved manuscripts, which he had not been able to consult, they might examine whether his asterisks or his *obeli* would be confirmed, upon the authority of these manuscripts. Nor, did he, in those things which he added, rest solely upon his own judgment. He took them, for the most part, from Theodotion, who not only was manifestly very nearly allied to the Septuagint translators, in his manner of translating, but had transferred into his own version the very words of those translators, found in the ancient copies. What greater diligence can we conceive of?

XVII.

Origen did not, however, bestow his critical labour upon the Old Testament alone. He bestowed it also upon the New Testament; not that arduous labour which the former received,—for, the latter was comparatively of small bulk, and did not demand the same regard to versions,—but, still, not less commendable, and useful to the Church. Concerning which, inasmuch as those who say much about his critical services, in reference to the Old Testament,

either are silent, or touch upon it very superficially, I thought it proper to enlarge with more diligence. The thing, moreover, is worthy of being more accurately known by all, who wish to judge of the origin and authority of manuscripts, even those which are now extant; and of the value of the readings, which are drawn from them; and, finally, to be successfully and understandingly employed in the criticism, universally, of the New Testament. And, at the outset, I perceive that men of learning in this department, disagree in this matter. Some suppose the books of the New Testament to have been examined by Origen, with critical diligence, and corrected by a comparison with ancient manuscripts. Others are of opinion, that no such thing was done by him. Accordingly, the manuscripts and copies of Origen, which are stated to have been brought into the Cesarean library by Pamphilus, and consulted by many, they understand to be manuscripts procured by him, and collected for his assistance in interpreting. I find Zacagnius,* Simon,† and Mills,‡—in this instance, also, following in the steps of Simon,—to have been of this opinion. We are not sorry to entertain a different opinion, viz. that the text of the sacred books was corrected by Origen, and that the examples of this castigation were called the *exemplaria* of that Father.

XVIII.

And, in the first place, this opinion receives some degree of probabilty from this consideration, that, in like manner as Lucian and Hesychius, who, as we have already stated, revised, almost simultaneously, the Greek version

* Monumentt. Vet. Eccles. Graec. Praef. p. 65.

† Histor. Critic. Nov. Test. c. 29. p. 337.

‡ Prolegg. in Nov. Test. n. 673.

of the Old Testament, published also the books of the New Testament,—a work, however, less approved by the learned,—so it seems probable that Origen, either of his own accord, or at the instigation of others, undertook the same labour, in order that corrected copies of both portions of the sacred volume might be extant. But this conjecture receives, as it seems to me, the fullest support, from those passages of ancient writers in which the *exemplaria* of Origen are mentioned. Jerome, for example, cites them, in a passage* where they can denote nothing but the copies revised by Origen and corrected according to the authority of good and ancient manuscripts. If the *exemplaria* of Lucian the Martyr, cited by the same Jerome, are no other than those copies which he had critically revised,—of which there can be no doubt, nor has it ever been questioned,—why may not the *exemplaria* of Origen be understood in the same manner? Especially when Jerome rests upon their authority, in asserting the genuineness of a reading. For, it is not the owner that brings authority to a manuscript,—nay a very learned critic may be the owner of very faulty manuscripts,—but the known diligence of the owner, or some other person, in revising and correcting them. And Origen, in more than one passage, informs us that vitiated manuscripts had been examined by him. In regard to the opinion of Simon,†—that, if the books of the New Testament had been revised by Origen, in the same manner as the Septuagint version had been, copies would have been generally made from his, or corrected by it,—it is undoubtedly correct; but he errs, when he denies that this was done, again and again, in the ancient Greek Church. For, the manuscripts of Pamphilus, which, as Euthalius‡ affirms, had been transcribed by his own hand, and deposited in the Cesarean

* Note upon Matthew xxiv. 36. † As cited above.
‡ Epistt. Cathol. p. 513.

library, are believed by scholars to have been formed from the *revision* of Origen, of whom Pamphilus was, as is well known, a great admirer, inasmuch as he was the author of an *Apology* for that Father. Moreover, the manuscripts of Eusebius, with whose transcription, and conveyance to Constantinople, he was entrusted, by order of Constantine the Great,* were, beyond a doubt, derived from the same *revision ;* nor, can it be credited, that Eusebius was charged by the Emperor with this commission, for any other reason, than because the reputation and authority of the manuscripts of Origen were the most unequivocal. No one, I imagine, will be disposed to doubt, that the Constantinopolitan manuscripts, publickly acknowledged and approved, at least in that diocese, were, if not all, at all events, very many new copies, modelled after these. And, again, when Euthalius, who has just been mentioned, conceived the design of producing his critical work,—an edition of the Catholic Epistles of Paul and of the Acts of the Apostles,—he left every thing, and went to Cesarea, and compared his own copy with those at Cesarea, prepared by Pamphilus and Eusebius, that is, the copies formed from the *revision* of Origen, and corrected it by them, as he himself declares.† In the very ancient manuscript of R. Marshall, which is now in the possession of the Parisian Jesuits, at the end of Jeremiah we find the following words, although spoken of the books of the Old Testament : διωρθώθη ἀπὸ τῶν Ὠριγένους αὐτοῦ τετραπλῶν, ἅτινα καὶ αὐτοῦ χειρὶ διώρθωτο . . . . *corrected from the Tetrapla of Origen himself, which had been corrected by his own hand.* Hence it is perfectly obvious, what is meant by the *copy* of Origen, and *correcting in conformity with his copies.*

* Euseb. Vit. Constantin. iv. 36. Theodoret. Histor. Eccles. 16.

† Actt. Apostt. et Epistt. Cathol. p. 515. in the Monumentt. Vet. Eccles. Graec. as above cited.

XIX.

It seems important, however, to ascertain what was the nature of this *revision* of Origen. In doing this, our attention is called, at the very outset, to the fact, that the authority of this revision was so great, in the ancient Church, not merely among the common and less erudite multitude, but among the most learned, such as Pamphilus, Eusebius, Jerome, and others of this class, who could judge correctly in such matters; that they published it in the libraries, commended it to Churches, settled controversies about doubtful readings by an appeal to it, and, almost in every instance, followed it in translating. We do not venture to affirm,—what we are aware has been supposed by a very learned man, whose name does not, at this moment, occur to us,—that Origen, when he was in Palestine, made use of manuscripts, not only others of an ancient date, but also the *autographs* of certain portions, the Epistles especially, which were still, at that time, preserved in those Churches to which they had been written. For, we are sufficiently aware, that this opinion is advanced without any adequate authority and testimony; and that it is plainly a matter of uncertainty, how long the *autographs* of the inspired writers were preserved. As to the assertion of Tertullian:* *in Ecclesiis Apostolicis adhuc recitari authenticas Apostolorum literas, that the original (or authentic) Epistles of the Apostles were still publicly read in the Apostolical Churches;* although any one, with Garbellus,† may understand it as alluding to the *autographs*, still, there remains a doubt, which, indeed, suggested itself to the mind of that scholar, whether Tertullian speaks of it as a well known and certain fact, which

* Praescriptt. Heret. c. 36.

† Prolegg. ad Blanchini Euangelarium p. 27.

hardly seems to be the case, or, as a mere report. But there is no reason why we may not understand the *authenticae literae*, to mean *uncorrupted Epistles*, that is, *not interpolated*, as is frequently the case with those of our day. The opinion entertained by the interpreters of Tertullian, and which meets the approbation of Simon, viz. that by this phrase is meant *the Greek copies*, is refuted by the fact, that other Greek Churches, also, had Greek copies in their possession. That Origen, however, possessed and consulted very many and approved manuscripts, of which there was no want, we are led to believe, even from his known intelligence in such matters; and this opinion is confirmed by many passages of his works, in which he alludes to the variety of manuscripts which he had consulted: for example, in his Commentary on John p. 130., σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις κεῖται · ταῦτα ἐν Βηθανίᾳ ἐγένετο, *in almost all the copies is found* ταῦτα, &c. Nor can it be suspected, that the manuscripts which he used, had been interpolated from the Latin version, and that some degree of corruption was introduced into his edition, from this source. Against such a supposition, we have the evidence of the readings of Chrysostom, and of other Greeks, who relied upon the copies of Origen; which readings, as is obvious, are at variance with the copies which followed the Latin version. And that the edition under consideration, had contracted some degree of error, from the corruptions and interpolations of heretics, is so far from being credible, that we are rather persuaded to believe, with Saubert, in a very learned work,* that he was especially on his guard, in this respect, in order that the text of the New Testament might be, and might continue to be, pure from all such blemishes.

* Var. Lectt. in Matth. Prolegg. p. 21.

XX.

I am aware that it is made a question, whether Origen, in his revision, gave place to conjectures. Wetstein,* indeed, although he does not entertain a doubt, that, if the revised copy of Origen were extant, we should obtain more assistance, toward furnishing a strictly accurate edition of the New Testament, from that quarter, than from all the manuscripts which we now possess; nevertheless, denies that he would approve of all the readings of Origen, because, from mere conjectures, and those, too, as is usually the case, neither happy nor necessary, he has altered many things in the New Testament; as may be discovered from those passages concerning which he himself instructs us in the remains of his commentaries; and as we would be aware, also, from a still greater number of examples, if we possessed all his Greek Commentaries entire. In regard to what this distinguished scholar advances concerning the goodness of the revision of Origen, we admit that it would satisfy even Origen himself, if he were alive; but, in regard to what he says concerning the conjectures of Origen, there seems to be some room for doubt. I am disposed, therefore, to devote a few words to this subject. I am well aware, that the ancient Doctors of the Church, and interpreters of the sacred books, and those, too, the most celebrated and erudite, have thought very differently in relation to the criticism to be exercised in those cases, from certain novices formed from the study of some *Introduction* and *Compend of learning*, who reject, as offensive and pernicious, all criticism, the very name of which they dread and detest; and that they have approved of the exercise of this criticism, not only so far as not to rest satisfied with the authority of any one manuscript whatever; and with a decision in regard to what is to be

* Prolegg. ad Nov. Test. i. p. 67.

adopted, resting upon a comparison of the more ancient and approved copies ; but, also, that in case the manuscripts did not afford satisfaction, or, rather, did not seem to afford it, they might betake themselves to conjectures. But they resorted to this, in the same manner as modest critics do in uninspired writings ; that is, to propose conjectures in their commentaries, but to abstain from any verbal alterations in the text itself. Origen, in my opinion, used this same method and moderation. Now and then, in his commentaries, he indulged in conjectures, in those passages where he was unable to extricate himself ; and in the revision of the inspired writings, he was scrupulously careful not to admit any thing without the authority of good manuscripts. The examples, indeed, of conjectures, which are cited by Wetstein, are all taken from his commentaries and notes, nor can it be shown or rendered probable, that those conjectures were introduced into the text. And if, subsequently, some of those conjectures were incorporated with the text, by those who attributed too much authority to Origen, this is not the fault of Origen, so much as of those who thoughtlessly abused those conjectures.

XXI.

That the revised copy of Origen sometimes followed a different reading from the Homilies and Commentaries, is manifest from the passage in Matth. xxiv. 36., which, in the Homilies, is handled in such a manner as to evince, that regard was had to the words οὐδὲ υἱὸς ; as Erasmus remarks, when commenting upon that passage. That these words, however, were not found in the copy of Origen, is testified by Jerome in his commentary. Besides, I would not number among conjectures, every thing which Wetstein places in this class. The reading ἐν βηθαβαρᾷ Jo. i. 28., which he, unhesitatingly, discards from the text, as

an empty conjecture of Origen, restoring the reading ἐν βηθανία, was derived, in my opinion, not from a vain conjecture, but from the authority of manuscripts, although the number was small. And this, as it seems to me, is intimated by Origen himself, because, in the first place, he uniformly, with so much confidence, calls it, *Bethabara;* and, in the next place, says, expressly, that the reading ἐν βηθανία, was found, not *in all the copies*, but ἐν σχεδὸν πᾶσι *in nearly all.* Here I would ask, what was the reading in the excepted copies? For, in some, although it be a few, there was another reading than ἐν βηθανία. May we not suppose, that those few had ἐν βηθαβαρα, since he mentions no other reading as exhibited by those copies? And wherefore should he say, that he was not ignorant, that in almost all the copies, was found the reading ἐν βηθανία? Evidently for the purpose of excusing himself to his readers, because, in adopting a particular reading, he disregarded a large majority of manuscripts, to which he generally had regard, unless, as he supposed was the case in the present instance, the nature of the thing and the circumstances forbade it. So that, we should, without hesitation, attribute to the revision of Origen, the character which the ancients gave it, viz. that of *accuracy* and of *superior accuracy.*

XXII.

