

to me; the day of my new-birth. Sheffield is the place where I experienced this great change. Last Tuesday was a fortnight, I went to Mr. Bramwell's, to instruct him in the French Language. I had been reading the Bible all the morning, and was particularly affected with some passages in which Pardon is promised to the Penitent, and we are assured that whatsoever we ask in faith we shall have. I prayed earnestly that GOD would pardon me, and was enabled to trust in his Word. I laid down the book, firmly persuaded I should see his Salvation. It then was suggested to my mind that GOD had said, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," and I thought I should do well to desire Mr. Bramwell to pray for my conversion. That day he dined with us at Mr. Holy's, and after dinner he desired me to return with him to his house. Mr. H. Taylor joined us, and after some conversation on indifferent subjects, at least, indifferent to me, Mr. Taylor proposed prayer before he left us. I fell on my knees expecting to receive the Blessing I so much desired. They began to pray for my conversion: when by degrees my heart was much affected, till I was dissolved in tears. Mess. T. and B. appeared to me to pray by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and the Room to be filled with the Presence of GOD. No doubt GOD was in the midst of us. I trembled as a criminal before his tribunal, and with many sighs and tears besought him to forgive my sins. He graciously looked on my distress and did not suffer me to remain long in this anguish of mind, but in his abundant mercy spoke these kind words to my heart, "I will remember thy sins no more: I will wipe away all tears from thine eyes." I believed. I felt an assurance of pardon. My soul was filled with joy unspeakable, and all I could say for a season was, "O infinite goodness! dost thou condescend thus to notice a wretch like me." From that moment I have rejoiced in the Lord, and his Spirit hath witnessed with my spirit, that I am a child of GOD. I feel that GOD dwells in me and I in him. And as Christ prayed that the faithful might be one in him, I now feel united to them as I never did before. GOD grant we may never be disunited, but that our union may be more and more intimate, in time and in Eternity. Thus prays the whole soul of him who is your sincere friend for ever,

DU PONTAVICE.

LETTER II. from the Bishop of Landaff to Thom. Paine.

**B**EFORE you commence your grand attack upon the Bible, you wish to establish a difference between the evidence necessary to prove the authenticity of the Bible, and that of any other ancient books. I am not surprised at your anxiety on this head; for all writers on the subject have agreed in thinking that St. Austin reasoned well, when, in vindicating the genuineness of the Bible, he asked—"What proofs have we that the works of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Varo, and other profane authors, were written

written by those whose names they bear ; unless it be that this has been an opinion generally received at all times, and by all those who have lived since these authors ?" This writer was convinced, that the evidence which established the genuineness of any profane book, would establish that of a sacred book ; and I profess myself to be of the same opinion, notwithstanding what you have advanced to the contrary.

In this part your ideas seem to me to be confused ; I do not say that you, designedly, jumble together mathematical science and historical evidence ; the knowledge acquired by demonstration, and the probability derived from testimony.—You know but of one ancient book, that authoritatively challenges universal consent and belief, and that is Euclid's Elements. — If I were disposed to make frivolous objections, I should say that even Euclid's Elements had not met with universal consent ; that there had been men, both in ancient and modern times, who had questioned the intuitive evidence of some of his axioms, and denied the justness of some of his demonstrations : but, admitting the truth, I do not see the pertinency of your observation. You are attempting to subvert the authenticity of the Bible, and you tell us that Euclid's Elements are certainly true. — What then ? — Does it follow that the Bible is certainly false ? The most illiterate scrivener in the kingdom does not want to be informed, that the examples in his Wingate's Arithmetic, are proved by a different kind of reasoning from that by which he persuades himself to believe, that there was such a person as Henry VIII. or that there is such a city as Paris.

