

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
Defence of Christianity
FROM THE
PROPHECIES
OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT.

In ANSWER to the SCHEME of
LITERAL PROPHECY
CONSIDERED.

By the Right Reverend FATHER in GOD
EDWARD, Ld. Bishop of *Coventry* and *Lichfield*.

V O L. II.

WITH A
L E T T E R

From the Reverend Mr. *MASSON*, concerning the
RELIGION of *MACROBIUS* and his Testimony
touching the Slaughter of the Infants at *Bethlehem*, with
a POSTSCRIPT upon *Virgil's* IVth ECLOGUE.

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A

VINDICATION of the DEFENCE

O F

CHRISTIANITY, &c.

B O O K II.

CHAP. I. SECT. I.

*Of the expectation of the Messias by the
Jews, at the coming of the Lord Jesus.*



THE design of the first Chapter
of my *Defence*, was to prove
a general and national expect-
tation among the *Jews* of the
coming of the *Messias*, about

Sect. I.



the time that the Lord Jesus appeared in
the world: and I am glad our *Author* is
advanced one step, and admits it. “ I al-
“ low, *saieth he*, that there was in and a-
“ bout the times of Jesus a *very great ex-*
“ *pectation* among the *Jews* of a person
“ *to come*, that was to redeem them out

Scheme, ch. I.

Y 5

“ of

Chap. I. “ of misery and slavery, and set up the
 “ *Jewish* temple and *Jewish* worship in
 “ all its forms and splendor; to which
 “ person, by way of emphasis, the name
 “ of *Messias* or *Christ* is attributed.

BUT as if he had forgot what the force
 of evidence had extorted from him, he soon
 retracts much of what he had granted, and
 correcting himself he denies, “ that the
 “ *expectation* was *so general* as some may
 “ imagine, or it hath been for many last
 “ ages among them, who from the ele-
 “ venth Century made it one of their fun-
 “ damental Articles of faith.

FOR this he first cites a text of Scrip-
 Luke ii. 38. ture. “ The prophetess *Anna* upon seeing
 “ the infant Jesus in the temple, *spake of*
 “ *him to all that looked for redemption in*
 “ *Israel*. Which words, according to a
 “ learned Critick, seem to imply, that
 “ there were *Jews* then who did not ex-
 “ pect the coming of the *Messias*.

I am astonished at the observation! But
 what if the thing were true? Is not that
 belief National, which is assented to by
 nineteen in twenty of the people? He
 might as well deny that the people of
England do now profess the Christian faith,
 because

because two hundred in *London*, or per- Sect. I.
haps more, may be found of the *Writer's* 
principles, that do not believe in Jesus.
But the true answer is, that the text doth
not really imply what is inferred from it;
and to this purpose I also give the judg-
ment of a very learned Critick. He notes, Maldonat in
" that there are two readings of this text, loc.
" and each reading carries a good sense.
" The one is of *Euthymius* *, who read, * He might
" *to all that expected redemption in Je-* have added,
" *rusalem*, and then St. *Luke* means, that of most of
" *Anna* spoke of Jesus being the Christ, the Greek co-
" not *to all, every where*, that expected pies, and of
" redemption, but to those only that were the *Syriack*.
" (then) at *Jerusalem*. She resided con-
" stantly at the temple, and did not run
" about the country. The other reading,
" which is that of *Origen* [and the *Vul-*
" *gate*] hath the *redemption of Israel*, in-
" stead of *in Jerusalem*, signifying that *An-*
" *na* chose out such hearers as were more
" inquisitive, and desirous to be informed
" of the coming of Christ. But what?
" Did not all the *Jews* expect the redemp-
" tion of *Israel*? They did expect it, or
" certainly professed to expect it. But some
" were less certain as to the time, or were
" less

Chap. I. “ less attentive (to the consequence of it :)
 “ Others looked for it about the time
 “ their redemption did come, and longed
 “ for it more ardently.”

THEY were believers of this latter sort that *Anna* addressed herself to : such who out of a persuasion the time of their redemption drew nigh, did prepare themselves for it by a life of devotion and righteousness, as it is expressly said of *Simon*, ver. 25. who was full of the like hopes. It doth not follow that men that are slack in the performance of such duties, or remiss in attending on the publick service, where *Anna* could only meet and speak to them, must therefore renounce the same expectations, that were retained by *Jews* of a stricter conversation. How many are there among the several denominations of Christians, that profess belief in Christ's second coming, and act unsuitably to such professions, and yet cannot be said in judgement to deny this article, though their practice shews they do not consider it.

Scheme, p.
20, 21.

2. HIS next proof is taken from the *Sadducees*, and the *Scribes* or *Karaites*, *Jewish* Sects that were not so generally

in the expectation of a *Messias*, as the *Pharisees* and *Essens* were. Sect. I.

“ It should seem the *Sadducees*, a
 “ standing and considerable sect among the
 “ *Jews*, so considerable, that some of
 “ them often became civil magistrates,
 “ and sometimes stepped into the office
 “ of the high-priesthood, were not so ge-
 “ nerally in this expectation, &c. for they
 “ pretended to adhere only to the literal
 “ sense of the scriptures, and to reject the
 “ allegorical and traditional sense thereof; Scheme, p. 211
 “ upon which only the *Jews* could justly
 “ ground their expectation of a carnal
 “ *Messias*. ”

IN this *Author's* first *Essay*, the *Saddu-
 cees* were very considerable for their *num-
 bers*: in this they are considerable for their
offices. But the authority of *Josephus* is as Jos. Ant.
 express against the one as against the other. xviii. 2.
 Some few, as he relates, did get into places,
 which they held by dissembling their opi-
 nions, and imposing on the people with
 their hypocrisy; and I add in the latter
 state of the *Jews*, they purchased them of
 the *Herods*, or of the *Roman* Governours.
 But whether they were in place or not, is
 little material to the point in hand: their
 numbers

Chap. I. numbers were not increased with their magistracy, nor the general expectation of the *Jews* diminished thereby.