In regard to the merits of Origen in the first office of a good interpreter, we have said enough, as we suppose, to show, that he has been, with strict propriety, denominated, by learned men,—by Vitringa,* for example,—*a most able critic.* In regard to his merits in the other office, viz. the ascertaining of the sense of the words, by means

* Commentar. in Jesaiam. Praef.

of the grammatical arts, it remains for us to speak. And here we have, at the very outset, a testimony not sufficiently heeded, which is afforded by the *Hexapla*, a work of which I have already had occasion to speak. In this work, he seems to me, not to have had in view merely the furnishing a correct copy of the Hebrew and Alexandrine Greek text, but also to aid in understanding the sense of the words. The order in which the several Greek versions were arranged by Origen, in this work, is manifestly this. The first place is occupied, not by the most ancient version, but by that of Aquila; the next, by that of Symmachus; the third, by the Alexandrian; the fourth, by that of Theodotion. I shall say nothing of a fact, which all acknowledge, viz. that versions serve the purpose of a grammatical commentary and of notes. So that the Hebrew text was guarded, as it were, by four commentaries. Who does not know, that the version of Aquila, which was so accurately literal that it was held in high estimation, and was preferred before the other versions, both by the Jews, and by Christian Doctors who were ignorant of the Hebrew, which was also commonly known by the name of *Hebrew Verity*, and was cited in place of the Hebrew; that this version was regarded in the light of a Hebrew Glossary, of which, there existed, at that time, as far as I know, no example? And, with so much the better reason, in proportion as Aquila was more skilled in the Hebrew tongue, which Ephanius* asserts of him in the following words: ἀκρότατα παιδευθεὶς τὴν Ἑβραΐδα διάλεκτον, *thoroughly instructed in the Hebrew language.* But, a person who is competent to translate, word for word, does not, on this account, convey the meaning of a writer, especially if the languages differ widely in their genius, as we see is the case with the Oriental and the Occidental languages. Ac-

* De Pond. et Mens. c. 15.

cordingly, to the version of Aquila, which, perhaps, promised assistance to the Jews, but not to those whose knowledge extended no farther than the Greek, he added, next in order, that of Symmachus, which expressed the sense of the Hebrew text in good Greek, as is agreed by the ancients. Jerome, for example, bestows upon it unbounded praise, for this very reason; whilst the Jews, supposing that the celestial truth was too much contaminated by the purity of the Greek, at such a remove from the Hebrew idiom, regarded it with utter detestation. Shall we not say, then, that Origen, by the union of these two versions, has presented the student of sacred letters, with an almost perfect exposition of grammatical interpretation. This was clearly seen by the commentator* above cited, who, having censured the ancient Greek expositors of Isaiah, who followed too closely the Alexandrian version, and were seduced by it from the true sense of the Prophet, remarks that *they had in their hands, and before their eyes, most excellent versions* (he adds, also, a third, viz. that of Theodotion, which stood, as it were, in the middle between both, preserving neither the Greek purity nor the Hebrew accuracy, and mixed and compounded, if I may so speak, of both versions), *from which, when compared with one another, they might easily have ascertained the true sense of the Prophet, without any, or, at least, without any more, knowledge of the Hebrew idiom.* In this passage he expresses also his astonishment, that, after the revival of letters, there should have existed those, who did not set a due value upon the versions and their fragments. This remark pertains also to the Alexandrian version. For, this too was in the Hexapla; although the object of its insertion was, as we suppose, not so much that the Hebrew might be understood by means of it;—it must be con-

* Vitringa: Commentar. in Jesaiam. Praef. p. 4.

fessed, however, that this also might be done, but with great caution, concerning which it is not necessary to speak at present:—but, in order that, in those passages which manifestly departed from the Hebrew, a remedy might be extracted from Aquila, where the sense was expressed word for word in bad Greek, that is, obscurely, and from Symmachus. For, as the Alexandrine version had been received in all the Greek Churches, and was held in such honour that it was almost regarded as of equal authority with the Hebrew copies, it being generally considered as divinely inspired, it was introduced by Origen into the *Hexapla*, as another authentic text, the understanding of which, as well as of the Hebrew copy, was to be sought for from Aquila and Symmachus, by those who were ignorant of the Hebrew. That the Greeks did not avail themselves of this advantage in their commentaries,—a fact which is manifest from the commentary of Procopius upon Isaiah, drawn from those commentaries of the Greeks,—is to be accounted for, as I suppose, in this way, that they were desirous of rendering them profitable, not to Doctors merely, but to all; on which account, it became necessary to adhere, in their interpretations, to the words of the Septuagint version, and with it to depart from the sense of the Hebrew; in the same manner as is done, not unfrequently, and with success, by our own countrymen, in expounding the words of Luther's version, for the benefit of the common people.

XXIII.

This might have sufficed for those who wished, for themselves, to make trial of their talents and learning in interpreting, and to explore the sense of the inspired books of the Old Testament. But he pushed the matter further, from an insatiable desire of aiding in the understanding of sacred letters, and with an indefatigable industry and pa-

tience. For, he designed to furnish also examples of explanations of the inspired writings, which would be profitable either to Doctors or to the people. Jerome and other ancient authors mention not merely one kind of exegetical production of his. For, they ascribe to Origen, *Scholia*, *Remarks*, and *Commentaries*. Concerning which, I perceive there is a doubt entertained, whether two works are here designated under three names, so that *Scholia* and *Remarks* may be understood as denoting the same work; or three distinct works, designated by as many distinct names. Huet,* indeed, whom the majority are wont to follow, is of opinion that *Scholia* and *Remarks* are to be regarded as different names for the same work. This opinion is supported by a great degree of probability, since the word σημειώσεις *Remarks* is used for every kind of exegetical work, even for volumes of commentaries; and Jerome translates *Scholia* and σημειώσεις, by one and the same word *Excerpta*, as Huet informs us in the same passage. Still, however, we have some doubt remaining, owing to certain passages of ancient writers, and to information derived from manuscripts. To the discussion of this subject we shall devote a few moments.

XXIV. XXV. XXVI. XXVII. XXVIII.

[These sections are devoted to a discussion concerning the nature of the σημειώσεις of Origen. As the discussion is somewhat intricate and tedious, and of minor importance, as it regards the general subject, we have deemed it best, out of regard to a large majority of our readers, to omit it, and pass on to the closing remarks.]

XXIX.

From this process of *induction*, as it is called by Logicians, I think it is made manifest, that whatever advantages the ancient interpreters of the inspired writings, of the literal class, possessed, and whatever benefits they conferred, proceeded, almost entirely, from Origen, or, at least, originated

* Origeniana iii. 2. p. 238.

from the works of Origen. An ancient writer, whose name I am not acquainted with, in Suidas, at the word Ὠριγένης, expresses himself correctly: *And, indeed, he has left innumerable works, in which he illustrates, by means of commentaries, the whole range of Ecclesiastical literature; so that all the Doctors of the Church, who succeeded him, have derived assistance from him. Gregory the Theologian remarks, therefore, with propriety: Origen is our common whet-stone.* As this judgment of Gregory ought to be understood as pertaining to the literal interpretation of sacred things, the same is the case also with the expression of Jerome,* when he calls him, *the Teacher of the Churches, next to the Apostles.*

XXX.

Some one will ask: How great, however, is the advantage derived from the commentaries of the Fathers? I cannot regard with approbation, those who will tolerate nothing at all that is new, in the interpretation of the sacred writings, but contend that in all things we must abide by the decisions of antiquity. This I find to be the opinion of Calovius,†—a cautious doctrine, indeed, in regard to the desire of innovation, but not a very friendly one to letters. For, if this opinion prevail, we must, forthwith, discard all study of languages, and acquiesce in the authority of the common commentaries of the ancients; than which mode of proceeding, nothing can be more favourable to sloth, or better adapted to recall a state of barbarism. Still, however, the advantages are by no means contemptible, which flow to us from the works of Origen as a fountain, through the commentaries of the Fathers, as those are wont to ex-

* Interpret. Nomm. Hebr. Praef.

† Biblior. Illustr. Praef.

press themselves, who, to use the words of Horace, *in contraria currunt.* The great Erasmus, who had examined, with the greatest diligence, all the commentaries of the Fathers, and was well able to judge in relation to such matters, wrote as follows, when commenting upon the passage in James iv. 5. : *The later theologians introduce here also a goodly number of interpretations, who, whenever they are deserted by the commentaries, which those have left to us, whom they denominate rhetorical and grammatical writers, appear then in their own character.* But I will be more explicit We possess, from the hands of the same Erasmus, a paraphrase of the whole New Testament, elegantly worded, as is the case with all the productions of that scholar. Into this he collected whatever of good there was in the commentaries and other discussions of the Fathers, and pertaining to the accurate understanding of those books;—which fact we have been aware of, by a comparison of the remains of Origen with Chrysostom and others whom we have mentioned above, and by other methods. If any one will read this paraphrase, who is acquainted with the works of the later scholars, he will discover, indeed, how little has been added to the ancients by their efforts; nay, how many things have been deteriorated by these later writers. If we had not been much pressed for time, while writing these things, and distracted by many other cares, we should have made the thing plain by a multitude of examples. The student must be contented, therefore, with one. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans xii. 6., recommending sobriety of mind to Christians, delivers a precept to prophets also : εἴτε προφητείαν, κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως. Origen* translates this clause in such a sense, that Paul commanded the prophets to be content with the gift which they had re-

* Commentar. in Matth. p. 253.

ceived, according to the amount of their faith: *if a gift is conferred on any prophet, in the proportion of his faith* (for this *faith* was the measure of grace given from above), *let him be, and continue to be, a prophet;* and let him not covet other or greater gifts. Let us take a cursory view of the manner in which this interpretation has descended through all the ancient commentaries. In the first place, Jerome, in his Homilies upon this Epistle, receives the clause in the same sense. Hereupon the epitomisers Oecumenius and Theophylact, and, in the Latin Church, Hilary the Deacon and Pelagius, in their notes upon this clause, and the rest of the Fathers, whoever among them approached the passage, followed in the same steps. The same may be said of the ancient Latin interpreters also. For, he who is styled *Italicus*, whose works were used by Hilary, translates the clause *secundum operationem fidei*, expressing the general rather than the literal sense. So also, the Vulgate, as it is called, has *secundum rationem fidei;* for which, Beza, in his version, but with as little reason as in other cases, adopts the phrase *proportione:* for, the phrase *secundum rationem* denotes the same thing, by a form of speech in use among Mathematicians, from whom the phrase κατ' ἀναλογίαν was taken. Erasmus, of whom I have spoken above, translates, in his paraphrase, the Greek phrase κατ' ἀναλογίαν πίστεως, by the Latin phrase *pro modo fidei.* But, as soon as Luther had received the word ἀναλογία, in his German version, in the sense of *resemblance, analogy*, inasmuch as he was more conversant with the schools of the philosophers than with those of the Mathematicians, a new interpretation, concerning a certain *form of doctrine*, which, indeed, in imitation of the philosophers, might be styled, not incorrectly, ἀναλογία πίστεως *analogy of faith*, was introduced into all our doctrinal and ascetical works. But, if the voice of antiquity is to be regarded, this interpretation cannot be

approved. We are not, however, a present, passing sentence, but merely narrating facts, and recommending to the student the use of the ancient commentaries. We must, therefore, confess, that the legitimate hermeneutical treatment of the inspired writings, is very much indebted to Origen, as to its parent; and that, if he was accounted great and worthy of admiration, in his own times, in the allegorical method, he ought to be accounted no less so, by us, in the grammatical department.

XXXI.

But the ancients inform us, that Origen interpreted incorrectly many passages of the inspired writings. Epiphanius,* who is lavish of his praises of the *Hexapla*, nevertheless asserts, that the author had done a serious injury to the world at large, *by his erroneous doctrinal views concerning faith, and his mal-interpretation of very many passages of the Scriptures.* I have some doubts, however, whether this censure belongs to his *Scholia* and *Remarks;* although I by no means suppose that work to have been free from faults. To me, indeed, the observation of Epiphanius, and of others who advance similar sentiments concerning Origen, seems referable, more particularly, to his views of theological doctrines, for the confirmation or defence of which, he had abused some passages of the Scriptures, in such a manner, as to give them an undue force, by collecting from them and expressing what they did not contain; as has, from time immemorial, been done by heretics. *His doctrinal discussions about faith*, says an ancient author in Suidas, *are found to be still more absurd than all.* In every other respect, he is much praised by the same writer. Such an interpretation was of things, not of words; doctrinal, and, as it were, logical, but not

* De Pond. et Mens. c. 7.

grammatical; as is the interpretation employed by nearly all those who are said to have perverted the meaning of the sacred writings. Those very persons, who are said by Peter, to pervert those things "*hard to be understood*" of Paul, as well as the other Scriptures, perverted *things*, rather than *words;* as those, for example, who denied that the dead would be raised again to life. For, they did not deny that Christ had expressly spoken of the *resurrection*, nor did they attempt, by means of grammatical interpretation, to elicit any other sense; but they maintained, that they could not comprehend the thing, and therefore, the *resurrection* was to be understood of a thing already past; which was the wild dream of persons philosophizing about the thing, and not the mode of proceeding proper for those who interpret the words grammatically. And, if any one prefers to turn his attention to the allegorical interpretations, still, the praise of a grammatical interpreter, is not, on this account, to be denied to Origen. For, allegories belong to the *things*, rather than the *words;* nor are they sought for, before the sense of the words has been discovered, by means of the arts of the grammarian. In the allegorical commentaries of Origen, are many grammatical interpretations; and, in general, he does not engage seriously in those allegories, except so far as such a mode of proceeding, as I have remarked above, was believed to conduce to edification. I am not, however, disposed to deny, that Origen pressed the matter too far, through a fondness for allegory; since, in some passages, he acknowledges no other than an allegorical sense. But, he seems to have come to this pitch of folly, when he was now advanced in years, and after he had bestowed grammatical labour upon the sacred writings; which folly, while it obscures the glory of Origen, acquired by his other meritorious treatment of the Scriptures, does not, however, entirely extinguish it; nor does it stand in the

way of his having been the first, in the Christian Church, who introduced the grammatical interpretation of the inspired writings ; and that, too, with great excellence and profit, which we hope we have shown clearly in this discussion.