It may be of use, to remove this confusion in your argument, to state, distinctly, the difference between the genuineness, and the authenticity, of a book. A genuine book, is that which was written by the person whose name it bears, as the author of it. An authentic book, is that which relates matters of fact, as they really happened. A book may be genuine, without being authentic ; and a book may be authentic, without being genuine. The books written by Richardson and Fielding are genuine books, though the histories of Clarissa and Tom Jones are fables. The history of the island of Formosa is a genuine book ; it was written by Psalmanazar ; but it is not an authentic book, (though it was long esteemed as such, and translated into different languages,) for the author, in the latter part of his life, took shame to himself for having imposed on the world, and confessed that it was a mere romance. Anson's Voyage may be considered as an authentic book, it, probably, containing a true narration of the principal events recorded in it ; but it is not a genuine book, having not been written by Walters, to whom it is ascribed, but by Robins.

This distinction between the genuineness and authenticity of a book, will assist us in detecting the fallacy of an argument, which you state with great confidence in the part of your work now under consideration, and which you frequently allude to, in other parts,

parts, as conclusive evidence against the truth of the Bible. Your argument stands thus — If it be found that the books ascribed to Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, were not written by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, every part of the authority and authenticity of these books is gone at once. — I presume to think otherwise. The genuineness of these books (in the judgment of those who say that they were written by these authors) will certainly be gone; but their authenticity may remain; they may still contain a true account of real transactions, though the names of the writers of them should be found to be different from what they are generally esteemed to be.

Had, indeed, Moses said that he wrote the five first books of the Bible; and had Joshua and Samuel said that they wrote the books which are respectively attributed to them; and had it been found, that Moses, Joshua, and Samuel, did not write these books; then, I grant, the authority of the whole would have been gone at once; these men would have been found liars, as to the genuineness of the books; and this proof of their want of veracity, in one point, would have invalidated their testimony in every other; these books would have been justly stigmatized, as neither genuine nor authentic.

An history may be true, though it should not only be ascribed to a wrong author, but though the author of it should not be known; anonymous testimony does not destroy the reality of facts, whether natural or miraculous. Had Lord Clarendon published his History of the Rebellion, without prefixing his name to it; or had the history of Titus Livius come down to us, under the name of Valerius Flaccus, or Valerius Maximus; the facts mentioned in these histories would have been equally certain.

As to your assertion, that the miracles recorded in Tacitus, and in other profane historians, are quite as well authenticated as those of the Bible — it, being a mere assertion destitute of proof, may be properly answered by a contrary assertion. I take the liberty then to say, that the evidence for the miracles recorded in the Bible is, both in kind and degree, so greatly superior to that for the prodigies mentioned by Livy, or the miracles related by Tacitus, as to justify us in giving credit to the one as the work of God, and in withholding it from the other as the effect of superstition and imposture. This method of derogating from the credibility of christianity, by opposing to the miracles of our Saviour, the tricks of ancient impostors, seems to have originated with Hierocles in the fourth century; and it has been adopted by unbelievers from that time to this; with this difference, indeed, that the heathens of the third and fourth century admitted that Jesus wrought miracles; but lest that admission should have compelled them to abandon their gods and become christians, they said, that their *Apollonius*, their *Apuleius*, their *Aristeas*, did as great: whilst modern deists deny the fact of Jesus having ever wrought a miracle. And they have some reason for this proceeding; they

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are sensible that the Gospel Miracles are so different, in all their circumstances, from those related in pagan story, that, if they admit them to have been performed, they must admit Christianity to be true; hence they have fabricated a kind of deistical axiom — that no human testimony can establish the credibility of a miracle. — This, though it has been an hundred times refuted, is still insisted upon, as if it's truth had never been questioned, and could not be disproved.

