

hostile. The natives, however, no sooner saw in what a deplorable situation they were, and how unable to make any opposition, than they conducted themselves in so pacific a manner as to dispel their fears. One of them even lent those who were employed on the whale, his lance, by the assistance of which, and the two knives, they were enabled to cut it into junks: And putting these into their bags, they pursued their way, till they could find wood and water to dress it.

[*To be continued in our next.*]

#### ~~~~~ L E T T E R    I V .

From the Bishop of LANDAFF to THOMAS PAINE.

[ *Concluded from page 36.* ]

THE two books of Samuel come next under your review. You proceed to shew that these books were not written by Samuel, that they are anonymous, and thence you conclude, without authority. I need not here repeat what I have said upon the fallacy of your conclusion; and as to your proving that the books were not written by Samuel, you might have spared yourself some trouble if you had recollected, that it is generally admitted, that Samuel did not write any part of the second book which bears his name, and only a part of the first. It would, indeed, have been an enquiry not undeserving your notice, in many parts of your work, to have examined what was the opinion of learned men respecting the authors of the several books of the Bible; you would have found, that you were in many places fighting a phantom of your own raising, and proving what was generally admitted. Very little certainty, I think, can at this time be obtained on this subject: but that you may have some knowledge of what has been conjectured by men of judgment, I will quote to you a passage from Dr. Hartley's observations on man. The author himself does not vouch for the truth of his observation, for he begins it with a supposition. — "I suppose then, that the Pentateuch consists of the writings of Moses, put together by Samuel, with a very few additions; that the books of Joshua and Judges were, in like manner, collected by him; and the book of Ruth, with the first part of the first book of Samuel, written by him; that the latter part of the first book of Samuel, and the second book, were written by the prophets who succeeded Samuel, suppose Nathan and Gad; that the books of Kings and Chronicles are extracts from the records of the succeeding prophets, concerning their own times, and from the public genealogical tables, made by Ezra; that the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are collections of like records, some written by Ezra and Nehemiah, and some by their predecessors; that the book of Esther was written by some eminent Jew, in or near the times of the transaction there recorded, perhaps Mordecai; the book of Job by a Jew, of an uncertain time; the Psalms by David, and other pious persons; the books of Proverbs and Canticles by Solomon; the book of Ecclesiastes by Solomon, or perhaps by a Jew of later times, speaking in his person, but not with an intention to make him pass for the author; the prophecies by the prophets whose

whose names they bear ; and the books of the New Testament by the persons to whom they are usually ascribed." — I have produced this passage to you, not merely to shew you that, in a great part of your work, you are attacking what no person is interested in defending ; but to convince you, that a wise and good man, and a firm believer in revealed religion, for such was Dr. Hartley, and no priest, did not reject the anonymous books of the Old Testament as books without authority. I shall not trouble either you or myself with any more observations on that head ; you may ascribe the two books of Kings, and the two books of Chronicles, to what authors you please ; I am satisfied with knowing that the annals of the Jewish nation were written in the time of Samuel, and, probably, in all succeeding times, by men of ability, who lived in or near the times of which they write. Of the truth of this observation we have abundant proof, not only from the testimony of Josephus, and of the writers of the Talmuds, but from the Old Testament itself. I will content myself with citing a few places — " Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer." 1 Chron. xxix. 29. — " Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer ? " 2 Chron. ix. 29. — " Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of Shemaiah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer, concerning genealogies ? " 2 Chron. xii. 15. — " Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Jehu the son of Hanani." 2 Chron. xx. 34. Is it possible for writers to give a stronger evidence of their veracity, than by referring their readers to the books from which they had extracted the materials of their history ?