In presenting to our patrons these tracts from the pen of Ernesti, we owe, perhaps, an apology for occupying so many pages, in two successive numbers, with a subject which, from the manner in which it is treated, will interest, it may be, but a small portion of our readers.

It was deemed expedient, not to separate these tracts and throw them into several numbers of the work, in order that the view of the subject, taken by the illustrious author, might be presented to the public as a continuous and connected whole.

It should also be remembered, that Ernesti was, perhaps, the first to throw this whole subject into a systematic form, connecting together the various subordinate departments, and showing their mutual relations and dependence, and their comparative importance and difficulty. And these tracts may be regarded as the original germ, or the parent stock, of his own more precise and systematic work, which shortly followed, and of those luminous productions on the subject of *Hermeneutics*, which have adorned this department of Biblical study, and embalmed the names of their authors. In this light, it is hoped, these earlier efforts of Ernesti will be received with some degree of interest, by our literary readers.

As in the other pieces admitted, from time to time, into the Repertory, so also in these tracts, we do not mean to intimate, by the act of insertion, our concurrence with the author in all his principles, or their application. The limitation, necessary

under such circumstances, would be not only prejudicial to the interests of solid learning, but also unjust. And to attempt to guard the text, in every instance, by notes of our own, setting forth our views, or those of our particular Church, would be, as we conceive, to entertain too low an idea of our readers' good sense and discrimination.

The general principles advanced by Ernesti, on this subject, may have received some modification, since his day; and his application of some of them, to individual cases, may not be deemed altogether correct. Still, the views of such a scholar as Ernesti,—at a time when the separate parts of the subject were just beginning to be collected into one consistent and systematic whole; when the partial labours of Grotius, Erasmus, Le Clerc, Wetstein, and Michaelis, had just begun to convince the more intelligent, of the necessity of a more comprehensive and compacted view of the subject of *sacred interpretation;* when, also, the tide was beginning to set full against exegetical study and philological research, and even the studious youth—the hope of the church—were beginning to be infected with sloth and indifference; the views of such an accomplished scholar, if regarded with suitable candour and liberality, must be highly interesting; while the sound, judicious, and practical remarks of this experienced student and teacher, which are scattered throughout the whole, will amply repay the ingenuous reader for the labour of a perusal. [Tr. & Ed.]

Refutation

OF THE

HYPOTHESIS OF THE PAPISTS,

IN RELATION TO THE INTERPRETATION OF

THE SCRIPTURES.

Extracted from the works of

JOHN ALPHONSO TURRETIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

BY JOSEPH ADDISON ALEXANDER, A. B.

Refutation

OF THE

HYPOTHESIS OF THE PAPISTS,

&c.

[The following article is an extract from the work of John Alphonso Turretin, *On the Interpretation of Scripture.* The design of the work, as announced by the author, is, 1. To refute false principles and systems of interpretation. 2. To point out and demonstrate the true method. The false hypotheses which he enumerates are four in number, that of the Roman Catholics being the first, which forms the subject of the present article.]

THE first hypothesis is that of the Papists, who regard the Traditions of the Church, the Decrees of Councils, the decisions of the Popes, and the opinions of the Fathers, as the standard of interpretation; and hold that no sense is to be admitted in opposition to this standard; so that however obvious any meaning may appear, it is not to be received, unless sanctioned by the Church.

Their doctrine upon this point cannot be better ascertained, than by a reference to the decree passed at the fourth session of the Council of Trent. The Vulgate is there recognized as an authentic version, after which it is added—

"Præterea ad coercenda ingenia petulantia, decernit Synodus, ut nemo, suæ prudentiæ innixus, in rebus fidei et morum, ad ædificationem doctrinæ christianæ pertinentium,

sacram Scripturam ad suos sensus detorqueat contra eum sensum, quem tenet et tenuit sancta mater ecclesia, cujus est judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione *sacrarum Scripturarum;* ut etiam contra unanimum Patrum consensum ipsam *sacram Scripturam* interpretari audeat, etiamsi hujusmodi interpretationes nullo unquam tempore in lucem edendæ forent; qui contra venerint, per ordinarios declarentur, & poenis a jure statutis puniantur."

"*For the restraining of presumptuous dispositions, the Council further ordains, that no one, in reliance upon his own discernment, in matters of faith and life which pertain to the establishment of christian doctrine, shall wrest the sacred Scriptures to an agreement with his private notions, in opposition to the meaning which is held and ever has been held by the holy mother Church, whose prerogative it is to decide upon the true meaning and interpretation of the Scriptures; and also, that no one shall venture to interpret the Scriptures in opposition to the unanimous opinion of the Fathers, even though such interpretations should at no time be publicly promulgated. Let those, who thus transgress, be proclaimed by their Bishops, and punished according to law.*"

Such is the decree of the Council of Trent—a decree, however, which was not adopted without division or dispute. When the subject was first proposed in the council the members divided in opinion upon it. A large number thought with Cajetan, that a new interpretation, if consistent with the text, ought not to be rejected, although the current of Doctors was in opposition to it. Others were of opinion that the liberty of interpretation should be withheld from the people. Even Francis Richard, of Man, denied that it was any longer necessary to look for the doctrines of religion in the Bible. It was sufficient, he thought, to derive them from systems of Theology. This

opinion, also, was strongly supported. Others recommended à middle course. Of this party was Dominic Soto, who was in favour of drawing a distinction between matters of *faith and life*, and the other subjects contained in the Scriptures; restricting liberty of interpretation in relation to the former, and allowing it in the rest. There were some, too, who maintained the opinion advanced by Cardinal Cusanus in his day—that the Scriptures may be differently explained, at different periods—that the Fathers did no more than interpret to the best of their ability, and that modern christians are at liberty to do the same.

At length, after long debate, the opinion of Cardinal Paciecus prevailed, which excludes all interpretation at variance with the unanimous opinion of the Church. This is the Doctrine expressed in the Decree, and it is easy enough to see with what view such a doctrine was got up. The Reformers used to object to the tenets of the Church of Rome as inconsistent with the word of God. The Papists, not being provided with an answer, to embarrass their opponents devised this plan of taking from the people their right to read the Bible and understand it for themselves. This doctrine the Church of Rome endeavours to establish, both on the authority of Scripture, and by dint of argument; and it has been embraced by all her Doctors in long succession, except some of more recent date, who have abandoned it in practice for sound hypotheses.

To add an expression of our own opinion—we acknowledge that much respect is due, not only to the entire Church, but to its major part; and that, if any passages of Scripture shall appear to have been always and every where understood in a certain way, we have the strongest reason to regard that meaning as the true one. We grant, moreover, that those assemblies which are called *Councils*, are worthy of reverence; especially such as appear to have been chiefly composed of learned and pious men; and that

their expositions deserve our careful attention. We confess, still further, that interpretations proposed by teachers of ancient date, are entitled, from their antiquity, to diligent investigation. We allow, that there are obscure passages which need the elucidation of learned men. We admit, that it is useful and even necessary, that there should be persons in the Church, qualified to act as interpreters; and, finally, we affirm, that no man has a right to repose an overweening confidence in his own ability to interpret; and that they are highly culpable, who are bent upon forcing their own notions upon Scripture, as its genuine meaning. But we do deny, that any man, or any council, has, or ought to have, such an authority over us, that we must give up the clear and palpable meaning of a passage, because this Father or that Council has not approved it; and, on the other hand, that particular interpretations should be received, merely because certain Doctors have been of that opinion. The grounds of our belief are as follows :—

I. The method, which the Papists propose, is much more difficult and intricate than that which consists in meditation on the Bible itself. To investigate the opinions of the Church, and of all its Doctors; to turn over the acts of every Council, the writings of every Father, is a task beyond the strength, not only of the vulgar, but of the learned themselves. To gain our end we must be able to distinguish spurious from genuine documents, and even in the latter, to detect interpolated passages—a matter of no small difficulty. Besides all this, there are the ambiguities and obscurities of Fathers and Councils to be cleared up—difficulties which arise not always from mere human infirmity, but sometimes from deliberate purpose. The Decree of the Council of Trent, for example, on the subject of grace and predestination, is designedly expressed with such obscurity, that it condemns neither the Dominicans on the one hand, nor the Thomists on the other; and

two celebrated theologians, Dominic Soto and Andrew Vega, who wrote in 1548, have actually explained the Decree in opposite ways.

It will be said, perhaps, that there is a shorter method of coming at the opinion of the Church universal—that is, by a reference to the opinion of the Church at present. But who knows, in the first place, whether the opinion of the Church is always the same? Or rather, who does not know, that in innumerable instances it has been changed. In the next place, it is not so easy to discover the actual doctrines of the Church. If we side with the Church of France, we must consult the Councils; but the Italian system is much more convenient, for it makes the Pope arbiter of all controversies. But still it may be asked, must we consult the Pope on every difficulty which occurs? If not, then, either every inferior Priest is to be regarded as the organ and oracle of the Church, or else their method of interpretation is far more difficult than ours.

II. An attentive examination of the rule in question will show, that, if literally understood, it is wholly useless and nugatory. For, supposing an interpretation to have been received as true in every age and quarter of the Church, who will call it in question? But how is it to be known, that all Christians, or even that all Churches, have understood the Scriptures in a certain way? It can never be certainly known.

Again, by saying that no sense is to be received but that which is held by the Church, do they mean all Churches, heretical as well as orthodox? If both, the rule is evidently futile, for different sects hold different opinions. If only the orthodox churches be intended, it is equally useless. For, supposing the truth to be ascertained, controversy is at an end.

We are willing, however, to deal candidly with the Papists, and to admit, that this rule, as understood by them.

has a meaning widely different—to wit, that we are to look for no meaning in the Scriptures, but that which is maintained by the Church of Rome. An admirable regulation! It amounts to nothing more nor less than setting up themselves as judges of the meaning of the Scriptures.

III. Admitting the validity of the arguments, by which they attempt to prove, that individuals can never comprehend with certainty the meaning of the Scriptures, independently of the decisions of the Church; it follows, that the authority of the Church itself, can never be certainly established. On what foundation does that authority rest, if not upon the word of God? How, then, can it be proved, that Popes or Councils are the standards of interpretation, if not from passages of Scripture? Individuals must, therefore, determine for themselves the meaning of the passages, which establish the authority of the Church, in order that they may submit to it. Now, if they are able to decide, by their own understanding, upon passages, which are of difficult interpretation, why may they not also decide upon those, whose meaning is much more evident? It is not a very easy matter, for example, to infer the authority of the Pope from the words—"Thou art Peter, &c." It is much easier to infer from Exodus xx. 4, 5, that images are not to be worshipped.

IV. All men are exhorted in the Scriptures to read, meditate, and practice what is there taught or commanded, without waiting for the decision of any superior. Nay, they are required to bring to the standard of the Scriptures the instructions of the most eminent teachers, even the Apostles themselves, though inspired, and endowed with gifts from on high. Passages to this effect are every where to be found. "*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*"* "*Try the Spirits whether they are of*

*1 Thess., v. 21.

*God."** "*I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.*"† This is the most important: "*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*"‡

Here we say, that believers are required to examine, with care, even the sayings of the apostles, and, consequently, that all men can understand the Scriptures, and need not bind themselves to the opinions of any one. Christ himself, the Teacher of teachers, argued from the Bible, by citing passages demonstrative of his divine mission or his doctrines—a plain proof, that the mass of men can and ought to determine the meaning of the Scriptures for themselves.

V. It is admitted by the Papists themselves, that the Scriptures are the rule of faith and life, the standard to which all teachers should accommodate their doctrines. Now, if the rule of interpretation, which they propose, is a sound one, the Church becomes the rule of the Scriptures—that is, the meaning of the Scriptures becomes subject to its control. But it is absurd that any thing should regulate that by which it is controlled.