You “ proceed to examine the authenticity of the Bible ; and you begin, you say, with what are called the five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Your intention, you profess, is to shew that these books are spurious, and that Moses is not the author of them ; and still farther, that they were not written in the time of Moses, nor till several hundred years afterwards ; that they are no other than an attempted history of the life of Moses, and of the times in which he is said to have lived, and also of the times prior thereto, written by some very ignorant and stupid pretender to authorship, several hundred years after the death of Moses.” — In this passage the utmost force of your attack on the authority of the five books of Moses is clearly stated. You are not the first who has started this difficulty ; it is a difficulty, indeed, of modern date ; having not been heard of, either in the synagogue, or out of it, till the twelfth century. About that time *Aben Ezra*, a Jew of great erudition, noticed some passages (the same you have brought forward) in the five first books of the Bible, which he thought had not been written by Moses, but inserted by some person after the death of Moses. But he was far from maintaining, as you do, that these books were written by some ignorant and stupid pretender to authorship, many hundred years after the death of Moses. *Hobbes* contends that the books of Moses are so called, not from their having been written by Moses, but from their containing an account of Moses. *Spinoza* supported the same opinion : and *Le Clerc*, a very able theological critic of the last and present century, once entertained the same notion. You see that this fancy has had some patrons before you ; the merit or the demerit, the sagacity or the temerity of having asserted, that Moses is not the author of the Pentateuch, is not exclusively your's. *Le Clerc*, indeed, you must not boast of. When his judgment was matured by age, he was ashamed of what he had written on the subject in his younger years ; he made a public recantation of his error, by annexing to his commentary on Genesis, a Latin dissertation — concerning Moses, the author of the Pentateuch, and his design in composing it. If in your future life you should chance to change your opinion on the subject, it will be an honour to your character to emulate the integrity, and to imitate the example of *Le Clerc*. The Bible is not the only book which has undergone the fate of being repudiated as spurious, after it had been received as genuine and authentic for many ages. It has been maintained that the history of

*Herodotus* was written in the time of *Constantine*: and that the Classics are forgeries of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. These extravagant reveries amused the world at the time of their publication, and have long since sunk into oblivion. You esteem all prophets to be such lying rascals, that I dare not venture to predict the fate of your book.

Before you produce your main objections to the genuineness of the books of Moses, you assert — “that there is no affirmative evidence that Moses is the author of them.” — What! no affirmative evidence! In the 11th century *Maimonides* drew up a confession of faith for the Jews, which all of them at this day admit; it consists of only thirteen articles; and two of them have respect to Moses; one affirming the authenticity, the other the genuineness of his books. — The doctrine and prophecy of Moses is true — The law that we have was given by Moses. — This is the faith of the Jews at present, and has been their faith ever since the destruction of their city and temple; it was their faith in the time when the authors of the New Testament wrote; it was their faith during their captivity in Babylon; in the time of their kings and judges; and no period can be shewn, from the age of Moses to the present hour, in which it was not their faith. — Is this no affirmative evidence? I cannot desire a stronger. *Josephus*, in his book against *Appion*, writes thus — “We have only two and twenty books which are to be believed as of divine authority, and which comprehend the history of all ages; five belong to Moses, which contain the original of man, and the tradition of the succession of generations, down to his death, which takes in a compass of about three thousand years.” Do you consider this as no affirmative evidence? Why should I mention *Juvenal* speaking of the volume which Moses had written? Why enumerate a long list of prophane authors, all bearing testimony to the fact of *Moses* being the leader and law-giver of the Jewish nation? and if a law-giver, surely, a writer of the laws. But what says the Bible? In *Exodus* it says — “Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people.” — In *Deuteronomy* it says — “And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, (this surely imports the finishing a laborious work,) that Moses commanded the Levites which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, “Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.” This is said in *Deuteronomy*, which is a kind of repetition or abridgment of the four preceding books; and it is well known that the Jews gave the name of the Law to the first five books of the Old Testament. What possible doubt can there be that Moses wrote the books in question? I could accumulate many other passages from the scriptures to this purpose; but if

what I have advanced will not convince you that there is affirmative evidence, and of the strongest kind, for Moses's being the author of these books, nothing that I can advance will convince you.

