

THE
ANALYTICAL REVIEW,

OR
HISTORY OF LITERATURE,
DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN,

ON AN ENLARGED PLAN.

CONTAINING
SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACTS OF IMPORTANT AND INTERESTING WORKS,
PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH;

A GENERAL ACCOUNT OF SUCH AS ARE OF LESS CONSEQUENCE,
WITH SHORT CHARACTERS;

AND
NOTICES, OR REVIEWS, OF VALUABLE FOREIGN BOOKS;

ALSO THE
LITERARY INTELLIGENCE OF EUROPE, &c.

“ At hæc omnia ita tractari præcipimus, ut non, Criticorum more, in laude et
“ censura tempus teratur; sed plane *historice* RES IPSÆ narrentur, iudicium
“ *parcius* interponatur.” BACON *de historia literaria conscribenda.*

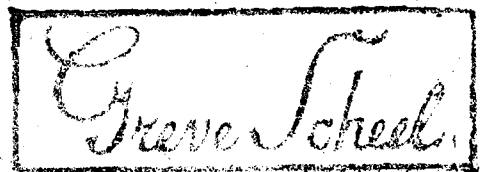
V O L. XX.

FROM SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER INCLUSIVE, 1794.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, N^o. 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

M DCC XCV.



Of fondness and of love, crowd on my memory,
 Once my soul's dearest joy, now its despair,
 And fill my breast with woe unutterable.—
 Those arms which oft around my neck were thrown
 In playful tenderness, are gall'd by chains;
 That breast, the soft abode of filial kindness,
 Now pours, perhaps, the gushing tide of life.—
 Yet you're a parent.—Had I been a man,
 I would have rush'd on swords and pointed spears—
 This bosom should have stream'd one bleeding wound
 Ere thus abandon her.—

' *Duke.* O dry those tears—

What could I do—hemm'd in by warring thousands,
 Compell'd by duty to consult the safety
 Of those given to my charge,—to guard thee too.

' *Duch.* Perish such duty! perish too my safety!

Can I survive my daughter's death, or, worse,
 Her soul dishonour—for this public duty,
 'Tis a fine word ambition has invented
 To cheat mankind, to screen its selfish views
 Beneath the specious mask of patriot zeal,
 And blunt the feelings of humanity.
 But he whose stubborn breast is steel'd against
 The social charities of love and friendship,
 Whatever knaves pretend, or fools believe,
 Can never love his country.

' *Duke.* Peace, and hear me.

' *Duch.* I will not, cannot.—

O, I am deaf to every sound but sorrow's!—
 Matilda! O, my child! my bleeding daughter!

D. M.

T H E O L O G Y.

ART. IX. *A View of the Evidences of Christianity in three Parts.*
Part I. Of the direct historical Evidence of Christianity, and
wherein it is distinguished from the Evidence alleged for other Mi-
racles. Part II. Of the auxiliary Evidences of Christianity.
Part III. A brief Consideration of some popular Objections. By
 William Paley, M. A. Archdeacon of Carlisle. In three Vo-
 lumes. 12mo. price 10s. 6d. sewed. Faulder. 1794.

IN the present awakened and agitated state of society, in which ancient institutions of every kind are canvassed with greater freedom than ever before; in which people of all classes, not excepting the lowest, seem disposed to assert the natural right of rational beings, to judge for themselves in all points which concern their personal conduct, and affect their personal happiness;—it becomes more necessary than ever to furnish men with the means of forming a fair and satisfactory judgment, especially on such interesting subjects as those of morals, policy, and religion. The two former of these subjects have been so happily illustrated by Mr. Paley in his 'Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy,' that the public

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public will, of course, entertain high expectations from his exertions in the cause of religion, and will observe with satisfaction so able an advocate stepping forward in defence of christianity.

Though many valuable works have been written in proof of the divine authority of the christian religion, there is still room for other elementary treatises upon the subject; and we have no hesitation in saying—for we are well assured of being supported in the opinion by the general voice of the public—that no popular view of the evidences of christianity has hitherto been given, at once so judicious in the selection and arrangement of materials, so happy in illustration, and so well supported by citations, as that which now comes under our consideration. Without spending more time in general commendation, we shall immediately proceed to give an analysis of the reasoning of this work, in order that our readers may be furnished with a concise view of the whole series of evidence for the truth of the christian religion. We shall, at present, state the direct historical evidence, reserving the more indirect proofs, with the author's replies to objections, to another article.

Preparatory consideration.—It is urged as an argument sufficient to supersede all further inquiry concerning the truth of christianity from the evidence of miracles, that no human testimony can, in any case, render miracles credible, because it is contrary to experience that miracles should be true, but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false.—To this it is replied, 1. If it be not improbable, that God should destine men for a future state of existence, and should acquaint them with this destination, it is not improbable, that he would authenticate this discovery by miracles. 2. The improbability arising from the want of experience is only equal to the probability, that, if the thing were true, such things would be generally experienced: but, supposing it to be true, that miracles were wrought at the first promulgation of christianity, it is not certain, or a probability approaching to certainty, that such miracles would be repeated so often, as to become objects of general experience. The course of nature may not be invariable; and, nevertheless, the variations may be so few as not to establish a general experience. 3. If we believe in God, miracles are not incredible; for there are sufficient power, and an adequate motive. 4. Cases may be put, in which united testimony to a miraculous fact, persisted in at the expence of life, would be irresistible.

Part I. Of the direct historical evidence of christianity.

Proposition 1. 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 these accounts; and that they also submitted from the same motive to new rules of conduct.