VI. According to this hypothesis, the design of God in giving the Scriptures is palpably frustrated. For, what was that design? It unquestionably was, that Divine Revelation might be preserved from the corruptions of human ignorance or wickedness. But, if its meaning is to be determined altogether by oral tradition and the opinion of learned men in different ages, the evil provided against will return. Revelation may with ease be perverted, and its being committed to writing will have no effect in preserving it inviolate and untouched.

* 1 John iv. 1. † 1 Cor. x. 15. ‡ Gal. i. 8.

VII. The Papists alone, without our interference, destroy their own rule completely, by disputing among themselves, where the power of the Church is vested, and by whom its oracles are pronounced. Some say that the Popes—others, that the Councils—are the organs of the Church. Which must we believe? The Italians demonstrate, that Councils are not infallible. The French prove, as clearly, that Popes have often erred. Without any attack on our part, therefore, they themselves annul the system of interpretation which is founded on the concurrent judgment of Popes and Councils.

Among those too, at the present day, who pay great deference to the authority of Œcumenic Councils, there are some who admit, that there is no means of distinguishing such Councils from others. Lannoy, in particular, acknowledges the want of a criterion by which these Councils, which alone are regarded as infallible, may be clearly recognised.

Many, also, who stand up for Councils, and admit the authority of the Pope—Holden, among the rest,—confess that their arguments are not always sound, that their expositions are sometimes inadmissible. How this concession is to be reconciled with the doctrine that Councils, or Popes, or the Church in general, are the standards of interpretation, I am unable to perceive.

VIII. The opinion of the Church, in order to be a proper standard of interpretation, should be immutable. It is certain, however, that some modes of interpretation have been in vogue for ages, and then become obsolete. To specify one instance out of many, the doctrine of infant communion prevailed during several centuries, and was supported by this text, "*Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*"*

* John vi. 53.

That this was the meaning usually attached to the passage is evident from the express words of Augustine and Pope Innocent I. The fact is indeed admitted by celebrated writers among the Papists; and Maldonat, in commenting upon the sixth chapter of John, plainly asserts, that the custom, founded on the text in question, continued for six hundred years; after which it was abandoned, and the interpretation abandoned with it. The opinion of the Church, therefore, is not a *sure* standard of interpretation.

IX. To show with how little reason the Papists look up to the Church, or to Councils, or to Fathers, or to Popes, as the standard of interpretation, we need only observe how many absurd, false, and inconsistent expositions have been proposed both by Popes and by the Fathers of the Church. For surely no man, who interprets absurdly, can be considered a competent judge of Scripture.

Many expositions of this kind occur in the acts of the second Council of Nice; where, through a marvellous ignorance of the principles of interpretation, the worship of images is justified by a reference to the following texts from the books of Moses—*Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land. Moses did obeisance to Jethro. Jacob set up a pillar to God. God wrestled with Jacob, under the form of a man. Jacob kissed the coat of Joseph.* The following passages are then cited from the other books of the Old Testament. *Joshua set up twelve stones. Nathan bowed himself before David. Solomon made cherubim in the temple. The bride saith, Let me see thy countenance. There shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt.* They are not without proof also derived from the New Testament, *No man lighteth a candle and putteth it under a bushel. That they may see your good works. The woman*

* Psalms xlv. 1.

touched the garment of Jesus. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, &c. But I am ashamed to proceed, the interpretations are so wretchedly unsound. Although, however, they afford no ground for believing, that images ought to be worshipped, they certainly prove that the Councils were miserable expounders of Scripture. Nor let it be supposed, that it is only the Councils of the middle ages, that interpret so admirably. The reasoning of the more ancient is not always the strongest; as, for instance, when they prove the divinity of Christ from the words, *My heart is inditing a good matter*—or from Ps. cx. 3, which they translate, *From the womb I have begotten thee before Lucifer*, whereas the sense of the original is, *From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth.* The meaning in the two cases is widely different. Expositions of this description occur on every page.

It is no less certain, that the Popes have not always interpreted aright. It is well known, that Pope Silvius inferred the celibacy of the clergy from Rom. viii. 8, *They that are in the flesh cannot please God.* It is equally notorious, that some of the Pontiffs have supposed their temporal and spiritual authority to be represented and established in the words, *Behold, here are two swords.* It is even believed by impartial judges that several of the Popes have been tainted with heresy. Liberius subscribed the *Arian* formula. Honorius leaned to *Monothelism.* And it is universally known, that some of the Popes have been at variance with each other, on certain points of doctrine. Innocent I. believed the communion of the Eucharist to be necessary to infants. All his successors have maintained the contrary. Gregory I. was in favour of allowing the clergy to marry. All the others forbid it. The same Pontiff denounced, as the forerunner of antichrist, any man, who should assume the title of *Universal Bish-*

op. Yet this very title was assumed by his successor Boniface, and retained by all who followed him.

The same thing may be said of the most noted among the Fathers. It is well known, that the immediate successors of Peter fell into various errors, respecting the marriages of demons and the exploratory fire at the end of the world; and that Hilary, who has been honoured with the name of *Saint*, denied the reality of Christ's sufferings. It must be admitted, indeed, that from some of them the true meaning of the Scripture may be learned—especially from the Greek Fathers, who were enabled to throw light upon the subject, by a more familiar acquaintance with the idioms of their vernacular tongue. But an attentive inquiry will show, that on the whole, they were wretched interpreters. Of this deficiency the following circumstances may be considered as the cause.

They were all ignorant of the Oriental languages, excepting Jerome and Origen; and even their acquaintance was partial and imperfect.

They were disqualified for the task by their devotion to the Heathen Philosophy, the mixture of which, with Christian doctrine, led them to seek for philosophical notions in the Scriptures, which, in fact, have no existence there.

From their immoderate love of allegory, they furnish us with little else than frigid conceits and rhetorical figures. Of this Augustine is an example—a man of the first distinction in the Church. Let any one peruse his commentaries on the Psalms, and he will sicken at his pitiful annotations.

A strong capacity and fondness for controversy led them to press any and every text into their service. Jerome himself acknowledges, that there should be a distinction made between their didactic and controversial writings. For, when we dispute, says he, our object is to accumulate authorities, however little they may bear upon the subject. Now, what confidence can we repose in men, who confess, that they wrest the Scriptures to suit their own opinions?

Finally, they have no regular method. They scrape together, from every quarter, whatever has been said by former writers, however the opinions cited may differ from their own or from one another. Their commentaries may be said to have no fixed design, and to contain nothing that is either definite or coherent.

But while we pronounce this judgment, it is not our design to subject all the Fathers to the same censure. Some are certainly better than others at exposition. Chrysostom, for instance, although he does not expound all parts of Scripture with equal correctness, for he is by no means without his faults, yet may in general be regarded as an able interpreter.

X. We may urge, as an additional argument, the confession of the Fathers themselves, that they were not infallible judges of the meaning of the Scriptures. Several quotations might be made in proof of the fact—one from the nineteenth Epistle of Augustine to Jerome, and one from Jerome himself, who commends Marcella, a Christian woman, because she had not relied wholly upon him for an explanation of the Scriptures, but had carefully weighed even his instructions.

XI. We add what may be regarded as an *argumentum ad hominem*—the fact, that the Papists themselves do not scruple to dissent both from Fathers, Popes, and Councils, when their opinions do not give them satisfaction. Unequivocal evidence might be adduced from the work of Cajetan on the interpretation of Scripture. Melchior Canus is still more explicit. He asserts, that the Fathers are to be read with reverence—but at the same time with discrimination, as being mere men. To these older writers we may add one of more recent date, Elias Du Pin, who advances the same opinion in his "Treatise on the Scriptures."* He quotes the decree of the Council of Trent;

* Lib. 1. cap. 10. 5.

but afterwards insinuates his aversion to it. He says, indeed, that the Decree has reference to innovators; but that Catholic Doctors are at liberty to seek for new senses. An admirable distinction! One man, because he is called an *innovator*, is denied the liberty of interpretation, which is enjoyed by another under the name of a *Doctor Catholicus*. It is evident, however, that this writer acted with caution; for he afterwards refutes the doctrine of the decree, under pretence of explaining it, and shows, that it is in the power of modern commentators to elucidate the Scriptures, that the ancients looked only for allegories, and that consequently we are now at liberty to correct their errors, and supply the defects of their knowledge or understanding.

Having proved, that the general opinion of the Church is improperly set up by the Papists as a standard of interpretation, we must now refute their objections to the opposite hypothesis. A part we have already answered when treating of the Judge of controversies. A few observations only need, therefore, be added, and those relating more immediately to the sense and interpretation of the Scriptures.

Their objections are of two kinds—those derived from Scripture, and those founded upon argument.

The passages, which they adduce, are principally such as follow. They argue, first, from those parts of the Old Testament, where the Israelites are commanded to come to the Priests, when they met with any difficulty.

A passage of the kind occurs in Deuteronomy xvii. 8, 9. "*If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come unto the priests the*

Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire, and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment: and thou shalt do according to the sentence, &c." All these commands are enforced by threats against those who refused, in such cases, to obey the Priests. *The man that will do presumptuously and will not hearken to the Priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die, &c.* Deut. xvii. 12. From this passage they infer, that the Priests were to be consulted in religious disputes, and their decisions received upon pain of death.

We answer, first, that there is here, in reality, no reference to the meaning or interpretation of the law (at least to its essential principle) but rather to controverted matters of fact—as, for instance, whether a particular crime had been committed—or to the ceremonial law, as in the 13th chapter of Leviticus. It is there directed, that in order to determine whether a person was polluted with the leprosy, he should be brought to the Priest, for his decision. In the same way the Israelites are commanded to consult the Priest on various similar subjects, not of essential importance. For essential matters needed no explanation. *This commandment which I command thee this day, is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off*, a doctrine inculcated by Moses elsewhere.

But it is evident, that reference is here intended to *civil affairs*, to matters within the jurisdiction of the *civil* magistrate. They were commanded to come, not only to the *Priest*, but also to the *Judge*. This is implied, too, in the expressions *between blood and blood, between plea and plea*. Now it has never been pretended, before, that the *civil Judges* of Israel were infallible.

Finally, it is a certain fact, that the Priests *were not* infallible in matters of faith, and consequently, that the Israelites were not required to yield implicit submission to

their judgments. It is unquestionable, that they frequently erred, and sometimes even fell into idolatry. Proof might be adduced from Jewish history and the Prophecies. A few passages we shall quote. *As the thief is ashamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes, their* PRIESTS, *and their prophets, saying to a stock, Thou art my father.** Here, it is evident, that not only the people but the Priests also are charged with idolatry. From Jer. xviii. 18., it appears that some in those days held the very doctrine now maintained by the Church of Rome—*that Priests cannot err;* and indeed, it was under this pretence of infallibility, that they sought the life of the prophet, saying, *come and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for* THE LAW SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE PRIEST, *nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet: come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.* But there is a passage still more explicit in the seventh chapter of Ezekiel, where it is plainly asserted, that the very event which the Jews regarded as impossible —to wit, that *the law should perish from the Priest*— was then about to happen. *Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour, then they shall seek a vision of the prophet: but* THE LAW SHALL PERISH FROM THE PRIEST, *and counsel from the ancients.*† In the twenty-second chapter of the same prophecy, it is explicitly said, that the Priests did not interpret the law aright. *Her Priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.* To these texts many might be added; but

* Jer. ii. 26, 27. † Ezek. vii. 26.

there is nothing which shows more clearly how little pretensions the Jewish Priests had to infallibility than their conduct towards Christ. They must have attached an erroneous meaning to the prophecies which foretold him as the Messiah, or they would not have rejected him.

Another passage, which the Papists quote from the Old Testament as an evidence that the interpretation of the law belonged exclusively to the Priests, is Malachi, ii. 7. *The priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts.* The answer is obvious. The duty of the Priests is here undoubtedly defined; but was this duty always discharged? That it was not, is evident from the following sentence, where he upbraids them, because they had *departed out of the way, caused many to stumble at the law, and corrupted the covenant of Levi.*

Some passages from the New Testament also are adduced by the Papists, the greater part of which we have already explained. We shall attend only to one or two others, which they urge with some plausibility, in support of their rule of interpretation. The first is from the history of Philip and the Eunuch of Queen Candace in the eighth chapter of Acts. The latter while engaged in reading Isaiah, falls in with Philip; and to the Apostle's inquiry, whether he understood what he read, replies, *How can I understand, except some man should guide me?* ἐὰν μή τις ὁδηγήσῃ με; This argument is easily answered. The words have reference to the prophecies, which, before their accomplishment, were, of course, obscure, and when read at that period might be regarded as puzzling enigmas. But that which is true respecting prophecy does not hold with regard to all other parts of Scripture. Those which are clear are not to be considered obscure, merely because found in connexion with others which are really so. Besides, the expression which the Eunuch uses is worthy of

observation—ἐὰν μή τις ὁδηγήσῃ με. It is here implied, that interpreters are neither more nor less than *guides*. They *show us the way* to interpret Scripture; and if they do not guide us aright, it is surely wiser to desert them, than to suffer ourselves to be led astray.