What if I should grant all you undertake to prove (the stupidity and ignorance of the writer excepted)? --- What if I should admit, that *Samuel* or *Ezra*, or some other learned Jew, composed these books, from public records, many years after the death of Moses? Will it follow, that there was no truth in them? According to my logic, it will only follow, that they are not genuine books; every fact recorded in them may be true, whenever, or by whomsoever they were written. It cannot be said that the Jews had no public records; the Bible furnishes abundance of proof to the contrary. I by no means admit, that these books, as to the main part of them, were not written by Moses; but I do contend, that a book may contain a true history, though we know not the author of it, or though we may be mistaken in ascribing it to a wrong author,

The first argument you produce against Moses being the author of these books is so old, that I do not know it's original author; and it is so miserable a one, that I wonder you should adopt it: --- "These books cannot be written by Moses, because they are written in the third person --- it is always, The Lord said unto Moses, or Moses said unto the Lord. This, you say, is the style and manner that historians use in speaking of the persons whose lives and actions they are writing." This observation is true, but it does not extend far enough; for this is the style and manner not only of historians writing of other persons, but of eminent men, such as *Xenophon* and *Josephus*, writing of themselves. If General *Washington* should write the history of the American war, and should, from his great modesty, speak of himself in the third person, would you think it reasonable, that, two or three thousand years hence, any person should, on that account, contend, that the history was not true? *Cæsar* writes of himself in the third person --- it is always, *Cæsar* made a speech, or a speech was made to *Cæsar*, *Cæsar* crossed the Rhine, *Cæsar* invaded Britain; but every school-boy knows, that this circumstance cannot be adduced as a serious argument against *Cæsar's* being the author of his own Commentaries.

But Moses, you urge, cannot be the author of the book of Numbers, --- because he says of himself --- "that Moses was a very meek man, above all the men that were on the face of the earth." If he said this of himself, he was, you say, "a vain and arrogant coxcomb, (such is your phrase!) and unworthy of credit --- and, if he did not say it, the books are without authority." This your dilemma is perfectly harmless; it has not an horn to hurt the weakest logician. If Moses did not write this little verse, if it was inserted by *Samuel*, or any of his countrymen, who knew his character and revered his memory, will it follow that he did

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not write any other part of the book of Numbers? Or if he did not write any part of the book of Numbers, will it follow that he did not write any of the other books of which he is usually reputed the author? And if he did write this of himself, he was justified by the occasion which extorted from him this commendation. Had this expression been written in a modern style and manner, it would probably have given you no offence. For who would be so fastidious as to find fault with an illustrious man, who, being calumniated by his nearest relations, as guilty of pride and fond of power, should vindicate his character by saying, My temper was naturally as meek and unassuming as that of any man upon earth? There are occasions, in which a modest man, who speaks truly, may speak proudly of himself, without forfeiting his general character; and there is no occasion, which either more requires, or more excuses this conduct, than when he is repelling the foul and envious aspersions of those who both knew his character and had experienced his kindness: and in that predicament stood *Aaron* and *Miriam*, the accusers of *Moses*. You yourself have, probably, felt the sting of calumny, and have been anxious to remove the impression. I do not call you a vain and arrogant coxcomb for vindicating your character, when in the latter part of this very work you boast, and I hope truly, "that the man does not exist that can say I have persecuted him, or any man, or any set of men, in the American revolution, or in the French revolution; or that I have in any case returned evil for evil." I know not what kings and priests may say to this; you may not have returned to them evil for evil, because they never, I believe, did you any harm; but you have done them all the harm you could, and that without provocation.

I think it needless to notice your observation upon what you call the dramatic style of Deuteronomy: it is an ill-founded hypothesis. You might as well ask, where the author of *Cæsar's Commentaries* got the speeches of *Cæsar*, as where the author of Deuteronomy got the speeches of *Moses*. But your argument --- that *Moses* was not the author of Deuteronomy, because the reason given in that book for the observation of the sabbath is different from that given in *Exodus*, merits a reply.

