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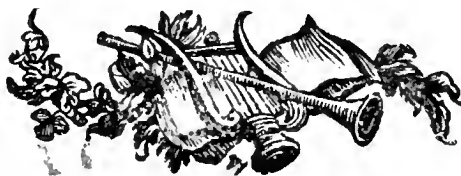
FOR

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VOLUME IV.

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P R E F A C E.

IN forming a Garden, for utility or pleasure, men select their plants with care; the nutritive, the salutary, the elegant, are sought and studiously arranged, while the useless, the offensive, and the noxious are banished without scruple, and permitted to depend on chance for a despised and precarious existence. Into a Garden formed with this attention, we endeavour to conduct our readers, when we present them with our periodical preface. We would place no plants beneath their eye, but such as may contribute to their health, or at least to their elegant and innocent gratification. The severe impartiality of civil history may require, that good and evil, virtue and vice, success and miscarriage, should be equally recorded; the general connection of facts demands that all should be related; and it is frequently of no less use to display the evil that ought to be abhorred, than the good that ought to be imitated. But literary history essentially demands selection. To tell the reader what deserves his notice is the highest service we can render. Of bad books, whether they are dull, or whether they are pernicious, the proper end is oblivion, towards which we ought by no means to retard their progress. An *Index expurgatorius* has answered frequently no better end than to excite and aid a vicious curiosity. By this same rule it would be pleasing to us to conduct the whole of our labours, but such is not the custom, or

the expectation of the public. Besides, though folly might be safely left to perish by its own inanity, literary poison will frequently demand an antidote; and there are many questions, against which a conscientious Critic could not satisfy himself with giving a mere silent vote. Our monthly Criticisms will therefore continue to flow, like those of our predecessors, and our rivals, through all the wilds of literature; but of our prefaces, as we ourselves first opened the springs, we shall continue to conduct the course through laughing meads, and between gay banks of violets,

stealing and giving odours.

DIVINITY.

We cannot open this part of our account, so properly with the mention of any work, as of Archdeacon *Paley's evidences of Christianity**. The appearance of so clear, so able, so conclusive a book on this most important subject, is a great event. Hosts of powerful writers were not wanting, it is true, in defence of the christian faith, and they who were disposed to enquire could not easily be at a loss, to find the proofs by which it is established. But every age has its peculiar mode of reasoning; objections and arguments thought strong at one time, at another are despised, while new difficulties are started, and new replies demanded. Mr. Paley aims his force against the sceptics of the present hour, and with such success, that were their oracles of the French and English school now living, we might defy their utmost subtlety to write a refutation. He takes advantage of all that has been done, of late years, to elucidate the evidences of our faith; and digests the labours of voluminous writers into a convenient yet efficacious form. From the stores of his own acute observation he brings forward some new arguments, and presents the whole in such a manner,

* No. V. p. 487.

P R E F A C E.

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that while it satisfies the profound, it cannot fatigue even the superficial reader. At such a period as the present, when, from dire example, impiety has risen to more than common insolence; and the danger lest those who hesitate should be hurried into unbelief, is increased beyond example, we cannot sufficiently congratulate the public on the publication of this excellent work. It is addressed, in its style, exactly to the class of people who are likely to be affected by the objections of Gibbon, Hume, &c. that is, to persons moderately well educated; but if this class be kept firm to their duty, their influence, efforts, and example, will always spread instruction to the lower orders. Very far below this for general utility, though not without its merit, to those who have skill to select the valuable ore from inferior metals, is Mr. *Wakefield's* volume with a similar title; not first published now, but enlarged and improved†. To divines we may safely recommend it, not to ordinary readers. With learning and ingenuity worthy of himself, the celebrated Mr. *Bryant* has written *on the Plagues of Egypt*‡. Yet has not even he entirely escaped the common fate of discoverers in theology; that of treading on a ground in part pre-occupied, unknown to himself, by a former writer. What Dr. Owen, however, had but slightly, though learnedly and ably, sketched, Mr. *Bryant* has completed in a masterly manner, and his publication will always be esteemed by those who are capable of appreciating the researches of so profound a scholar. Mr. *Travis's* much augmented third edition of his *Letters to Gibbon*,§ is also a work which addresses itself only to the learned, and indeed, to a still smaller class, the controversialists. Of these undoubtedly none will think it unimportant to read and weigh with attention, what further arguments, an acute and active disputant has been able to adduce in favour of a contested verse of scripture. He will wait also with some eagerness of

† No. I. p. 27. ‡ No. I. p. 33. § No. IV. p. 396.

curiosity to know what rejoinder similar acuteness and energy, can bring forward on the other side. While these heroes of theological literature contend, the troops on either part remain in mute suspense. Happily the object of contest is not the citadel of faith, but only a single out-work; and we, though not entirely of neutral feelings, shall readily proclaim victory to either party, according to the real merits of the issue. Still keeping in the track of learned publications, the *Corrections of various passages*,* &c. by the late Dr. Roberts of Eton, justly claim the attention of the public. Candour, modesty, and ingenuity, will be found in them adorning learning, as might be expected from the name of the author. Nor has the period lately passed been undistinguished by theological works of a more popular nature. Among those which we have had an opportunity of noticing, Dr. Blair's fourth volume of *Sermons*,† appears with honour as the production of an admired teacher, and as a proof that he is still able to support, and to extend, the fame he has acquired. A volume of *Sermons*,‡ by Mr. Nares puts in a contrary claim. They are the first specimen of his publication in that species of writing, and must form the basis of future expectation. This at least is true of them, that they have been commended by critics unconnected with the author. *Marsh's Translation of Michaelis on the New Testament*, we dismissed in our last Preface, as having concluded our remarks upon it. Our opinion in its favour was then given; but, having extended our observations further than we at that time designed, we must now mention that two articles upon it will be found in this volume: § A new edition of Mr. Gilpin's valuable *Exposition of the New Testament*, || drew our attention to it, not so much by any considerable additions it contained, as by the intrinsic merit of the book. An excellent sermon subjoined