Another text, which they bring forward, is 2 Pet. i. 20. *No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation*—ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως. This they explain to mean, that every individual is not at liberty to interpret Scripture as he pleases, but ought to follow the public interpretation of the Church. There are many obstacles, however, in the way of our acquiescence in this exposition.

In the first place, the reference in the text is not to all parts of Scripture, but only to the Prophecies, which the Apostle had compared in the nineteenth verse to *a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn.* He is, therefore, speaking merely of prophecy, which, we grant, is obscure before its accomplishment. Even admitting, therefore, the sense which they propose, it will not follow, as they pretend, that all Scripture must be interpreted by the Church.

2. The sense which they propose cannot be reconciled with the language of the text. For in the expression, that *no prophecy is of any private interpretation*, the word ἰδίας cannot be referred to those who read, so as to mean, that the interpretation of Scripture does not belong to individuals; at least, if we admit the natural import of the terms. It must be referred to the prophecies themselves, so as to convey the idea, that they do not furnish their own explanation.

3. We affirm that the sense which they propose, is at variance with the whole Scriptures, as well as with the doctrine of the Apostles, who exhorted believers to read the Scriptures with diligence, and to judge by that standard even their instructions. The Bereans are commended be-

cause *they searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things*, taught by the Apostles, *were so;* And Paul tells the Galatians, that *if he or an angel from heaven, should preach any other gospel save that which had been preached, he should be accursed*—an indisputable token, that the Apostles permitted every man to examine the Scriptures, and interpret it to the extent of the ability vouchsafed him.

4. Our last and principal objection is, that the sense, proposed by the Papists is foreign from Peter's subject. His object no doubt was to confirm the Christian's faith, not merely by an appeal to the miracles and transfiguration of Christ, but also from the testimony of the Prophets. *We have*, says he (in the nineteenth verse), *a more sure word of prophesy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.* Now what connexion with this design has the precept, that prophecy cannot be interpreted by individuals? None whatever. So far from it, that he actually inculcates attention to the prophecies. But how could such a command be obeyed, if the liberty of interpretation was withheld? But, supposing that Peter intends to say that the prophecies should be interpreted only by the Church; what Church does he mean? Not the Jewish; for that Church interpreted the prophecies very differently from the Apostles. Not the Christian Church—the Apostles themselves. For his argument would then assume this admirable form: "You should take heed to the prophecies, that your faith may be confirmed; but as you cannot interpret them yourselves, you must follow our expositions" —a doctrine as opposite to the practice of the Apostles, as it is in itself absurd. It is plain, therefore, that the interpretation proposed by the Papists is inconsistent with the design of the Apostle.

It may be asked, however, what is the proper mode of explaining the passage. Upon this point, commentators differ. Some wish to substitute ἐπηλύσεως for ἐπιλύσεως, so as

to express the idea, that the prophecies did not proceed from the private impulse and suggestion of men. But this emendation being supported by the authority of no MSS., and the word ἐπηλύσεως seldom occurring in Greek writers, and never in this sense, the conjecture does not seem admissible. Others, suppose the import of the words ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως to be, that the Prophets did not *open their own mouths.* Others consider the metaphor as derived from the public races, and as importing that the Prophets did not run unsent. But all these interpretations are liable to objection on account of their expressing merely the idea, that the Prophets were not prompted by private impulses. Now this is fully stated in the following verse. The admission of the sense proposed would, therefore, only create a tautology—and one the more unnecessary because this question of inspiration was not a subject of dispute between the Jews and the Apostles. The former were fully persuaded of the fact, that the Prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit.

It is probable that the words ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως refer to the *means* of interpreting the prophecies, and upon this hypothesis may be founded the best explanation of the text—which is, that the prophecies do not contain their own solution, but that it must be derived from some other source, to wit, from the Gospel. This sense harmonizes admirably with the train of the Apostle's observations. For he had said before, that prophecy was like a light shining in a dark place until the dawning of the day, and the rising of the day-star in the heart. Now considering the prophecies as a sort of enigma, which were in themselves unintelligible, and whose explanation was to be derived from the clear daylight of the Gospel, which should succeed the age of prophecy—the ensuing expression is natural and proper. Prophecy is not ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως, that is, cannot explain itself or be comprehended before its predictions are fulfilled, an event which can only occur after the dawning of the Gos-

pel. For this interpretation, which seems so appropriate, we are indebted to the distinguished and learned Werenfels, Professor in the University of Basle, whose dissertation upon the subject is highly worthy of perusal.

Having now refuted the principal objections which the Papists derive from Scripture, we must add a few words respecting their artificial arguments, as they call them—that is, arguments founded on various considerations.

1. They assert, then, that unless the opinion of the Church be implicitly followed there can be no fixed interpretation of the Scriptures, on account of the ambiguous expressions which are to be found in it, and the difficulty of the subjects of which it treats—as well as the prejudices and passions by which interpreters are carried away, and the divisions of sentiment which exist among them—all which are rehearsed with great parade by the author of the work on *Prejudices against the Calvinists.* We answer, first, that all these inconveniences fall back upon the Papists. For how can those passages be interpreted, which establish the authority of the Church, if the meaning of Scripture can be learned only from the unanimous opinion of that Church? Yet surely the authority of the Church should be clearly proved, before we submit to it. And since it can be proved only from passages of Scripture, those passages should be carefully examined, without reference to ecclesiastical decisions Now if the objections of the Papists are valid, this end could never be accomplished. Besides, if the Scriptures cannot be understood, much less can the acts of Councils and the writings of Popes and Fathers be comprehended. Are there no ambiguities in them? no difficulties? no defects? There are, without number. Admitting, therefore, the truth of their hypothesis, the same evils must recur.

But we answer, directly, that, notwithstanding the difficulties which have been mentioned, all that is essential may

be understood by every man. Fundamental doctrines are so intelligibly taught, and so frequently repeated in various forms, that no one can err respecting them even if he wishes it. Sacred History, for example, which is a considerable part of religious knowledge, is almost universally intelligible. Is there any man who cannot comprehend the account of the Creation, of the Patriarchs, of Christ, of the Apostles? It is plain, that whatever is necessary to be known is intelligibly taught. There certainly are difficult doctrines in the Scriptures; but they are not essential to salvation. Wherever any thing essential to salvation is obscurely expressed in one place, it is more clearly exhibited in another.

II. They object, that, unless their method is pursued, the private opinion of every individual must be considered as the rule of Sacred Scripture; which is absurd.

We deny the consequence. Individual opinion in such a case would no more be the judge of the meaning of Scripture, than in reading a will, we are judges of the meaning of the words in which that will is expressed. We determine the sense of Scripture, it is true. But it is rather by simple perception of its meaning, than in the way of a judicial decision. And there is no absurdity whatever in a person's understanding for himself what is clearly expressed upon paper.

III. They object that the exercise of this right of private interpretation has divided Protestants into parties—different persons, for instance, urging different arguments in proof of the divinity of Christ. We answer, that if the truth be established, it is enough; even though all parts of Scripture be not equally understood. Essential doctrines may be expressed, sometimes clearly, sometimes obscurely; and although in the latter case divisions may arise, it is sufficient that the doctrines are *somewhere* so intelligibly stated, that men may agree respecting them. We may

also retort the argument upon the Papists. How many divisions exist among themselves on important doctrines—nay upon the very same, respecting which they accuse us of differing! How variously do they expound the passages of Scripture which relate to the divinity of Christ! How diverse their hypotheses of grace and predestination! How many different explanations of the subject which lies at the bottom of all interpretation! Some ascribing infallibility to the Councils, and others to the Pope!

IV. Their fourth objection is, that if their rule be rejected, the labours of Councils and eminent commentators would be useless, and the interpretations of the Church without effect. We deny the consequence. Councils and Commentators point out the way to interpret Scripture. Now if they misguide us, must we follow after them, or follow the right path? Their labours are useful aids to our infirmity; but we should avail ourselves of those aids with circumspection. When they continue in the truth, let their guidance be followed. When they wander from it, let them be deserted.

V. Finally, they object, that unless their hypothesis is received, there will be no end to heresy and schism. For if every one is at liberty, they say, to interpret the Scriptures for himself, there will be as many interpretations as individuals, and almost as many sects. From such a state of things nothing can arise but schisms and heresies, anathemas and wars.

We answer, first, that their hypothesis by no means remedies these evils, as we learn from experience,—the number of schisms and heresies in Christendom not being the less on account of this mode of interpretation. For they who bring forward doctrines at variance with those generally received, either acknowledge the authority of the Church, or they do not. If not, then this method of following the Church, in the interpretation of Scripture, af-

fords no remedy to the evils above mentioned. If, on the other hand, they acknowledge it, then they differ in their mode of understanding the meaning of the Church itself, and make even its decisions a subject of dispute. This fact is also established by experience.

But to meet the objection directly, we assert, that God, if he had seen fit, might have afforded to man infallible means for the prevention of heresy. But this life is a place of trial. There must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest. We must conclude, therefore, that it was not the will of God to afford us infallible means for our liberation from all error. He has chosen to give us merely the power of acquiring knowledge—just as he has afforded means for the relinquishment of sin, leaving it in our choice to embrace these means or not; and according to the neglect or use of them, we shall be punished or rewarded.

Finally we may add, that there is a remedy for heresy and schism—an attachment and assiduous attention to truth—a devout mind exempt from the influence of pride, prejudice, or envy—and a pious moderation in matters not essential, leading us to bear with the weak, in obedience to the precepts, and after the example of the Apostles. If this be our rule of conduct, the truth must and will shine forth on subjects of essential moment. Harmony will reign in Christian society, and they who are engaged in the search of truth, will, by their united efforts, assist each other in the work of the Lord.

It ought to be observed, in conclusion, that, with the Papists who interpret Scripture according to the general opinion of the Church, may be classed those among Protestant Christians who recognize the authority and opinions of eminent teachers as regulating the meaning of the sacred Scriptures. It is a notorious fact, that there are many who think it a sin to dissent at all from the opinions of such

men, and look upon those as heretics, who recede from them in the slightest degree. This system is evidently the same as that of the Papists. For if we may depart from the interpretations of Councils and Fathers, what have these Doctors above the ancients, that they are to be regarded as infallible?

They will say perhaps that modern expositions are the best, and should, therefore, be adopted. We reply, that every man professes to be searching for the truth. This is professed by the Church of Rome, and by every individual teacher. But no one should regard his own interpretations as correct, until they have been fairly examined and approved by others. But it may be replied again, these expositions *have* been examined and approved by synods, universities, and similar societies. We answer, that those learned men and those universities examined for *themselves* not for *us*. Every man should rely upon his *own* understanding—unless, indeed, it be designed to introduce a new papacy. We acknowledge, indeed, that received modes of interpretation should not be departed from unnecessarily, and that this when done should be done with caution and moderation. Every novelty should not be seized upon as if its truth were already demonstrated. We ought neither on the one hand to be wanting in respect to our own understanding, nor on the other to employ ourselves wholly in searching for something new. The knowledge of truth should be our only object. When we discover a mode of interpretation therefore, differing from the usual method, it should be proposed with great reserve, as an evidence that we place no overweening confidence in ourselves, but are engaged in a modest inquiry after truth. And if there is a probability, that the new interpretation will be productive of more evil than good, of disturbance rather than edification, instead of being promulgated, it should be passed over in silence. In short, we should act

in reference to this subject, with the utmost liberality, prudence and forbearance.

But it is not to be supposed, that there is no longer room for discovery or occasion for divine illumination. Much was undoubtedly brought to light at the time of the Reformation; and we cannot sufficiently admire the spirit of the Reformers, by which they were enabled to rise so far above the genius of the age, and to extricate themselves from scholastic darkness and its abominable systems. But though they did much, they did not accomplish every thing. At that period, a competent skill in oriental learning was impracticable, a corrupt philosophy was universally in vogue, and commentaries, as the necessity of things required, were entirely controversial. Since that time, a clearer light has been revealed. A more extensive knowledge of the Oriental languages, a profounder skill in the art of criticism, a purer philosophy have been disseminated. It is not at all surprising, therefore, that with the aid of these advantages, interpretations should be offered superior to the ancient. And, surely, such ought not to be rejected, merely because they are proposed by moderns.

Gleanings.

I. Sources of information concerning the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, down to the year 1697; from the *Classical Journal* for March, 1826. Vol. xxxiii. p. 130.

1. *Reynerus Sacco*, the inquisitor who was employed against the Vaudois, asserted that the sect of the Vaudois commenced either in the days of the apostles, or of Constantine the Great and Sylvester, in the beginning of the fourth century. He added, *Coram hominibus juste vivunt.* (Leger, pt. 1. p. 183. Usher, p. 151. 210.

2. *Claudius Seisselius*, Abp. of Turin, and of the Valleys, A. D. 1500, vindicated the morals of the Vaudois. (Ibid. p. 184.)

3. *Thuanus*, A. D. 1560, vindicated their morality. (Ibid. p. 184.) See more testimonies in Leger. (Ibid.)