First. The fact of the voluntary sufferings of the first christians is probable from the nature of the case, or from circumstances on all hands acknowledged. For, 1. Since the christian religion exists and was established, it is probable, that its author, and his immediate

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immediate disciples after his death, exerted themselves in first publishing, and afterwards spreading this religion. 2. It is probable, that, in the prosecution of this purpose, they underwent the labours and troubles, which the propagators of new sects are observed to undergo. 3. It is probable, that the first propagation of christianity would be in a high degree dangerous; because it contradicted the popular expectation concerning the Messiah, and the jewish prejudices against other nations; because it disparaged those ceremonies which were in the highest estimation, and decried the merit of ritual zeal; because the first missionaries would necessarily offend the jewish rulers, by reproaching them with the murder of their master, and raise jealousy in the roman governors, by their profession of unqualified obedience to a master, foretold to the jews under the title of king; and because they had to oppose a priesthood possessed of municipal authority, and were under a foreign government constantly surrounded by their enemies. 4. It is probable, that, when the preachers of christianity turned themselves to the heathen public, they would meet with great opposition, because their religion was exclusive, and would accept no compromise with idolatry, herein essentially differing from the doctrine of the philosophers; that this opposition would subject them to great danger from private enmity, even where no public persecution was denounced by the state; and that they would find little protection in that general disbelief of the popular theology, which is then supposed to have prevailed, since (beside that unbelievers are not usually tolerant) the magistrates, who were also frequently officers of religion, were deeply interested in the continuance of the established system; to which may be added, that an ancient religion has always many votaries*, and a splendid and sumptuous religion would retain great numbers partly by fascination, and partly by interest. 5. It is probable, that the original teachers of christianity conformed themselves to the institution which they preached to others, and consequently made an essential change in their habit of life, attended with a considerable degree of self-denial.

Secondly, The fact of the sufferings of the first christians is established by direct testimony, both heathen and christian.

1. *Heathen.* Tacitus, who wrote about seventy years after Christ's death, speaking of the fire which happened at Rome in the time of Nero, relates (Annal. l. xv, c. 44) that this emperor, to put an end to the report of his having ordered the city to be set on fire, laid the guilt, and inflicted the most cruel punishments, upon a set of men, who were held in abhorrence for their crimes, and called by the vulgar *christians*. The founder of that name, he adds, was *Christ*, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, under his procurator Pontius Pilate. He goes on to relate, that this pernicious superstition, thus checked for awhile, broke out again, and spread not only over Judea, where the evil originated, but through Rome also—where a vast multitude were apprehended, who were convicted, not so much of the crime of burn-

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ing Rome, as of hatred to mankind;—that their sufferings, at their execution, were aggravated by insult and mockery;—that some were disguised in the skins of wild beasts, and worried to death by dogs, some were crucified, and some set on fire, when the day was closed, that they might serve as lights to illuminate the night;—that Nero lent his own gardens for these executions, and exhibited at the same time a mock circensian entertainment, being a spectator of the whole;—and that this conduct made the sufferers pitied, so that, though they were criminals, and deserving the severest punishment, yet they were considered as sacrificed, not so much for the public good, as to gratify the cruelty of one man.—This happened thirty-four years after the death of Christ.—Suetonius, a writer of the same age, says, (Nero, c. xvi) ‘The christians, a set of men, of a new and mischievous (or magical) superstition, were punished.’—Juvenal probably refers to these executions, sat. i, v. 155. A celebrated letter of Pliny to Trajan speaks of many christians of every age, and of both sexes; and says, that the contagion of this superstition had not only seized cities, but smaller towns, and the open country. From the same letter it appears, that trials were and had been going on against them in the provinces over which he presided, and that in consequence of anonymous informations, sent in writing, many had been apprehended, some of whom had died in the cause, while others abandoned it. This letter, and also a rescript of Adrian to the proconsul of Asia, which takes notice of tumults raised against the christians, show, that christians were exposed to sufferings without any public prosecution.—Martial ridicules the *voluntary* sufferings of the christians; Epictetus (l. iv, c. 7) imputes their constancy to madness, or a kind of fashion or habit; M. Aurelius (Medit. l. xi, c. 13) ascribes it to obstinacy.

2. *Christian.* We have four histories of Jesus Christ, a history taking up the narrative from his death, for thirty years, and a collection of letters written by principal agents, which attest the sufferings of the witnesses of the history, directly and indirectly, by recital, allusion, and discourse.—These books relate, that Jesus, the founder of the religion, was in consequence of his undertaking put to death as a malefactor at Jerusalem;—that this religion was, *notwithstanding*, continued and widely propagated, by his disciples; and that Christ foretold the persecution of his followers, [see Matt. xxiv, 9; Mark iv, 7; Luke xxi, 12; John xvi, 4.] These books abound with exhortations to patience, and with topics of comfort under distress, [see Rom. viii, 35—37; 2 Cor. iv, 8—17; James v, 10, 11; Heb. x, 32—36; 2 Theff. i, 1—5; Rom. v, 3, 4; 1 Pet. iv, 12—19] which prove, that the circumstances of the times required patience and constancy.—Not in a professed history of persecutions, but in the course of a mixed general history, it is related in detail with the utmost particularity of names and circumstances, that Jesus commissioned twelve persons, to publish his gospel, and collect disciples, in all countries;—that they began their work at Jerusalem, and made many converts, but met with opposition from the jewish magistracy and priesthood, and suffered imprisonment; that the people at length

joined