* No. VI. p. 648. † No. V. p. 534. ‡ No. VI. p. 611.
§ No. I. p. 47. II. p. 170. || No. II. p. 121.

was its only plea of novelty, to attract our notice. We again recommend it to public esteem. Among smaller works in divinity, two answers to Paine's book of impiety, appeared to us to have peculiar merit. The one as an answer adapted to the taste and use of persons well educated, and the other as formed with singular skill, to act as an antidote wherever the poison should happen to have spread among the common people. The former of these was entitled, *The Age of Infidelity*,* the latter, a *Country Carpenter's Confession of faith*.† Among productions of the nature of sermons, *the Bishop of Lincoln's Charge*, ‡ stands honourably forward; nor can we forbear, though without any intention to slight many that we omit, to mention *Dr. Valpy's Assize Sermons*, § *Mr. Hurdis's Assize Sermon on Equality*, || and that of *Mr. Owen, on Subordination* ¶. Of the high and peculiar excellence of those by *Dr. Valpy*, we have already spoken strongly, and we could not speak too strongly. The others are also above the ordinary class. On the whole we may certainly congratulate our readers, on obtaining intelligence of no small accession of valuable divinity, in this volume of our periodical labours. A Public, happily as yet attentive to good productions of this nature, will not despise or neglect the information.

METAPHYSICS.

To those who study *Locke*, the chief of English Metaphysicians, we recommend to take with them the *Annotations* of the late *Dr. Morell*, upon his famous *Essay on Human Understanding*.** They will at least lead the student to think with a more extensive range than otherwise he might allow himself; and not to place a reliance too implicit on a name which at this day might have sufficient authority to overawe him.

* No. V. p. 551. † Ibid. ‡ No. VI. p. 655. § No. III. p. 307. || No. VI. p. 676. ¶ No. VI. p. 677. ** No. I. p. 54.

To turn such questions on every side is the way to exercise the mind with full advantage.

HISTORY.

A conspicuous part in our account of the last six months is occupied by History, and historical disquisitions. Among the productions of this nature, for the importance of its topic, none certainly can contend with the *History of the American War* *; and the historian, *Mr. Stedman*, appears to have executed the task with diligence and ability. A well written and well digested history of that period, drawn up with as much impartiality as the recentness of the transactions would allow was surely much to be desired; and *Mr. Stedman's* seems to answer that description. Next to this, in point of dignity, we may place *Mr. Andrews's History of Great Britain* †, a work rather of chronology and anecdote than strictly a history, but replete with utility and entertainment. They whose curiosity is on the search respecting our late war in India, and extends itself also to the knowledge of places and customs in that country, will be much gratified with a book by *Licut. Edward Moor*, entitled *A Narrative of the Operations of Capt. Little's Detachment, and the Mahratta Army under Purseram Bhow* ‡. It is written with spirit and intelligence, and conveys much novel information. The *History of the Reign of George III.* by an anonymous writer, may be mentioned among works of merit. Only the third volume of it fell under our notice §, and to that we gave a character, mixed indeed, but wherein the good predominated. We should be glad to say no worse of any books, or men. French History, of the present period, will make a formidable and disgusting volume whenever it shall be completed: among the materials for it, *M. Pelletier's late Picture of Paris* ||, will supply some of the

* No. VI. p. 581. † No. IV. p. 417. V. p. 514. ‡ No. III. p. 221. IV. p. 381. § No. II. p. 179. || No. IV. p. 436.

most horrible ingredients, but such, however, as cannot be omitted. The period immediately preceding the present convulsions is not unskilfully illustrated in an anonymous book, entitled *Domestic Anecdotes of the French Nation* *, from which we selected some curious and entertaining materials. Corrupt as the manners of that nation were before the Revolution, there seems to be this striking difference between that time and the present, that then its depravity might be exaggerated, as in the book here mentioned; now alas! it cannot. In elucidating obscure points of Ancient History, two very learned authors have lately laboured with great ability. Dr. *Vincent*, in a short dissertation on the *Manlian Legion* †; and Mr. *J. Whitaker*, in two octavo volumes, on the *Course of Hannibal over the Alps* ‡. The former is a question in which only those will feel interested, who have gone into the minutiae of that curious subject the ancient Tactics, and therefore is with propriety written in Latin: the latter is a point of universal curiosity, including one question which has been as much canvassed as any in antiquity, the use of vinegar by Hannibal to mollify or split a rock. They who read Mr. Whitaker's two volumes will also find many topics of considerable import introduced collaterally, and very skilfully elucidated. The main question will require examination on the spot. With the mention of this able work we must conclude this part of our narrative.

BIOGRAPHY.

The publication of the fifth volume of the *Biographia Britannica*, by Dr. *Kippis* §, called upon us to give our sentiments of that important work. We commended it, and shall continue so to do, unless in any subsequent volumes we should see realized the faults which the suspicion, we trust, rather than the

* No. III. p. 239. † No. II. p. 144. ‡ No. VI. p. 661.

§ No. II. p. 162. III. p. 268.