4. *Centuriatores Magdeburgenses*, 1569, Cent. xii. p. 1204, de Waldensibus, seu de Pauperibus de Lugduno.

Abp Usher observes, (p. 156.) that this work contains *the most ancient information from Ms.*

5. *Abp. Usher's* work, before referred to, and entitled *De Christianarum Ecclesiarum Successione et Statu*, 1613.

This most important document is the basis both of Leger and of Morland. We should notice particularly, p 17, where he observes, that there was no need of witnesses before the seventh century, for proof of which he alleges Bp. Jewel's testimony: 'Quod cum ab aliis, tum a Johanne Juello immortalis memoriæ viro luculenter demonstratum.' N. B. This may be true with respect to *doctrine;* but does not apply to *usurpation.* Both Irenæus, Bp. of Lyons, and Hilarius, Bp. of Arles, were witnesses against the claims of Rome to undue jurisdiction, before that jurisdiction was employed to enforce Antichristian doctrine. (Sir I. Newton on Daniel, and Bower's Lives of the Popes.) P. 61. Remarks on the Revelation of Antichrist. Compare Mede on Dan. xii. 11. P. 149. Rev. ii. 24, is descriptive of Popery. P. 151, 210, he properly rejects and refutes the ignorance of those who derive the Vaudois from Peter Waldo. P. 156, he refers us to the Cent. Magd. as above stated.

6. *Perrin's History of the Waldenses and the Albigenses*, 1619. His ignorance of th origin of the Vaudois is corrected by his second English translator. This work is valuable for showing the effect of the persecutions and dispersions of the Waldenses and the Albigenses to have been the diffusion of primitive Christianity throughout Europe. The providence of God particularly in bringing the English, in the ime of Edward III., into contact with the Albigenses, deserves special note. This was that dark hour, when "all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones." Wickliff was the most eminent of their converts; but the voice of his thunder was to be sealed. To Perrin, we believe, we are principally indebted for the writings of the Waldenses, bearing date before the time of Peter Waldo.

7. *Sir Samuel Morland's History of the Vaudois*, 1658.

This noble author brings down their history to his own times. He asserts the antiquity of the Vaudois, and alleges the testimonies of Rorenco, prior of Lucerna (1632), that this heresy *continued* to the eighth century.

He maintains that the disciples of Waldo came into the valleys to reside with their brethren. See p. 13 & 27. He adds, that the Belvidere chiefs of the missionaries, having undertaken to show the original of the religion of the Vaudois, were never able to show the very age, even from the days of the apostles, when it was there introduced. All ancient concessions import no more than that they were permitted to continue in the same religion which they had received from their ancestors.

He likewise refers us to a Cambridge manuscript, in proof that their own belief was that they had preserved the gospel from generation to generation, from the days of the apostles.

His inference from the concession of Rorenco, that since that eminent author admitted that their religion continued till the eighth century, i. e. until the time of Claudius Abp. of Turin, in the eighth century, and that his doctrine continued in the ninth and tenth centuries; and that in the beginning of the eleventh century, Peter Waldo came into the valleys, where, it is admitted also, they have taught and professed the same ever since,—is, "that the professors of the reformed religion may clap their hands in token of an absolute triumph for ever over all the disciples of the church of Rome, and say that they are now able, manifestly and undeniably to prove the continual succession of their religion from the days of Christ and his apostles down to this present age."

N. B. Primitive Christianity must either have been preserved or restored in the valleys. If *preserved*, as we assert, the cause, for which Protestants plead, is gained; if *restored* by

Claudius or Peter Waldo, as may be objected, we demand, not *assertion* for the fact, but *proof;* and proof too, not from the arguments of the moderns, Ἡμεῖς γὰρ κλέος οἷον ἀκουσάμεθ' οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, but from the testimonies of the contemporaries of the Vaudois in former ages, who wanted neither the will nor the opportunity to disprove the antiquity of the faith of the Vaudois: one thing only they wanted, viz. the possibility of disproving it. Q. E. D.

8. *Jean Leger's History of the Vaudois*, 1669, continuing their history to 1664.

This most complete history of the Vaudois vindicates the antiquity of this church. Pt. 1. p. 128. 131. 183. Alleges Thuanus, p. 129, and Luther, p. 130; and Bp. Jewel, p. 133. Brings forward Claudius of Turin, p. 137. Asserts that England was reformed by them, p. 176. States, what we think not improbable, that the year 666 was the true epoch of idolatry and transubstantiation, the abomination of desolation, p. 134, which is confirmed by the Cent Magd. and asserted by Fleming on the Revelation, who adds that the Latin liturgy was then enforced.

Abp. Usher and Sir S. Morland left little to this eminent author to add to the history, besides a continuation of it to his own times. He has ably availed himself of their researches, and produced the most perfect history of the Vaudois.

9. *Dr. Allix on the Waldenses and Albigenses*, 1690. He proves the apostolical antiquity and primitive faith of both these churches, and demonstrates the regular succession of witnesses in them both. One grand omission, however, is that of Hilarius, Bp. of Arles, with whom both persecution and the times of the Man of Sin commenced. See Mede, More, and Sir J. Newton, to whom we most cordially assent. See also Whiston on Rev. xi. 2, for the best judgment on Dr. Allix.

10. *Peter Boyer's History of the Vaudois*, 1692. This author has given us an excellent epitome of the doctrine and history of the Vaudois to his own time. The epistle dedicatory is properly addressed to the Prince of Orange, who was at this time the head and champion of both Waldenses and Albigenses. See Bp. Burnet's Life of Queen Mary, and the History of his Own Times.

He asserts their antiquity, p. 2. He relates their history in a most interesting manner; and all that seems wanting to render this little history complete, is to erase the arguments of the chapters, and every thing like anticipation of success or defeat in the book: for the book abounds with anticipation, the greatest of all faults in an historian. The history of Jayer and Janavel particularly, in the hands of a skilful historian,

might be rendered the most interesting of histories. His reflections also are too often repeated, and he is in too great a hurry to finish his story. This work ought to be the basis of a better written popular work.

In his application of the prophecies he seems to have applied them well to the restoration of a small proportion of the Vaudois in 1690 But he has not told us what became of the vast multitude of dried bones, or of the Waldenses and Albigenses every where unchurched from April 1685, to the latter end of 1686. We must therefore have recourse to other sources of information. Bp. Lloyd agreed with him in his application of prophecy.

11. *Histoire de l'Edit de Nantes*, 1695. This great work is second to none in continuing the history both of Waldenses and Albigenses to the author's own times. The precise epoch of the last great persecution by all the Romanists throughout Europe is determined to April or May 1685; the work having been effected in France some months before the formal revocation of the edict: (tome iii. p. 745.) the Waldenses being involved in it, at the very same time. (Bp. Burnet's Travels, p. 65. Compare his History of his Own Times.)

12. *The History of the Persecutions of the Protestants by the French King in the Principality of Orange, by M. Pineton, Pastor of the Church of Orange*, 1689. This author justly observes, "that the year 1685 was such an epocha that future ages shall look on it to be the most dreadful that ever happened. It was in that year that the temples throughout France were pulled down, and an universal dispersion of the people into all the parts of the earth. We saw, indeed, our calamity hastening apace; but we never thought that the persecution would be so sharp.

"It was at Easter in the same year that we began to see the distress of the reformed churches in France: those who in the neighbouring provinces had been forbid all public exercise of their religion, came crowding to us for the sake of their devotion. Storms drive not the waves with more fury than this violent persecution threw troubles continually towards us, which at last swallowed us up."—See other authors, relating to the persecution at Orange, referred to in the History of the Edict of Nantes.

13. *M. de Brueys' History of Fanaticism.* This celebrated opponent of Protestantism witnesses, that, from June, 1688 to February, 1689, "enthusiasm spread itself with such a torrent among the French Protestants that a conflagration blown with the wind does not spread faster from house to house, than

this fury fled from parish to parish. Brethren, said the Prophet, amend your lives; repent ye of that great sin ye have committed in going to mass: it is the Holy Ghost that speaks to you through my mouth. They made loud cries for mercy; the hills and all the echoes adjoining resounded with the cry of mercy; with imprecations against the church, the Pope, and against the Antichristian dominion; with blasphemies against the mass, with exhortations to repentance for having abjured their religion, with predictions of the approaching fall of Popery, and the deliverance of the church pretendedly reformed." Compare Bp. Burnet's History of his Own Times, i. 779, and Jurieu's Preface to his work on the Prophecies, 1687, for most important matter.

14. *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages, by H. Hallam, Esq.* 1818, vol. ii. p. 531. This eminent author, competent if any modern be so, to sum up the evidence for the antiquity and morality of the Vaudois, seals the testimony in these words: "Those who were absolutely free from any taint of Manicheism are properly called Waldenses, a name perpetually confounded in later times with that of Albigenses. These, according to the majority of writers, took their appellation from Peter Waldo; according to others, the original Waldenses were a race of uncorrupted shepherds in the valleys of the Alps, which had shaken off, or perhaps never learned the system of superstition on which the Catholic church depended for its ascendency. I am not certain that their existence can be distinctly traced beyond the preaching of Waldo, but it is well known that the proper seat of the Waldenses has long continued to be in certain valleys of Piedmont. These pious and innocent sectaries, of whom the very monkish historians speak well, appear to have nearly resembled the modern Moravians. They had ministers of their own appointment, and denied the lawfulness of oaths and of capital punishments. In other respects their opinions probably were not far removed from those usually called Protestants. A simplicity of dress, and especially the use of wooden sandals, was affected by this people. Their innocence is out of all doubt. No book can be written in a more edifying manner than their Noble Lesson."

15. *Bp. Burnet's Essay of Queen Mary*, p. 142: "The refugees of France were considered by her, as those whom God had sent to sit safe under her shadow, and easy through her favour. Those scattered remnants of our elder sister, that had been hunted out of their valleys, were again brought together by their majesties' means. It was the king's power-

ful intercession that restored them to their seats, as well as to their edicts. And it was the queen's charity that formed them into bodies, and put them in the method of enjoying those advantages, and of transmitting them down to future ages. She took care also of preserving the little that remained of the Bohemian churches."

"N. B. During the reign of James II., the persecution which fell on all the Protestants throughout Europe, lighted specially on their elder sisters, the Waldenses and Albigenses. Their churches were unchurched; and their scattered members generally exhibited either a deadness to Protestantism, or actually renounced their former faith, and came over to the church of Rome." (Burnet.)

In 1688, Orange awakened, and the dry bones came together, and life entered into them; as M. Brueys acknowledges. It may be seen in the History of the Edict of Nantes, that their army consisted of the Prince of Orange, Marshal Schomberg, and 300 French officers, all of them Protestant refugees. The numbers of the common soldiers we have not found stated; but a paper published at the time of their landing at Torbay, takes particular notice of their fine appearance.

The most interesting account of this event is found in Bp. Burnet's History of his Own Times. Having ascended the throne of Great Britain, they had to establish the Protestant kingdom by a war, which continued till the close of the year 1697. And this object they effected, as will be seen in *The complete History of England*, and Bp. Burnet's History of his Own Times; and now—

Roma fuit, fuit Othmanides, fuit improbus orbis
Terrarum, solus regnat in orbe Deus.

(See Daubuz on Rev. xiv.)

In the mean time, in 1690, a remnant of the Vaudois crossed the lake of Geneva, and recovered their ancient seats, as the greater body had before crossed the British Channel. (Boyer, ch. xxvii.)

II. On *Bibliomancy* or *Divination by the Bible*; from *Townley's Illustrations of Biblical Literature.* Vol. i. p. 113.