You need not be told that the very name of this book imports, in Greek, a repetition of a law; and that the Hebrew doctors have called it by a word of the same meaning. In the fifth verse of the first chapter it is said in our Bibles, "Moses began to declare this law;" but the Hebrew words, more properly translated, import that *Moses* "began, or determined, to explain the law." This is no shift of mine to get over a difficulty; the words are so rendered in most of the ancient versions, and by *Fagius*, *Vetabius*, and *Le Clerc*, men eminently skilled in the Hebrew language: This repetition and explanation of the law, was a wise and benevolent proceeding in *Moses*; that those who were either not born, or were mere infants, when it was first (forty years before) deli-

verged in Horeb, might have an opportunity of knowing it; especially as Moses their leader was soon to be taken from them, and they were about to be settled in the midst of nations given to idolatry and sunk in vice. Now where is the wonder, that some variations, and some additions, should be made to a law, when a legislator thinks fit to republish it many years after it's first promulgation?

With respect to the sabbath, the learned are divided in opinion concerning it's origin; some contending, that it was sanctified from the creation of the world; that it was observed by the patriarchs before the flood; that it was neglected by the Israelites during their bondage in Egypt; revived on the falling of manna in the wilderness; and enjoined, as a positive law, at mount Sinai. Others esteem it's institution to have been no older than the age of Moses; and argue, that what is said of the sanctification of the sabbath in the book of Genesis, is said by way of anticipation. There may be truth in both these accounts. To me it is probable, that the memory of the creation was handed down from Adam to all his posterity; and that the seventh day was, for a long time, held sacred by all nations, in commemoration of that event; but that the peculiar rigidness of it's observance was enjoined by Moses to the Israelites alone. As to there being two reasons given for it's being kept holy, --- one, that on that day God rested from the work of creation --- the other, that on that day God had given them rest from the servitude of Egypt --- I see no contradiction in the accounts. If a man, in writing the history of England, should inform his readers, that the parliament had ordered the fifth of November to be kept holy, because on that day God had delivered the nation from a bloody-intended massacre by gunpowder; and if, in another part of his history, he should assign the deliverance of our church and nation from popery and arbitrary power, by the arrival of King William, as a reason for it's being kept holy; would any one contend, that he was not justified in both these ways of expression, or that we ought from thence to conclude, that he was not the author of them both?

You think --- "that law in Deuteronomy inhuman and brutal, which authorizes parents, the father and the mother, to bring their own children to have them stoned to death for what it is pleased to call stubbornness." --- You are aware, I suppose, that paternal power, amongst the *Romans*, the *Gauls*, the *Persians*, and other nations, was of the most arbitrary kind; that it extended to the taking away the life of the child. I do not know whether the Israelites in the time of Moses exercised this paternal power; it was not a custom adopted by all nations, but it was by many; and in the infancy of society, before individual families had coalesced into communities, it was probably very general. Now Moses, by this law, which you esteem brutal and inhuman, hindered such an extravagant power from being either introduced or exercised amongst the Israelites. This law is so far from countenancing the arbitrary power of a father over the life of his child, that it takes



takes from him the power of accusing the child before a magistrate --- the father and the mother of the child must agree in bringing the child to judgment --- and it is not by their united will that the child was to be condemned to death; the elders of the city were to judge whether the accusation was true; and the accusation was to be not merely, as you insinuate, that the child was stubborn, but that he was "stubborn and rebellious, a glutton and a drunkard." Considered in this light, you must allow the law to have been an humane restriction of a power improper to be lodged with any parent.