ART. 31. *The Age of Reason; being an Investigation of true and fabulous Theology.* By Thomas Paine. Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Congress in the American War, and Author of the Works entitled, *Common Sense, and Rights of Man, &c.* 8vo. 55 pp. 1s. 6d. Paris, printed by Banois: London, fold by J. Eaton. 1794.

Tom Paine is a perfect mirror for modern Philosophers, whose obstinacy, vanity, and presumption are usually in direct proportion to their ignorance. As in the latter accomplishment he is gifted beyond them all, so in the former qualities he has no less superiority. Hence he is justly valued by the disciples of the Sans-Culotte sect, as the boldest of all their teachers. If Voltaire and Rousseau wrote upon Theology with very little knowledge of the subject, he writes without any, and consequently with still more freedom. When we consider the perfect emptiness of this paltry pamphlet, we are surprised and concerned that any men of education should have thought it necessary to answer it. Tom is an original writer, certainly, and his objections to Christianity are such in general, as not many would have committed to writing, had they even floated in their brains; others, indeed, are trite, but they are all such as cannot weigh for a moment with any who have read or thought. The vulgar may, perhaps, be staggered at the impudence with which some things are urged, and at the jocularity (for that is Tom's forte) with which others are placed in a ridiculous light. But the vulgar will not read the answers, consequently they are useless: and, as adding something to the fame of the tract, they are pernicious. The book consists chiefly of a view of the Bible, in which the author *wisely* ascribes the invention of the histories of the Old Testament to the Christians. He thinks all the subjects of prophecy completely overturned by attempting to prove that the Prophets were Poets. He mistakes the corruptions of various sects for genuine Christianity, and argues against them. He says, that the study of the dead languages was invented by Christians, to impede the progress of science, not knowing, poor man! that Greek and Latin were living languages for many centuries after the establishment of Christianity. He imputes all the darkness of the middle ages to the efforts of Christians against science: never having heard of Goths and Vandals, who were not Christians; nor knowing that the total extinction of science of every kind was prevented by the efforts of Christians alone. He gives the history of his own boyish thoughts, as a proof that Christianity is irrational; and the history of his own knowledge of the universe, to prove that this world is too small a stage for such a drama as that of Redemption. He has somewhere picked up Hume's objections to miracles, and carries them to a still greater length of absurdity. Such is the fair and unprejudiced account of a work, which is neither worth answering nor prohibiting; were it not that a mere jest against religion, however empty, has a bad effect upon ignorant minds. What the title of *the Age of Reason* has to do with the book we do not perceive.

in supposing fire to have been the cause of destruction, for traces of which he refers to the Giant's Causeway, &c. In this letter Mr. S. treats of the longevity of the Patriarchs, which, we were surprised to find, after having stated the strongest reasons to believe true, he declares he apprehends to be an exaggeration, owing to the Oriental manner of expression.

At page 368, a curious observation is made. "Has ever any one tolerable reason been offered, why the Deity, for the transgression of man, should curse and destroy the whole terrene animal creation, and that he should let all the fishes and watery members escape, as a mark of especial grace and favour?" Not to insist upon this, as we might do, as a proof of the Deluge of Noah being universal, we shall suggest what we believe with people of the most moderate reflection would pass for at least a *tolerable reason*. To destroy the race of man, the earth was to be overwhelmed; to this terrene animals equally belonged. But why destroy the fishes, whose destruction could not be necessary in the punishment of man by means of *water*? This would be destruction for the sake of destruction. In the conclusion of this Letter, Mr. S. hopes he has not used a profane or licentious freedom,—“Truth,” he says, “demanded boldness.” Here we agree with Mr. S. But if the defenders of revelation oppose the mineralogists of the day with boldness, they are to be accused, it seems of “cowardice” and “fighting behind a wall of authority.” If this be not prejudice, we know not what is. The Letter ends with this remarkable conclusion, that though the author has professed as his creed in another place, that Adam and Eve were the wrecks of another world, yet he does not now dare to insist on it, for that very strong evidence has appeared that others of the human race, besides his own family, existed in the days of Adam. With such inconsistencies it must not be wondered at if we are not in an instant able to judge of Mr. Sullivan's principles and purposes.

(To be concluded in our next.)

ART. V. *A View of the Evidences of Christianity, in three Parts.*—Part 1. *Of the direct Historical Evidence of Christianity, and wherein it is distinguished from the Evidence alledged for other Miracles.*—Part 2. *Of the Auxiliary Evidences of Christianity.*—Part 3. *A Brief Consideration of some Popular Objections.* By William Paley, M. A. Archdeacon of Carlisle, Edit. I. 3 vol. 12mo. 9s. Edit. II. 2 vol. 8vo. 12s. Faulder, 1794.

WHILE we have been obliged to delay our account of these important volumes, from the necessity of inserting other matter,

matter, they have already taken a new form in a second edition. This uncommonly rapid distribution proves at once the opinion entertained by the public of the author, and the interest still happily felt by them on sacred subjects. We have remarked before, and we shall always remark with peculiar satisfaction this strong diagnostic of the sound state of our country, that well written books on religious topics, if not too abstruse for popular comprehension, infallibly obtain an extensive and a permanent sale. While this continues to be the case we will not be persuaded, by those who wish to have it so, that religion is on the decline among us. Our private belief is that truth continues to gain ground, and certain we are that such a book as we are now to describe cannot fail to be a powerful instrument, towards producing so desirable an effect. If the public expectation has been raised by the promise of a work on this subject from the pen of Mr. Paley, it will by no means be disappointed by the execution of it: and we do not hesitate to predict that many and large editions will follow the two which we now announce.