This kind of Divination was named Sortes Sanctorum, or Sortes Sacræ, *Lots of the Saints, or Sacred Lots;* and consisted in suddenly opening, or dipping into the Bible, and

regarding the passage that first presented itself to the eye, as predicting the future *Lot* of the inquirer The *Sortes Sanctorum* succeeded the *Sortes Homericæ*, and *Sortes Virgilianæ* of the pagans, among whom it was customary to take the work of some famous poet, as Homer or Virgil, and write out different verses on separate scrolls, and afterwards draw one of them; or else, opening the book suddenly, consider the first verse that presented itself, as a prognostication of future events. Even the vagrant fortune-tellers among them, like some of the gipsies of our own times, adopted this method of imposing upon the credulity of the ignorant. The nations of the east still retain this practice. The late Persian usurper, Nadir Shah, twice decided upon besieging cities, by opening upon verses of the celebrated poet Hafiz.*

Superstitious as this practice was, it nevertheless gained ground by the countenance of certain of the clergy, some of whom permitted prayers to be read in the churches for this very purpose.† Others, however, endeavoured to suppress it, for in the council of Vannes, held A. D. 465, it was ordained, "That whoever of the clergy or laity should be detected in the practice of this art, should be cast out of the communion of the church."‡ In 506, the council of Agde renewed the decree; and in 578, the council of Auxerre, amongst other kinds of divination, forbade the *Lots of the Saints*, as they were called, adding, "Let all things be done in the name of the Lord."§ But these ordinances gradually became slighted, for we find the practice again noticed and condemned, in a *capitulary*, or edict of Charlemagne, in 793. In the twelfth century, this mode of divination was adopted as a means of discovering heretical opinions! One *Peter* of *Thoulouse*, being accused of heresy, and having denied it upon oath, a person who stood near, took up the Gospels, on which he had sworn, and opening them suddenly, the first words he lighted upon were those of the Devil to our Saviour, (Mark i. 24.) "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?" Which, says the relator, agreed well with such a heretic, "who indeed had nothing to do with Christ!!"‖

Francis of *Assise*, who founded the order of Franciscans, in 1206, says of himself, that he was tempted to have a *book:*

* Sir W. Jones's Works, Traité sur la Poesie Orientale, V. p. 463. 4to.
† Heinault's Chronolog. Abridgment of the Hist. of France, A. D. 506.
‡ S. S. Concilia, Concil. Venet. Anno Christi 465, IV. p. 1057.
Bingham's Antiq. of the Chris. Church, VII. B. xvi. ch. v. p. 278.
§ S. S. Concilia, VII p. 989.
‖ Gataker, Of the Nature and Use of Lots, p. 330,

but as this seemed contrary to his vow, which allowed him nothing but *coats, a cord, and hose, and in case of necessity only, shoes;* he, after prayer, resorted to the Gospel, and meeting with that sentence, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given;" (Matthew xiii. 11.) concluded that he should do well enough without books, and suffered none of his followers to have so much as a Bible, or Breviary, or Psalter !!*

Bibliomancy was also practiced, not only in the common occurrences of life, and by private individuals, but by the highest dignitaries of the church, on the most public occasions, and particularly in the *election of bishops.* When a bishop was to be elected, it was customary to appoint a fast, usually for three days; afterwards the Psalms, the Epistles of St. Paul, and the Gospels were placed on one side of the altar, and small billets, with the names of the candidates upon them, on the other; a child or some other person then drew one of the billets, and the candidate whose name was upon it, was declared to be duly elected. On one of these occasions, St. Euvert caused a child to be brought, which had not yet learned to speak; he then directed the infant to take up one of the billets, the little innocent obeyed, and took up one on which the name of St. Agnan was inscribed, who was proclaimed to be elected by the Lord. But for the more general satisfaction of the multitude, Euvert consulted the Sacred Volumes. On opening the Psalms, he read, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts." In the Epistles of St. Paul he found, "Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And in the Gospels he opened upon the words, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." These testimonies were accounted decisive in favour of Agnan, all the suffrages were united, and he was placed in the episcopal chair of Orleans, amid the acclamations of the people.† A similar mode was pursued at the installation of abbots, and the reception of canons.

This usage was not confined to the Latins, it was equally adopted by the Greeks. Two facts may prove its existence, and injurious tendency. The first is that of Caracalla, archbishop of Nicomedia, who consecrated Athanasius on his no-

* Ibid. p. 346.

† Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions: *Recherches Historiques sur les Sorts appelés: Sortes Sanctorum;* par M. l'Abbé du Resnel, XIX. pp. 287, 296. Paris 1753. 4to.

mination to the patriarchate of Constantinople, by the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. Having opened the books of the Gospels upon the words, "For the devil and his angels;" the Bishop of Nice first saw them, and adroitly turned over the leaf to another verse which was instantly read aloud, "The birds of the air may come and lodge in the branches thereof." But as this passage appeared to be irrelevant to so grave a ceremony, that which had first presented itself, became known to the public almost insensibly. To diminish the unpleasant impression it had produced, the people were reminded, that on a similar occasion, another archbishop of Constantinople had accidentally met with a circumstance equally inauspicious, by lighting upon the words, "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," and yet his episcopate had neither been less happy, nor less tranquil than formerly. The historian, nevertheless, remarks, that whatever had been the case under former archbishops, the Church of Constantinople was violently agitated by the most fatal divisions during the patriarchate of Athanasius. The other instance, is that of the metropolitan of Chersonesus, the first prelate consecrated by Theophanes, after his translation from the metropolitan see of Cyzicus to the patriarchate of Constantinople, and who having received the book of the Gospels at his hands, and opened it, according to custom, met with these words, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch," which were regarded by the public as prognosticating evil to both the patriarch, and the Metropolitan.*

The Abbé du Resnel informs us, that this custom was continued in the cathedral of Boulogne, and at Ypres, and St. Omer, so late as the year 1744, only with this difference, that at Boulogne, the newly chosen canon drew the lot from the Psalms, instead of the Gospels. The late M. de Langle, bishop of Boulogne, who regarded the custom as superstitious, and perceived, that when the new canons accidentally opened upon passages containing imprecations or reproaches, or traits of depravity, an unmerited stigma attached to their character, issued an order for its abrogation, in 1722. But the chapter, who claimed exemption from Episcopal jurisdiction, treated the order with contempt, and persevered in their superstition, except, that as it had been customary to insert in the letters of induction given to each canon, the verse which had been drawn for him, it should in future be added, that this was done according to the ancient custom of the church of Ter-

* Memoires de l'Academie des Inscriptions, XIX. p. 303.

ouanne; out of which the churches of Boulogne, Ypres, and St. Omer, had risen, after its destruction by Charles V. "I have in my possession," says the Abbé, "one of these acts, dated in 1720, in which are the following words: *Et secundum antiquam ecclesiæ Morinensis, nunc Boloniensis consuetudinem, hunc ex psalmo sortitus est versiculum: Ipsi peribunt, tu autem permanes, et omnes sicut vestimentum veterascent:* "And according to the ancient custom of the church of Terouanne, (now Boulogne,) this verse was drawn from the Psalms: "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment."*

Another species of *Bibliomancy*, not very dissimilar from the *Sortes Sanctorum* of the Christians, was the Bath-Kol, or Daughter of the Voice, in use amongst the Jews. It consisted in appealing to the first words heard from any one, especially when reading the Scriptures, and looking upon them as a *Voice from Heaven*, directing them in the matter inquired about. The following is an instance: Rabbi *Acher*, having committed many crimes, was led into thirteen synagogues, and in each synagogue a disciple was interrogated, and the verse he read was examined. In the first school they read these words of Isaiah, (ch. xlviii. 22.) *There is no peace unto the wicked:* another school read, (Psalm l. 16.) *Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?* and in all the synagogues something of this nature was heard against *Acher*, from whence it was concluded he was hated of God!† This species of divination received its name from being supposed to succeed to the *Oracular Voice*, delivered from the mercy-seat, when God was there consulted by Urim and Thummim, or *Light* and *Perfection*, (Exodus xxviii. 30.) a term, most probably, used to express the clearness and perfection of the answers which God gave to the high-priest. The Jews have a saying amongst them, that the Holy Spirit spake to the Israelites, during the tabernacle, by Urim and Thummim; under the first temple by the prophets; and under the second temple by Bath-Kol.‡

* Memoires de l' Academie des Inscriptions, *ubi sup.*

† Basnage's History of the Jews, B. iii. ch. v. p 165, fol.

‡ Lewis's Antiquities of the Heb. Republic, B. ii. ch. iii. pp. 112. 114. 198. vol. I.

III. On the *Peshito** and other Versions of the New Testament; from *Marsh's Michaelis* Vol. II. pt. I. c. VIII. § VIII.

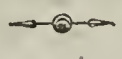
The *Peshito* is the very best translation of the Greek Testament that I have ever read; that of Luther, though in some respects inferior to his translation of the Old Testament, holding the second rank. Of all the Syriac authors with which I am acquainted, not excepting Ephrem and Bar-Hebraeus, its language is the most elegant and pure, not loaded with foreign words, like the Philoxenian version, and other later writings, and discovers the hand of a master in rendering those passages, where the two idioms deviate from each other. It has no marks of the stiffness of a translation, but is written with the ease and fluency of an original; and this excellence of style must be ascribed to its antiquity, and to its being written in a city that was the residence of Syrian kings. * * * * * * * * It is true that the Syriac version, like all human productions, is not destitute of faults, and, what is not to be regarded as a blemish, differs frequently from the modern modes of explanation: but I know of none that is so free from error, and none that I consult with so much confidence, in cases of difficulty and doubt.

* The *ancient* Syriac version. The translation, made under the patronage of Philoxenus, A. D. 508, is styled the *Philoxĕnian* version. (Ed.)

IV. *Church Music;* From the Quarterly Theological Review for Sept. 1826. Vol. IV. p. 400.

That we must trace the origin of all Church music to the Jews, or to the Hebrew ritual, seems sufficiently proved by the researches of musical antiquaries; and there can be little reason to doubt, that, in the early Christian Church, the Psalms of David were sung to the very melodies to which they had been associated in the Temple. There is here a chasm in the rigid evidence as to the descent of those melodies to a later age, from the want or the imperfections of musical notation, every where; among the Greeks as elsewhere. Whether they descended traditionally, through the ear, or by a Hebrew notation, or, as is not impossible, by a Greek one, has not been satisfactorily made out; but antiquaries entertain no doubt that the music of the early Latin Church was construct-

ed out of those, by pure borrowing, as well as by copying or imitation. And thus, in the ancient chants still used, as in the Ambrosian and Gregorian music, we may believe that we hear, even now, the melodies of the Hebrew temple.



V. Testimony of Profane Writers to facts recorded by the Sacred Historians; from *Gray's Connexion between the Sacred Writings and Jewish and Profane Literature.* Vol. I. ch. XVI. p. 176.

There are numberless passages in the profane writings of antiquity, which bear a direct testimony to the truth of many facts recorded by the sacred historians. A few only of these need be produced. Many representations, which bear evidence to the creation, the flood, and other particulars which took place in the early ages of the world, have already been brought forward; and many others will be produced in the remarks upon the works of individual writers. Manetho, Berosus, Hestiaeus, Hecataeus, and others relate, that those who succeeded the first man lived to a thousand years, and confirm many other particulars too numerous to mention with respect to the early ages of the world.

Nicolaus of Damascus mentions Abraham as a stranger who had rule in Damascus, to which city he came from Chaldea, and that upon a tumult he went to Canaan, where he had a numerous offspring.*

Tacitus admits that distinguished cities had been burnt by fire from Heaven on the plains where Sodom and Gomorrah stood.†

Josephus refers to writers who speak of the race of giants‡ in Assyria and Canaan, and Eusebius presents us with passages which repeat accounts concerning them, particularly from Abydenus§ and Eupolemus.‖

The passage through the Red Sea was remembered among the people of the Syrian Hierapolis, and is related by Artapanus.¶

* Euseb. Praep. Evang. Lib. ix. c. 16.

† Hist. Lib. v. § 7.

‡ Lib. v. c. 2. Lib. vii. c. 12.

§ Praep. Evang. Lib. ix. c. 14. Grot. de Verit. Lib. 1. note XL. Plin. Nat. Hist. Lib. vii. c. 16.

‖ Praep. Evang. Lib. ix. c. 17.

¶ Euseb. Praep. Evang. Lib. ix. c. 27.

Numberless writers speak of Moses as a distinguished legislator; some advert to the sublimity of his writings,* and others describe the excellence and permanent influence of his laws.

Tacitus mentions the Exodus from Egypt, and the abode of the Israelites in the wilderness, but he mingles many absurd reports with his account.†

Menander, relating the acts of Ithobal, King of the Tyrians, mentions the drought which happened in the time of Elias.‡

Josephus, in describing the events of sacred history, repeats, in a continued relation, almost all the leading circumstances which are recorded by Moses, and by the inspired Penmen, confirming his account from time to time, by a reference to other writers; most of the great events of the Jewish history are thus supported, and with regard to particulars recorded in the New Testament the witnesses are still more numerous.

VI. On the Ordeals of the tenth century. A law of king Athelstan. Extracted from *Johnson's Collection of Ecclesiastical laws*, as cited by *Townley*. Vol. i. p. 314.

As to Ordeals, we charge in the name of God, and by the precept of the archbishop, and all my bishops, that no one go into the church after the carrying in of the fire, with which the *Ordeal* is to be heated, but the priest, and the person to be tried. And let nine feet be measured out from the stake to the mark, according to the length of the person's foot who is to be tried. And if it be the *Water-Ordeal*, let it be heated till it boils: and if it be a single accusation, let the hand be dipped to the fist only, to take out the stone; but if the accusation be three-fold, then let it be dipped to the elbow. And when the *Ordeal* is ready, let two of each party come in, to see that it be sufficiently heated, and let an equal number of both sides enter, and stand on each side of the *Ordeal*, along the church, and let them all be fasting, without having been with their wives the foregoing night; let them humble themselves at the priest's sprinkling the holy water upon them; and let the priest give them the Holy Gospel.

* Longinus. † Hist. Lib. v. § 3.
‡ Joseph. Antiq. Lib. viii. c. 13.