" The two books of Kings," you say, " are little more than an history of assassinations, treachery, and war." That the kings of Israel and Judah were many of them very wicked persons, is evident from the history which is given of them in the Bible ; but it ought to be remembered, that their wickedness is not to be attributed to their religion ; nor were the people of Israel chosen to be the people of God, on account of their wickedness ; nor was their being chosen, a cause of it. One may wonder, indeed, that, having experienced so many singular marks of God's goodness towards their nation, they did not at once become, and continue to be, (what, however, they have long been,) strenuous advocates for the worship of one only God, the maker of heaven and earth. This was the purpose for which they were chosen, and this purpose has been accomplished. For above three and twenty hundred years the Jews have uniformly witnessed to all the nations of the earth the unity of God, and his abomination of idolatry. But as you look upon " the appellation of the Jews being God's *chosen* people as a *lie*, which the priests and leaders of the Jews had invented to cover the baseness of their own characters, and which Christian priests, sometimes as corrupt, and often as cruel, have professed to believe," I will plainly state to you the reasons which induce me to believe that it is no *lie*, and I hope they will be such reasons as you will not attribute either to cruelty or corruption.

To any one contemplating the universality of things, and the fabric of nature, this globe of earth, with the men dwelling on it's surface, will not appear (exclusive of the divinity of their souls) of more importance than an hillock of ants; all of which, some with corn, some with eggs, some without any thing, run hither and thither, bustling about a little heap of dust. — This is a thought of the immortal Bacon; and it is admirably fitted to humble the pride of philosophy, attempting to prescribe forms to the proceedings, and bounds to the attributes of God. We may as easily circumscribe infinity, as penetrate the secret purposes of the Almighty. There are but two ways by which I can acquire any knowledge of the nature of the Supreme Being, — by reason, and by revelation: to you, who reject revelation, there is but one. Now my reason informs me, that God has made a great difference between the kinds of animals, with respect to their capacity of enjoying happiness. Every kind is perfect in it's order; but if we compare different kinds together, one will appear to be greatly superior to another. An animal, which has but one sense, has but one source of happiness; but if it be supplied with what is suited to that sense, it enjoys all the happiness of which it is capable, and is in it's nature perfect. Other sorts of animals, which have two or three senses, and which have also abundant means of gratifying them, enjoy twice or thrice as much happiness as those do which have but one. In the same sort of animals there is a great difference amongst individuals, one having the senses more perfect, and the body less subject to disease, than another. Hence, if I were to form a judgment of the divine goodness by this use of my reason, I could not but say that it was partial and unequal. — “What shall we say then? is God unjust? God forbid!” His goodness may be unequal, without being imperfect; it must be estimated from the whole, and not from a part. Every order of beings is so sufficient for it's own happiness, and so conducive at the same time to the happiness of every other, that in one view it seems to be made for itself alone, and in another not for itself but for every other. Could we comprehend the whole of the immense fabric which God hath formed, I am persuaded that we should see nothing but perfection, harmony, and beauty, in every part of it; but whilst we dispute about parts, we neglect the whole, and discern nothing but supposed anomalies and defects. The maker of a watch, or the builder of a ship, is not to be blamed because a spectator cannot discover either the beauty or the use of disjointed parts. And shall we dare to accuse God of injustice, for not having distributed the gifts of nature in the same degree to all kinds of animals, when it is probable that this very inequality of distribution may be the mean of producing the greatest sum total of happiness to the whole system? In exactly the same manner may we reason concerning the acts of God's especial providence. If we consider any one act, such as that of appointing the jews to be his peculiar people, as unconnected with every other, it may appear to be a partial display of his goodness; it may excite doubts concerning the wisdom or the benignity of his divine nature. But if we connect the history of the jews with that of other nations, from the most remote antiquity to the present time, we shall discover that they were not chosen so much for their own benefit, or on account of their own merit, as for the general

benefit of mankind. To the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Grecians, Romans, to all the people of the earth, they were formerly, and they are still to all civilized nations, a beacon set upon an hill, to warn them from idolatry, to light them to the sanctuary of a God, holy, just, and good. Why should we suspect such a dispensation of being a *lie*? When even from the little which we can understand of it, we see that it is founded in wisdom, carried on for the general good, and analogous to all that reason teaches us concerning the nature of God.