That you may abuse the priests, you abandon your subject --- "Priests, you say, preach up Deuteronomy, for Deuteronomy preaches up tythes." --- I do not know that priests preach up Deuteronomy, more than they preach up other books of scripture; but I do know that tythes are not preached up in Deuteronomy, more than in Leviticus, in Numbers, in Chronicles, in Malachi, in the law, the history, and the prophets of the Jewish nation. --- You go on --- "It is from this book, chap. xxv. ver. 4, they have taken the phrase, and applied it to tything, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn:" and that this might not escape observation, they have noted it in the table of contents at the head of the chapter, though it is only a single verse of less than two lines. O priests! priests! ye are willing to be compared to an ox for the sake of tythes!" --- I cannot call this --- reasoning --- and I will not pollute my page by giving it a proper appellation. Had the table of contents, instead of simply saying --- the ox is not to be muzzled --- said --- tythes enjoined, or priests to be maintained --- there would have been a little ground for your censure. Whoever noted this phrase at the head of the chapter, had better reason for doing it than you have attributed to them. They did it, because St. Paul had quoted it, when he was proving to the Corinthians, that they who preached the gospel had a right to live by the gospel: it was Paul, and not the priests, who first applied this phrase to tything. St. Paul, indeed, did not avail himself of the right he contended for; he was not, therefore, interested in what he said. The reason, on which he grounds the right, is not merely this quotation, which you ridicule; nor the appointment of the law of Moses, which you think fabulous; nor the injunction of Jesus, which you despise; no, it is a reason founded in the nature of things, and which no philosopher, no unbeliever, no man of common sense can deny to be a solid reason: it amounts to this --- that "the labourer is worthy of his hire." Nothing is so much a man's own, as his labour and ingenuity; and it is intirely consonant to the law of nature, that by the innocent use of these he should provide for his subsistence. Husbandmen, artists, soldiers, physicians, lawyers, all let out their labour and talents for a stipulated reward: why may not a priest do the same? Some accounts of you have been published in England; but, conceiving them to have

have proceeded from a design to injure your character, I never read them. I know nothing of your parentage, your education, or condition in life. You may have been elevated, by your birth, above the necessity of acquiring the means of sustaining life by the labour either of hand or head; if this be the case, you ought not to despise those who have come into the world in less favourable circumstances. If your origin has been less fortunate, you must have supported yourself, either by manual labour, or the exercise of your genius. Why should you think that conduct disreputable in priests, which you probably consider as laudable in yourself? I know not whether you have not as great a dislike of kings as of priests: but that you may be induced to think more favourably of men of my profession, I will just mention to you that the payment of tythes is no new institution, but that they were paid in the most ancient times, not to priests only, but to kings. I could give you an hundred instances of this: two may be sufficient. *Abraham* paid tythes to the king of Salem, four hundred years before the law of *Moses* was given. The king of Salem was priest also of the most high God. Priests, you see, existed in the world, and were held in high estimation, for kings were priests, long before the impostures, as you esteem them, of the jewish and christian dispensations were heard of. But as this instance is taken from a book which you call "a book of contradictions and lies" --- the Bible; --- I will give you another, from a book, to the authority of which, as it is written by a profane author, you probably will not object. *Diogenes Laertius*, in his life of *Solon*, cites a letter of *Pisistratus* to that lawgiver, in which he says --- "I, *Pisistratus*, the tyrant, am contented with the stipends which were paid to those who reigned before me; the people of Athens set apart a *tenth* of the fruits of their land, not for my private use, but to be expended in the public sacrifices, and for the general good."

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A short account of the Life and Death of Mr. JOHN BRETTELL:  
by his Brother, Mr. JEREMIAH BRETTELL.

**J**OHAN BRETTELL was born at Stourbridge in Worcestershire, in the year 1742. His parents were Members of the Church of England, and having the form of religion, they taught their children early to remember the Sabbath, to pray in private, and conscientiously to regard the daily discharge of that duty. As my brother grew up, he was frequently troubled for such parts of his conduct as he thought wrong, and was sensible that he wanted something in religion which he had not. He frequently repeated the Ten Commandments, and made many resolutions to be good: but his rising passions and growing inclinations to folly, led him as often to break them. He then endeavoured to satisfy himself, by hoping for a future day, when he should better perform his purposes. About this time, one of his Cousins with whom he was