There is no material difference between the second edition and the first, except the addition of tables of contents; which, as they will serve as a clue to the plan of the work, we shall transcribe, accommodating them to the first edition, for the benefit of those who have purchased it. Vol. I. *Preparatory considerations.*—Of the antecedent credibility of Miracles. p. 1.—Part I. OF THE DIRECT HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY; AND WHEREIN IT IS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE EVIDENCE ALLEGED FOR OTHER MIRACLES. *Propositions stated*, p. 18, 19. PROP. I. That there is satisfactory evidence that many, professing to be original witnesses of the christian miracles, passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of those accounts; and that they also submitted, from the same motives, to new rules of conduct. p. 18. Chap. I. *Evidence of the sufferings of the first propagators of Christianity, from the nature of the case*. p. 20. Chap. II. *Evidence of the sufferings of the first propagators of Christianity, from profane testimony*, p. 47. Chap. III. *Indirect evidence of the sufferings of the first propagators of Christianity, from the Scriptures, and other ancient Christian writings*. p. 62. Chap. IV. *Direct evidence of the same*. p. 75. Chap. V. *Observations upon the preceding evidence*. p. 110. Chap. VI. *That the story for which the first propagators of Christianity suffered was miraculous*. p. 123. Chap VII. *That it was in the main the story which we have now proved by indirect considerations*. p. 133. Chap. VIII.

The same proved from the authority of our historical Scriptures. p. 167. Chap. IX. *Of the authenticity of the historical Scriptures, in eleven* sections.* p. 198.—§ 1. *Quotations of the historical Scriptures, by ancient Christian writers.* p. 216. § 2. *Of the peculiar respect with which they were quoted.* p. 273. § 3. *The Scriptures were in very early times collected into a distinct volume.* p. 283. § 4. *And distinguished by appropriate names, and titles of respect.* p. 293. § 5. *They were publicly read and expounded in the religious assemblies of the early Christians.* p. 299. § 6. *Commentaries &c. were anciently written upon them.* p. 306. § 7. *They were received by ancient Christians of different sects and persuasions.* p. 319. § 8. *The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen epistles of St. Paul, the First Epistle of John, and the First of Peter, were received without doubt by those who doubted concerning the other books of our present canon.* p. 336. § 9. *Our present Gospels were considered, by the early adversaries of Christianity, as containing the accounts upon which the religion was founded.* p. 347. § 10. *Formal catalogues of authentic Scriptures were published, in all which our present sacred histories were included.* p. 362. § 11. *These propositions cannot be predicated of any of those books which are commonly called Apocryphal Books of the New Testament.*—Chap. X. *Recapitulation,* p. 380.

Here concludes the first volume, but not the first part, which as we shall see, is pursued through some pages of the second. In order to keep the argument together, we shall proceed to give the contents here, to the end of part I.

Vol. II. Prop. 2. That there is NOT satisfactory evidence that persons pretending to be original witnesses of any other similar miracles, have acted in the same manner, in attestation of the accounts which they delivered, and solely in consequence of their belief of the truth of those accounts. p. 1. Chap. II. *Consideration of some specific instances.* p. 49.

And here concludes the first volume in the second edition. The reader who casts an attentive eye over these contents will easily see how much matter for conclusive argument they comprehend, and in how lucid an order the arguments are digested. When we add to that perception, our assurance that they are all treated with that clearness and acuteness of distinction for which Mr. Paley is so eminent, much more will not be wanting to excite his curiosity, if he has any for such topics. In treating these subjects we find much that if not altogether new, is made so by the advantage of a new situation; and some arguments of an original nature, of which kind the following seems to afford a favourable specimen.

* Erroneously printed *nine*.

“ In treating of the written evidences of Christianity, next to their separate, we are to consider their aggregate authority. Now there is in the evangelic history a cumulation of testimony which belongs hardly to any other, but which our habitual mode of reading the scriptures sometimes causes us to overlook. When a passage, in any wise relating to the history of Christ, is read to us out of the epistle of Clemens Romanus, the epistles of Ignatius, of Polycarp, or from any other writing of that age, we are immediately sensible of the confirmation which it affords to the scripture account. Here is a new witness. Now if we had been accustomed to read the gospel of Matthew alone, and had known that of Luke only as the generality of Christians know the writings of the apostolical fathers, that is, had known that such a writing was extant and acknowledged; when we came, for the first time, to look into what it contained, and found many of the facts which Matthew recorded, recorded also there, many other facts of a similar nature added, and throughout the whole work, the same general series of transactions stated, and the same general character of the person who was the subject of the history preserved, I apprehend that we should feel our minds strongly impressed by this discovery of fresh evidence. We should feel a renewal of the same sentiment in first reading the gospel of St. John. That of St. Mark perhaps would strike us as an abridgement of the history with which we were already acquainted, but we should naturally reflect, that, if that history was abridged by such a person as Mark, or by any person of so early an age, it afforded one of the highest possible attestations to the value of the work. This successive disclosure of proof would leave us assured, that there must have been at least some reality in a story which, not one, but many, had taken in hand to commit to writing. The very existence of four separate histories would satisfy us that the subject had a foundation; and when, amidst the variety which the different information of the different writers had supplied to their accounts, or which their different choice and judgment in selecting their materials had produced, we observed many facts to stand the same in all; of these facts, at least, we should conclude, that they were fixed in their credit and publicity. If, after this, we should come to the knowledge of a distinct history, and that also of the same age with the rest, taking up the subject where the others had left it, and carrying on a narrative of the effects produced in the world by the extraordinary causes of which we had already been informed, and which effects subsist at this day, we should think the reality of the original story in no little degree established by this supplement. If subsequent enquiries should bring to our knowledge, one after another, letters written by some of the principal agents in the business, upon the business, and during the time of their activity and concern in it, assuming all along and recognizing the original story, agitating the questions that arose out of it, pressing the obligations which resulted from it, giving advice and directions to those who acted upon it, I conceive that we should find, in every one of these, a still further support to the conclusion we had formed. At present the weight of this successive confirmation is, in a great measure, unperceived by us. The evidence does not appear to us what it is; for, being from our infancy accustomed to regard the New Testament as one book, we see in it only one testimony. The whole occurs to us as a single evidence; and