Several things you observe are mentioned in the book of the Kings, such as the drying up of Jeroboam's hand, the ascent of Elijah into heaven, the destruction of the children who mocked Elifha, and the resurrection of a dead man:—these circumstances being mentioned in the book of Kings, and not mentioned in that of Chronicles, is a proof to you that they are lies. I esteem it a very erroneous mode of reasoning, which, from the silence of one author concerning a particular circumstance, infers the want of veracity in another who mentions it. And this observation is still more cogent, when applied to a book which is only a supplement to, or an abridgment of, other books: and under this description the book of Chronicles has been considered by all writers. But though you will not believe the miracle of the drying up of Jeroboam's hand, what can you say to the prophecy which was then delivered concerning the future destruction of the idolatrous altar of Jeroboam? The prophecy is thus written, 1 Kings xiii. 2. --- "Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee (the altar) shall he offer the priests of the high places." --- Here is a clear prophecy; the name, family, and office of a particular person are described in the year 975 (according to the Bible chronology) before Christ. Above 350 years after the delivery of the prophecy, you will find, by consulting the second book of Kings, (chap. xxiii. 15, 16.) this prophecy fulfilled in all its parts.

You make a calculation that Genesis was not written till 800 years after Moses, and that it is of the same age, and you may probably think of the same authority, as Æsop's Fables. You give, what you call the evidence of this, the air of a demonstration --- "It has but two stages: --- first, the account of the kings of Edom, mentioned in Genesis, is taken from Chronicles, and therefore the book of Genesis was written after the book of Chronicles: --- secondly, the book of Chronicles was not begun to be written till after Zedekiah, in whose time Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, 588 years before Christ, and more than 860 after Moses." --- Having answered this objection before, I might be excused taking any more notice of it; but as you build much, in this place, upon the strength of your argument, I will shew you its weakness, when it is properly stated. --- A few verses in the book of Genesis could not be written by Moses; therefore no part of Genesis could be written by Moses: --- a child would deny your *therefore*. --- Again, a few verses in the book of Genesis could not be written by Moses, because they speak of kings of Israel, there having been no kings of Israel in the time of Moses; and therefore they could not be written by Samuel or by Solomon, or by any other person who lived after there were king in Israel, except by the author of the book of Chronicles: --- this is all an illegitimate inference from your position, --- Again, a few verses in the

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the book of Genesis are, word for word, the same as a few verses in the book of Chronicles; *therefore* the author of the book of Genesis must have taken them from Chronicles: --- another lame conclusion! Why might not the author of the book of Chronicles have taken them from Genesis, as he has taken many other genealogies, supposing them to have been inserted in Genesis by Samuel? But where, you may ask, could Samuel, or any other person, have found the account of the kings of Edom? Probably, in the public records of the nation, which were certainly as open for inspection to Samuel, and the other prophets, as they were to the author of Chronicles. I hold it needless to employ more time on the subject.



### A short ACCOUNT of JAMES ROTHWELL, of Bolton in Lancashire.

**H**IS first stirring up to seek for salvation was by hearing a sermon in Bolton church, from a minister from Yorkshire; I am not sure if it was not the late Mr. Grimshaw. The text was, 2 Cor. v. 17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." This was above forty years ago. The discourse made such an impression on his mind that he could not be easy; he saw himself wretched, miserable, blind and naked. Soon after Mr. Wesley came to Bolton, and preached at the Cross, at which time God gave James an assurance that he was a new creature.

He often saw the hand of the Lord interposed in his behalf either in preventing evils, or supporting him under them. One night in particular, having a few cows, his chief support, about midnight, a high wind blew the barn down in which his cows were, and though there were loads of stones among them, yet not one was wounded. He had some difficulties in life, and perhaps the greatest might be in his own family, in seeing them careless respecting the one thing needful; an affliction which will give unspeakable pain to a parent who knows the value of eternal things. How tremendous is the idea of seeing those, who have sprung from their own bowels, in their sins at the last day; and nothing but the prospect of God's eternal displeasure and everlasting burnings! O may the thought strike deep upon the unawakened conscience in time!

I visited our friend the evening before he died, and found him exceedingly happy in God his Saviour. I asked him, If the fear of death was gone? He answered with rapture, "*It is.*" "What is the ground of your hope?" "*The precious blood of my dear Lord which he shed for me upon the cross.*" "You have the application of that blood, that is, the efficacy of it upon your conscience?" "*I bless God, I have.*" As he had met with some bad treatment, I asked, "Are you at peace with all mankind?" "*O yes! I love all, and wish them all to be happy.*"