Book, and the sign of the holy cross to be kissed. And let no man increase the fire after the consecration is begun; but let the iron lie in the fire till the last collect, then let it be laid on the pillar.* And let nothing be said, but prayers to God that he may reveal the truth; and let the person accused drink holy water, and let the hand in which he is to carry the Ordeal be sprinkled with it. Let the nine measured feet, be divided into three parts, containing each three feet. Let him place his right foot at the first mark at the stake; at the second mark let him put his right foot foremost; when he is come to the third, let him throw down the iron. Let him speed to the holy altar, and let his hand be sealed up. On the third day let inspection be made whether there be any filth† or not, in the place that was sealed up. If any one break these laws, let the Ordeal be null, and a mulct of 120 shillings be paid to the king.‡

VII. Lectures in Paris. German Universities. Asiatic Society. Prof. Tholuck: From a manuscript letter from an American to a gentleman in Princeton, dated Paris, Jan. 29, 1827.

De Sacy lectures three times every week on Arabic, and three times on the Persic. His method does not differ from the ordinary manner of hearing a recitation with us. His class, which does not consist of more than seven or eight, read the *Coran* on one day, and a part of his *Chrestomathia* on the others. He does little more than explain the force of the words, and any difficulties which may occur in the grammatical forms or constructions. He is very particular and very attentive, devoting upwards of two hours to each exercise. Besides this, Prof. Cuisin lectures on the Arabic Grammar three times a week. Lectures are delivered upon almost all the Eastern languages—Sanscrit, Chinese, Bengalee, Hindostanee, &c. All these, as well as the instructions in the sciences, law, and medicine, are public and gratuitous. There is a great difference between the lecture-rooms of the Professor of Chemistry, and Professor of Hebrew, the latter having two, and the former two thousand, hearers.

* *Super Staples.* Some supporter made of stone or iron, from whence the person to be tried was to take the hot iron into his hands. *Johnson.*

† If there was any matter or corruption, the person was condemned as guilty; if there was none, or the priest could see none, he was acquitted. *Johnson.*

‡ Johnson's Collection of Ecclesiastical Laws, &c. II. A. D. DCCCCXXV.

I have attended the meetings of the Asiatic Society, which consists of forty or fifty near-sighted Orientals, of whom De Sacy is the President. It was an amusing sight to see every man with the paper or book he wished to read, almost in immediate contact with his face. The worthy President is as remarkable for the shortness of his sight as for the depth of his knowledge. The proceedings of this Society having no connexion with Biblical subjects, are not to me very interesting.

Goettingen has suffered very much of late, in the death and sickness of its Professors. Staeudlin is dead, Eichhorn superannuated, and Planck "is in ruins under the epilepsy." At Halle, as I am informed, more attention is paid to Biblical literature, than at any of the other Universities. It has also the great advantage of having Tholuck within its walls, who is as much distinguished for his piety as for his learning. I have seen a little work of his on the theology of the ancient Persians, which states in the title page, that the materials were derived from Arabic, Persic, and Turkish MSS, in the royal library of Berlin. As Tholuck is at present not more than eight or nine and twenty, he must have published that work when he was about twenty four or five! I have also seen a treatise of his to show that Christ is the centre, sum and key, of the Old Testament. He has also written a work, which has produced a great impression, on the doctrine of redemption.

Literary Intelligence.

We are authorized to state that the translation of Jahn's *Introduction to the Old Testament* by Samuel H. Turner, D. D. and William R. Whittingham, will be put to press in about three weeks, and may be expected by the end of June or some time in July.

Letters on Clerical Manners and Habits, addressed to a student of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J. by Samuel Miller, are nearly through the press, and may be expected in about one week.

A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, is in preparation by Professor Stuart, of Andover, Mass.

We are authorized to state, that the publication of this work has been delayed, chiefly because the Author found it indispensably necessary, to devote much time and labour to the *Historical and Critical Introduction*. The works of Dr. Schultz of Dessau, and of Dr. Seyffarth, calling in question the Pauline origin of the Epistle, have had so great an influence in Germany, that Mr. S. feels himself bound to attempt a refutation of their arguments, the most formidable of which are the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα and the ἅπαξ λογιζόμενα of this Epistle. The *Introduction* is now nearly completed.

We believe that no one who loves this study, and duly estimates its importance, will regret the delay, if thereby the authenticity of this Epistle be substantiated by a purely *American* scholar.

"The Traveller Schulz, has now in the press a Greek Testament, containing various new readings, and fixing only two recensions, the Κοίνη ἔισθεσίς and Alexandrine, which will, when published, subvert a great part of Griesbach's theory."

Class. Journ. June, 1826.

New Publications.

A popular Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures, designed for the use of mere English readers. In two parts. Part I.—Rules for reading the Bible. Part II.—Helps toward a right understanding thereof; comprising Introductions to the several Books; a Summary of Biblical Antiquities, Geography, Natural History, &c. By William Carpenter, Editor of the Critica Biblica, Scripture Magazine, Calendarium Palestinae, &c.

Essay on the Hebrew characters used at the time of the Patriarchs, and in the succeeding ages By M. Giuseppe Vigerano. Reggio. (An Italian work.)

The Gospel of St. Luke; with English Notes. By the Rev. J. R. Major, B. A. of Trin. Coll. Camb.

Origin of Expiatory Sacrifice. By George Stanley Faber, Rector of Long Newton. London, 1826.

Illustrations of Paley's Natural Theology, with descriptive Letter-press. By James Paxton, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons, London.

Discourses, Doctrinal and Practical; delivered in Essex street Chapel. By Thomas Belsham London, 1826.

The following Remarks are from the Quarterly Theological Review *for Sept* 1826, *p.* 334.

"The objections of Mr. Belsham and his adherents, to the atonement, seem to be a sort of à-priori objections; God *could not* require an *atonement for sin*, because he is *compelled* by the very kindness and tenderness of his divine nature, to forgive the sins of men, *without an atonement.* Now, how does Mr. Belsham know this! surely it ought at least to be set aside with those important matters, which at present we "have not faculties to explore." Not so with Mr. Belsham; he is one who would have made Job stare; he is one, who has "by searching found out God; he has found out the Almighty to perfection!" he knows that he is not only "Love," as John says, but "*All Love;*" that this attribute is so prevailing, as to swallow up every other attribute; and yet perhaps he may be wrong after all; himself being judge. For though he tells us over and over again, that he knows God will forgive sin without an atonement; entirely "for his great name's sake, and for his infinite mercy's sake, and because he delighteth in mercy," p. 64, yet in p. 27, he tells us, "Adequate ideas upon these subjects it is indeed impossible for beings whose faculties are so limited as those of men, to form;" and seems quite to agree with the patriarch Job, that no "finite being *can* com-

prehend the Almighty to perfection." How are we to reconcile these things? The Unitarians must admit, that they claim to know God *negatively*, if they do not know him positively, when they oppose the doctrine of atonement, and other doctrines, steadfastly believed by a large majority of Christians, as manifestly inconsistent with the very nature of God. That God is Love, we admit as well as they, but we conceive that his infinite purity, and infinite justice, may serve to explain to us, how an atonement for sin, may have been absolutely requisite, in the great scheme of Christian salvation; but Mr. Belsham, as we observed before, thinks the love of God is an overwhelming attribute, and that the Scriptures represent it to be so."

The Difficulties of Romanism. By George Stanley Faber, B. D. Rector of Long Newton. London, 1826.

It appears that the Bishop of Aire, a much respected Prelate in the South of France, had published, in the Spring of 1825, "*An Amicable Discussion respecting the Anglican Church in particular and the Reformation in general*," in the form of Letters to an English Traveller. This work, in consequence of the well known urbanity and exemplariness of its Author, made a powerful impression upon the travelling English laity, whose *purses* are generally somewhat longer than their *heads*. In the midst of this perplexity, a copy was forwarded to Mr. Faber, who had recently displayed his skill at starting *Difficulties*. Mr. Faber's mind had been occupied, for some time previously, with the subject of *The Claims of the Latin Church*. He adopts, accordingly, the views and statements of the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, presented by the Bishop, as most likely to be authentic and acquiesced in by his Church generally, and thinks it fair to use the *Amicable Discussion* as the text book of his refutation.

It had appeared to Mr. F., to use his own words, "that, on all the great leading points of divinity, those who conversed with the apostles, and those who lived nearest to the times of the Apostles, must best have known the mind of the Apostles." He found, upon a careful perusal of the Bishop's *Amicable Discussion*, that the drift of his argument was as follows: "Those who conversed with the Apostles, and those who lived nearest to the times of the Apostles, must best have known the mind of the Apostles. With these primitive theologians, the Church of Rome agrees, and the Church of England disagrees. Therefore the former must teach the truth, while the latter teaches falsehood." Mr. F. and the Bishop join issue therefore upon a mere matter of fact, "whether the doctrines

and practices of the Roman Church, as propounded and explained and vindicated by the Bishop of Aire himself, have or have not the unbroken sanction of all primitive antiquity."

In conducting the discussion, he endeavours to point out, in the first place, the *Difficulties* which meet the Church of Rome, on the score of her peculiar doctrines and practices, historically considered, viz. *Infallibility*, *Tradition*, *Transubstantiation*, *Auricular Confession*, *Satisfaction*, *Indulgences*, *Purgatory*: *Prayer for the Dead*, *Invocation of the Saints*, *Worship of Relics*, *Veneration of Images*, *Adoration of the Cross*; and, in the second place, the *Difficulties* she has to encounter in substantiating her claim of *universal supremacy*; and closes with a valedictory to the worthy Bishop.

This amiable Prelate, at least as cited by his antagonist, censures the Reformation, advocates the cause of the Inquisition, protests against freedom of religious worship, proposes a plan of union between the Church of Rome and the Church of England (according to which he would have the latter to submit, unconditionally, to the commands of the Church of Rome, because of the immutability of her religious principles,) and ascribes the continuance of the Church of England in this miserable state of separation, to the profound ignorance of her present clergy.

Remains of the late Rev. Charles Wolfe, B. A. Curate of Donoughmore; with a brief Memoir of his Life. By the Rev. J. A. Russel, M. A. Second Edition. London, 1826.

A Treatise on the Evidence of Scripture Miracles. By John Penrose, M. A. formerly of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. London, 1826.

A New Version of the Psalms of David. By Matthew Sankey, Esq. London, 1826.

The Temptations of Jesus Christ in the Wilderness, explained as symbolically representing the trials of the Christian Church. By George Miller, D. D. London, 1826.

Recensio Synoptica Annotationis Sacrae, being a Critical Digest and Synoptical Arrangement of the most important Annotations on the New Testament, exegetical, philological, and doctrinal; carefully collected and condensed from the best Commentators, both ancient and modern, and so digested as to form one consistent Body of Annotation; in which each portion is systematically attributed to its respective Author, and the foreign matter translated into English. The whole accompanied with a copious Body of original Annotations. By the Rev. S. T. Bloomfield, M. A. Vicar of Bisbrooke, in Rutland, &c. London, 1826.

The Laws respecting Pews or Seats in Churches. Compiled by H. S. English, Attorney. London, 1826.

The Old Testament, arranged on the basis of Lightfoot's Chronicle, in Historical and Chronological Order. By the Rev. George Townsend, M. A. Prebendary of Durham, &c. London, 1826.

The History of the Reformation of the Church of England, during the reign of King Henry the Eighth. By Henry Soames, M. A. Rector of Shelley, Essex. London.

The Connexion between the Sacred Writings and the Literature of Jewish and Heathen Authors, particularly that of the Classical Ages, illustrated, principally with a view to Evidence in Confirmation of the Truth of Revealed Religion. By Robert Gray, D. D. Second Edition. London.

This work has been some time before the English public, but we have reason to believe it has not been seen by many of our readers. We venture to subjoin an abstract of its contents.

The main scope and design of the Author is to point out the influence of Revealed Religion (taking the term in its widest acceptation), upon the History, Philosophy, Morality, Theology, Poetry, Arts, and Sciences, of the ancient nations ;—to trace the streams back to the fountain ;—to establish an indubitable *Connexion ;*—and to prove, that the glorious Light originally emanated from God, and diffused itself gradually throughout every region, modifying the views and colouring the principles of Philosophers, Poets, Statesmen, and Historians, and, although in some instances strangely perverted, confirming the truth of facts recorded by the sacred Historians.

In the first volume, he endeavours to discover among the Heathens, traces of the most prominent historical facts and doctrines of Sacred Writ—*the Creation, the Deluge, the Origin of Man, the Fall, the Immortality of the Soul, Atonement for Sin, Expiatory Sacrifices, Rewards and Punishments*, &c. &c.

In the second volume, he subjects the Classical writers of Greece and Rome to a rigid examination, in order to ascertain their indebtedness to Revelation, separating the original from (in his estimation) the borrowed matter, with the design of proving "that the Hebrews drank of the fountain, the Greeks of the stream, and the Romans of the pools ;" or, as some of the Fathers supposed, that "all the knowledge of the Heathens is a mere transfusion of revealed information."