and its different parts, not as distinct attestations, but as different portions only of the same. Yet in this conception of the subject we are certainly mistaken; for the very discrepancies amongst the several documents which form our volume prove, if all other proof was wanting, that in their original composition they were separate, and most of them independent productions." P. 183.

This way of stating the nature of the evangelical testimony is certainly fair, and to us at least appears novel. The first section of Chap. IX. p. 216. contains professedly an abstract of the most striking matter in Dr. Lardner's admirable volumes on the credibility of the gospel. "To pursue the detail of proofs throughout," says the author, "would be to transcribe a great part of Dr. Lardner's eleven octavo volumes; to leave the argument without proofs, is to leave it without effect, for the persuasion produced by this species of evidence depends upon a view and induction of the particulars which compose it." This Mr. Paley has performed with judgment and ability, and we will say without scruple, that in so doing, he has performed a very essential service to christianity; by giving to the indolent those proofs within a small compass, which, in their whole extent, they would never take the trouble to examine. The nature of this species of evidence is explained with great clearness in the opening of this section.

"The medium of proof stated in this proposition is, of all others, the most unquestionable, the least liable to any practices of fraud, and is not diminished by the lapse of ages. Bishop Burnet, in the history of his own times, inserts various extracts from Lord Clarendon's history. One such insertion is a proof that Lord Clarendon's history was extant at the time when Bishop Burnet wrote, that it had been read by Bishop Burnet, that it was received by Bishop Burnet as a work of Lord Clarendon's, and also regarded by him as an authentic account of the transactions which it relates; and it will be a proof of these points a thousand years hence, or as long as the books exist. Juvenal having quoted, as Cicero's, that memorable line,

"O fortunatam natam me consule Romam,"

the quotation would be strong evidence, were there any doubt, that the oration * in which that line is found, actually came from Cicero's pen. These instances, however simple, may serve to point out to a reader, who is little accustomed to such researches, the nature and value of the argument." P. 216.

We shall now proceed to give the contents of the second part, still referring to the volumes and pages of the first edition.

Part II. *Of the auxiliary evidences of Christianity.*—Chap. I. *Prophecy.* p. 67. Chap. II. *The morality of the gospel.* p. 94.

* It should be "*Poem* in which that line *was* found," for it is only a fragment from a poem "*De suis Temporibus*," quoted also by Quintilian, but not in any oration.

Chap. III. *The candour of the writers of the New Testament*: p. 166. Chap. IV. *Identity of Christ's character*. p. 189. Chap. V. *Originality of Christ's character*. p. 217. Chap. VI. *Conformity of the facts occasionally mentioned or referred to in scripture, with the state of things in those times, as represented by foreign and independent accounts*. p. 221. Chap. VII. *Undesigned coincidences*. p. 295. Chap. VIII. *Of the history of the resurrection*. p. 302. VOL. III. Chap. IX. *The propagation of Christianity*. p. 1. § 2. *Reflections upon the preceding account*. p. 45. § 3. *Of the success of Mahometanism*. p. 63.

In treating of the morality of the gospel in chap. 4. of this part, Mr. Paley skilfully abstracts a very material part of S. Jenyn's *internal evidences of Christianity*, (see p. 100.)—where that author remarks the difference between the morality of Christ and that of mankind in general. In doing this he has wisely thinned the exaggerations which render some passages of his author exceptionable. If we were to differ from Mr. Paley at all in this part, it would be in giving the name of moral *discoveries* to some of our Saviour's principles, which he does not allow to be applicable. On the apparently accidental coincidences between the account of St. John and the other Evangelists, and concerning the identity of our Saviour's character, Mr. P. has made some very acute remarks, very much in the style of his *Horæ Paulinæ*; among which the following is very striking.

“The three first evangelists record, what is called our Saviour's agony, *i. e.* his devotion in the garden, immediately before he was apprehended; in which narrative they all make him pray, “that the cup might pass from him.” This is the particular metaphor which they all ascribe to him. St. Matthew adds, “O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.” Now St. John does not give the scene in the garden; but when Jesus was seized, and some resistance was attempted to be made by Peter, Jesus, according to his account, checked the attempt with this reply: “Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup, which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” This is something more than bare consistency: it is coincidence: because it is extremely natural, that Jesus, who, before he was apprehended, had been praying his Father, that “that cup might pass away from him,” yet with such a pious retraction of his request, as to have added, “if this cup may not pass from me, thy will be done;” it was natural I say, for the same person, when he actually was apprehended, to express the resignation to which he had already made up his thoughts, and to express it in the form of speech which he had before used, “the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” This is a coincidence between writers, in whose narratives there is no imitation, but great diversity.” Vol. II. p. 212.

This is the observation of a master. His sixth chapter, of this part, is taken from the first volume of the first part of Lardner's credibility, in the same manner as a former chapter was taken from another part; with equal openness and equal success. He states in it forty-one instances, in which the sacred historians display a minute knowledge of the manners and customs of their times, in such a way as seems utterly impossible to be displayed by any forger. In the topic of *undesigned coincidences* chap. 7. he very properly refers to his own *Hæc Paulinæ*; some of the general arguments of which he had occasionally touched before. In chap. IX. § 2. the subject of missions is most judiciously introduced; and from the very small success of modern missions, in comparison with those of the apostles, under much more advantageous circumstances, the following sound conclusion is deduced: that the apostles "possessed means of conviction which we have not; that they had proofs to appeal to, which we want."

PART. III. A BRIEF CONSIDERATION OF SOME POPULAR OBJECTIONS. Chap. I. *The discrepancies between the several gospels.* vol. 3. p. 98. Chap. II. *Erroneous opinions imputed to the apostles.* p. 206. *The connection of Christianity with the Jewish history.* p. 117. Chap. IV. *Rejection of Christianity.* p. 124. Chap. V.* *That the Christian miracles are not recited, or appealed to by christian writers themselves, so fully or so frequently as might have been expected.* p. 160. Chap. VI. *Want of universality in the knowledge and reception of Christianity, and of greater clearness in the evidence.* p. 182. Chap. VII. *The supposed effects of Christianity.* p. 201. Chap. VIII. *Conclusion.* p. 220.

Among these topics, which are all handled with skill and luminous distinctness, it is difficult to select a passage for an example. The following, on the effects of christianity, is perhaps as original as any.

"The influence of religion is not to be sought for, in the councils of princes, in the debates or resolutions of popular assemblies, in the conduct of governments towards their subjects, or of states and sovereigns towards one another, of conquerors at the head of their armies, or of parties intriguing for power at home, (topics, which alone almost occupy the attention, and fill the pages of history,) but must be perceived, if perceived at all, in the silent course of private and domestic life. Nay more, even *there* its influence may not be very obvious to observation. If it check, in some degree, personal dissoluteness, if it

* This, and the remaining chapters, are erroneously numbered in the first edition, chap. 4 being put twice.

beget a general probity in the transaction of business, if it produce soft and humane manners in the mass of the community, and occasional exertions of laborious or expensive benevolence in a few individuals, it is all the effect which can offer itself to external notice. The kingdom of Heaven is within us. That which is the substance of the religion, its hopes and consolations, its intermixture with the thoughts by day and by night, the devotion of the heart, the controul of appetite, the steady direction of the will to the commands of God, is necessarily invisible. Yet upon these depends the virtue, and the happiness, of millions. This cause renders the representations of history, with respect to religion, defective and fallacious, in a greater degree than they are upon any other subject. Religion operates most upon those of whom history knows the least: upon fathers and mothers in their families, upon men servants and maid servants, upon the orderly tradesman, the quiet villager, the manufacturer at his loom, the husbandman in his fields. Amongst such, its influence collectively may be of incalculable value, yet its effects in the mean time little, upon those who figure upon the stage of the world. *They* may know nothing of it: they may believe nothing of it; they may be actuated by motives more impetuous than those which religion is able to excite. It cannot therefore, be thought strange, that this influence should elude the grasp and touch of public history; for what is public history, but a register of the successes and disappointments, the vices, the follies, and the quarrels, of those who engage in contentions for power?" Vol. III. p. 202.

The conclusion contains, as it ought, a clear and able summary of the preceding arguments; we should be glad for the sake of public utility, to extract the whole, but on account of its extent must content ourselves with selecting the most material part.

“The truth of Christianity depends upon its leading facts, and upon them alone. Now of these we have evidence which ought to satisfy us, at least until it appear that mankind have ever been deceived by the same. We have some uncontested and incontestible points, to which the history of the human species hath nothing similar to offer. A Jewish peasant changed the religion of the world, and that, without force, without power, without support; without one natural source or circumstance of attraction, influence, or success. Such a thing hath not happened in any other instance. The companions of this person, after he himself had been put to death for his attempt, asserted his supernatural character, founded upon his supernatural operations; and, in testimony of the truth of their assertions, *i. e.* in consequence of their own belief of that truth, and, in order to communicate the knowledge of it to others, voluntarily entered upon lives of toil and hardship, and, with a full experience of their danger, committed themselves to the last extremities of persecution. This hath not a parallel. More particularly, a very few days after this person had been publicly executed, and in the very city in which he was buried, these his companions declared with one voice that his body was restored to life; that

that they had seen him, handled him, eat with him, conversed with him; and, in pursuance of their persuasion of the truth of what they told, preached his religion, with this strange fact as the foundation of it, in the face of those who had killed him, who were armed with the power of the country, and necessarily and naturally disposed to treat his followers as they had treated himself; and having done this upon the spot where the event took place, carried the intelligence of it abroad, in despite of difficulties and opposition, and where the nature of their errand gave them nothing to expect but derision, insult, and outrage. This is without example. These three facts, I think, are certain, and would have been nearly so, if the gospels had never been written. The Christian story, as to these points, hath never varied. No other hath been set up against it. Every letter, every discourse, every controversy, amongst the followers of the religion; every book written by them, from the age of its commencement to the present time, in every part of the world in which it hath been professed, and with every sect into which it hath been divided, (and we have letters and discourses written by contemporaries, by witnesses of the transaction, by persons themselves bearing a share in it, and other writings following that age in regular succession) *concur* in representing these facts in this manner. A religion, which now possesses the greatest part of the civilised world, unquestionably sprang up at Jerusalem at this time. Some account must be given of its origin, some cause assigned for its rise. All the accounts of this origin, all the explications of this cause, whether taken from the writings of the early followers of the religion, in which, and in which perhaps alone, it could be expected that they should be distinctly unfolded, or from occasional notices in other writings of that or the adjoining age, either expressly alledge the facts above stated as the means by which the religion was set up, or advert to its commencement in a manner which agrees with the supposition of these facts being true, which renders them probable according to the then state of the world, and which testifies their operation and effects.

“ These propositions alone lay a foundation for our faith, for they prove the existence of a transaction, which cannot even in its most *general* parts be accounted for upon any reasonable supposition, except that of the truth of the mission. But the particulars, the *detail* of the miracles or miraculous pretences (for such there necessarily must have been) upon which this unexampled transaction rested, and *for* which these men acted and suffered as they did act and suffer, it is undoubtedly of great importance to us to know. We *have* this detail from the fountain head, from the persons themselves; in accounts written by eye-witnesses of the scene, by contemporaries and companions of those who were so; not in one book, but four, each containing enough for the verification of the religion, all agreeing in the fundamental parts of the history. We have the authenticity of these books established by more and stronger proofs than belong to almost any other ancient book whatever, and by proofs which widely distinguish them from any others, claiming a similar authority to theirs. If there were any good reason for doubt concerning the names to which these books are ascribed, (which there is not, for they were never ascribed to any other, and we have evidence not long after

their publication of their bearing the names which they now bear; their antiquity, of which there is no question, their reputation and authority amongst the early disciples of the religion, of which there is as little, form a valid proof that they must, in the main at least, have agreed with what the first teachers of the religion delivered.

“When we open these ancient volumes, we discover in them marks of truth, whether we consider each in itself, or collate them with one another. The writers certainly knew something of what they were writing about, for they manifest an acquaintance with local circumstances, with the history and usages of the times, which could only belong to an inhabitant of that country, living in that age. In every narrative we perceive simplicity and undesignedness; the air and the language of reality. When we compare the different narratives together, we find them so varying as to repel all suspicion of confederacy; so agreeing under this variety, as to show that the accounts had one real transaction for their common foundation: often attributing different actions and discourses, to the person whose history, or rather memoirs of whose history, they profess to relate, yet actions and discourses so similar, as very much to bespeak the same character; which is a coincidence, that, in such writers as they were, could only be the consequence of their writing from fact, and not from imagination.” P. 226.

We are sorry to remark in these volumes many errors of the press, some of which indeed are noticed at the end of vol. 2, in the first edition, but many are passed over, and some remain uncorrected even in the second edition. Of which kind is the quoting Dr. Townsend, for Dr. Townson, in two different notes, vol. 2. p. 171, and p. 307. In the second edition, vol. 2. p. 89, and p. 205. Nor can we sufficiently express our surprise at the very strange conjectural criticism, which the author has hazarded, probably only as a hasty thought, in page 59, of vol. 1.—There, in the conclusion of Martial's Epigram, instead of

Nam cum dicatur, tunicâ præfente molestâ,
Ure manum, plus est dicere non facio.

He says, forsan, “thure manum.” Now in the first place, the proposed alteration admits only of a very harsh and awkward construction, if any: in the second place, it entirely spoils the epigram: and, in the third, it does not give the idea required more clearly than the original reading. Martial says, “A man lately acted the part of Scævola; if you think him remarkably bold, you are mistaken, for, when the pitched coat which burns the whole body, was the alternative, it was less bold to burn the hand than to refuse.” Now, the person compelled to do this, may fairly be supposed to have been a christian, because there is sufficient evidence that the cruel punishment

punishment of the pitched coat (the *tunica molesta*) was particularly applied to christians ;* but that any thing of sacrificing was exacted, in the instance alluded to by the epigrammatist, cannot, by any fair construction, be forced from his words. Mr. Paley, does not err alone in this unfortunate epigram : we find Dr. Townson not much less unhappy, in proposing “*ure manu*,” in p. lv. of his life, prefixed to his discourse on the resurrection : and Lardner† inclining to the interpretation of Le Moyne, who would make *non facio* signify, non sacrifico. “*I will not sacrifice* ;” which it might indeed, as to the latinity, but not as to the turn and spirit of the epigram. All this arises from an ill placed zeal, to make the Christians more plainly alluded to, in this passage, than the words of the author will allow. We are sorry to observe this trifling defect in Mr. Paley’s book, because we would not have one tittle deducted from the character of clear and strong judgement, which he has so ably achieved, and which this work in general so strongly confirms.

After the account we have given, it is hardly necessary to say, that we strongly recommend this work to general perusal. We think the author has very happily executed what he professes to have been his design. “*To preserve the separation between evidences and doctrines as inviolable as he could ; to remove from the primary questions all considerations which have been unnecessarily joined with it ; and to offer a defence of christianity, which every christian might read, without seeing the tenets in which he had been brought up attacked or decried :*” he adds, “*It always afforded a satisfaction to my mind, to observe that this was practicable ; that few or none of our many controversies with one another affect or relate to the proofs of our religion ; that the rent never descends to the foundation.*” ‡ To this book then let the doubter or the Deist have recourse ; and when he has satisfied himself, as here abundantly he may, of the irrefragable evidence of the whole, let him carefully consider the sacred books themselves, and adopt as doctrines whatever he finds there delivered.

* We may add that, very probably, Martial’s desire of depreciating the courage of this person arose from the fear, lest too much admiration should be paid to the obnoxious character of a Christian. It is impossible here not to remark also the almost inconceivable inhumanity of the Romans, who could be entertained with such a spectacle as that of a man compelled to burn his own hand off in the fire.

† *Heathen Testimonies*, chap. 6. vol. vii. 260. edit. 1788.

‡ Vol. 3. p. 225.

ART. 34. *The Age of Infidelity: in Answer to Thomas Paine's Age of Reason, by a Layman.* 8vo. pp. 76. 1s. 6d. Button, 1794.

When we gave our account of Tom Paine's pamphlet, we lamented that any men of education should have given it consequence by answering it. On perusing the tract before us we were almost tempted to retract our words. So clear, so manly, so dispassionate a production we have seldom seen. It consists of two parts, the former contains a concise, but very distinct and masterly view of the evidences of Christianity: the latter a complete and strong answer to all the cavils of Paine; detecting his fallacies, and exposing his ignorance. If an answer was to be written, for the higher classes of society, this is such a one as we could have wished to see. It is a tract of value to those who have not seen Paine's, as well as to others. The author professes himself a layman; and from one or two expressions, we suspect him to be a dissentor; he is, however, not one who dissents from, or will consent to surrender, the peculiar *doctrines* and *mysteries* of Christianity. "I know," says he, "that some are willing to give up, perhaps the best part of Christianity, to secure the rest: but I believe the whole tenable. Nor do I conceive it worth any exertions to procure profelytes to such a mutilated system; for if christianity be reduced to the standard of natural religion, and mere morality, it matters not by which denomination it is called." Such a Christian, however, he may class himself, from education, or any other accidental circumstance, we must cordially hail as a brother.

ART. 35. *A Country Carpenter's Confession of Faith: with a few plain Remarks on the Age of Reason, in a Letter from Will. Chip, Carpenter, in Somersetshire, to Thomas Paine, Staymaker, in Paris.* 12mo. pp. 24. 2d. or 25 for 3s. Rivington. 1794.

This is, perhaps, the kind of answer to T. Paine (or Pain) which is best calculated to do real service. It is short and clear, and addressed exactly to the capacities of those who are most likely to be injured by the blasphemous ribaldry of that infatuated man. It will seem strange to those who have not an adequate idea, of the excessive wickedness of the persons who are endeavouring to disturb the tranquillity of this country, but it has come accidentally under our certain knowledge that the publication of Paine's wretched book, here answered, was part of an extensive plan for subverting religion in this country, as had been practised before in France, by corrupting the lower orders of the people; and that large sums were employed, and probably still are, for the purpose of promoting its circulation. Happily this little tract contains a strong antidote to the poison, and wherever the former dose has not worked too deeply into the constitution, will probably destroy its effects. It is written very ably, and very neatly, in the assumed character of Will Chip, the hero of that most admirable little dialogue entitled *Village Politics*.* which was written by Miss H. Moore.

* *Village Politics* were printed by Rivingtons, and others, and extensively circulated with great effect. They were reprinted in the 9th number of tracts published by the Association at the Crown and Anchor, and sold by Downes, Temple Bar, and others, of which see an account in our first volume, p. 435.

This, we are authorized to say, is not by that lady, but it is a happy imitation of that tract in its most meritorious points; propriety, and simplicity of language, soundness of reason, and native wit. We hope it will be circulated with equal success.

ART. 36. *The Grace of Christ in Redemption; enforced as a Model of sublime Charity: In a Sermon, preached at St. Giles's, Cripplegate, on Sunday, December 8, 1793; and published by particular Desire for the Benefit of the Spitalfield Weavers. By the Reverend C. E. De Coetlogon, A. M.* 8vo. pp. 28. 1s. Jordan, Matthews, &c. 1794.

The design of this Discourse is, “to add to a collection already made, and which was rendered necessary by the uncommon distresses of more than twenty thousand objects;—men, women, and children, (p. 25.) pining in a state of extreme want; not arising from indigence, idleness, or profligacy; but from a defect in a particular branch of commerce.”

To every orator in such a cause, we join in saying,—may he be successful.

ART. 37. *The Uses to be made of the Divine Goodness, in the course of the Season. A Sermon preached at Errol, December 19, 1793, being the Day appointed by the Presbytery of Perth, for a solemn Thanksgiving, on account of the good Harvest, agreeably to the Act and Recommendation of Synod. By William Herdman, Assistant to the Minister of Errol.* 8vo. 23 pp. 6d. Morison, Perth; Vernon, and Hood, London, 1794.

Plain, practical, and well adapted to the occasion; but not distinguished by vigorous eloquence, or original thinking.

ART. 38. *A reply to the Rev. F. Randolph's Scriptural Revision of Socinian Arguments Vindicated. By Benjamin Hobhouse, Barrister at Law, and A. M. of Brazen-Nose College, Oxford.* 8vo. 2s. Crutwell, Bath; Cadell, London, 1793.

The author, is one of those minor champions in the Socinian cause, who strive to make up by impetuosity what they want in vigour and skill.

It sometimes happens, that the spirit of a writer, and some idea of his talents also, may be collected from one or two short specimens of his work. A more curious specimen than the following is not often to be met with: p. 121. “If a set of ingenious men had been employed to invent the most absurd system possible, they could not have succeeded better than in presenting us with the creed of the established church.”

The *political* affirmations of this author are little less hardy than the *theological*: p. 22. “I shall consider you as charging the publicati-