W H E T H E R indeed all the *Sadducees* were dis-believers of a *Messias* to come, is a question ; but not at all so for this *Author's* reason, *viz.* “ because they adhered to “ the literal sense of the scripture only.” *He* takes that for granted, which we shall prove by and by to be false. But if all the *Sadducees* were as *Josephus* describes some of them, men of *Epicuræan* principles, that neither acknowledged a providence, nor the natural distinction of moral good and evil, nor the distribution of future rewards and punishments, in proportion to men's behaviour in this life, it is not easily to be conceived how they could reconcile a belief of the *Messias* with a dis-belief of these things ? How should they admit of prophecy, or look for a *deliverer* upon the authority of the prophets, or be converted by the preaching of *Jesus* and the *resurrection*, when *Jesus's* religion presupposed and enforced all the principles which they rejected ?

Y E T possibly all the *Sadducees* were not in the sentiments of the rest of the Sect.

When

When *John the Baptist* preached up the Sect. I.
 near approach of the *kingdom of God*, a-
 nother word for that of the *Messias*, for
 which he prepared the people by repentance
 and baptism, many of the *Sadducees* as
 well as of the *Pharisees* came to his
baptism. This step is to be accounted Mat. iii. 7.
 for upon no other bottom, than of
 their *Hope* of the coming of some great
 person of their nation, or his harbinger
 that should be manifested by baptism. And
 so the question of those that were deputed
 by the Sanhedrin, to enquire into the
 pretensions of *John the Baptist*, doth im-
 ply, *why baptizest thou then, if thou be* John i. 25,
not that Christ, nor Elias, nor that pro-
phet?

To be baptized then with *John's* bap-
 tism, was in effect to declare their expec-
 tation of the coming of that *kingdom* which
John preached: and so it is interpreted in
 St. Luke vii. 29. *All the people that had*
been baptized with John's baptism, when
they heard this, justified God, i. e. they
 thankfully received the subject of his mes-
 sage. As on the other hand, they that
 were not *baptized of him*, and it is in-
 stanced in the *Pharisees* and *Lawyers* or
Scribes,

Chap. I. *Scribes*, are said to reject the council of God in their behalf, or that method which God's wisdom had chosen of saving them by *Jesus*, that appeared to them to be foolishness, and proved to them a stumbling-block.

T H E R E were therefore of the *Sadducees* as well as *Pharisees*, who looked for redemption in *Israel*, and for that reason repaired to *John's* baptism : and there were many *Pharisees* and *Scribes* that refused *John's* baptism, as soon as they understood that *John* had pointed out *Jesus* for that Redeemer. And to this our *Author* at last subscribes, supposing as he doth, “ that
 “ numbers of the *Sadducees* and *Scribes*
 “ fell in with so popular and political a
 “ doctrine as was the expectation of a
 “ *Messias*. ”

Scheme, p.
22.

B U T notwithstanding this supposition, he would have the contrary supposed of the *Scribes* or *Karaites*, at least of the greatest part of them. These are his words,
 “ The *Scribes* so often mentioned in the
 “ *New Testament*, were another party of
 “ lettered men, and therefore may be sup-
 “ posed with the *Sadducees*, to have re-
 “ jected many of the prevailing Jewish
 “ notions;

Scheme, p.
21.

“ notions, not founded on the letter of Sect. I.
“ scripture.” 

IN this artful manner doth the *Schema-
tist* insinuate that the *Karaites* or *Scribes*
did not believe the article of a *Messias*,
because they, as well as the *Sadducees* re-
jected many of the prevailing *Jewish* no-
tions. Was this of the *Messias* one of the
notions they rejected? He is afraid to say
that, though he would have others un-
derstand him so. He knew the books of
Trigland and of Dr. *Wolphius* on that sub-
ject, were in many people’s hands to con-
tradict such an assertion. And which is
strange ! he himself had read them ; but
dissembles all the evidence they give from
Karaite books of the *Karaite* faith of a
Messias.

BUT in the end this his objection will turn
strongly upon himself. For when it appears,
that this sect, which rejected many of the pre-
vailing *Jewish* notions for having no foun-
dation in the *letter* of the scripture, did
generally and *strictly* adhere to the notion
of a *Messias*, it cannot be denied, but that
this notion of the *Messias* was thought by
them to be founded in the *letter* of the
Z text,

Chap. I. text, and was no new prevailing tenet of
 the *Pharisees*.

No, replies the *Schematist* in his answer
 p. 96. to a letter in the *London-Journal*, “ The
 “ enmity of the *Karaites* to traditions and
 “ inventions of men, nor their being as
 “ strict believers of the *Messias* as any o-
 “ ther *Jews*, will not in the least prove,
 “ that *any Jews antiently* founded their
 “ expectations of a *Messias* on the mere
 “ letter of the bible, or that the *Karaites*,
 “ who seem a *very modern* separation from
 “ the *Jews*, did so.”

SURELY this cannot pass upon an at-
 tentive reader. Will the *letter-writer* say
 now, that the *Karaites*, or which is the
 same thing, the *Scribes*, were not *Jews*?
 Or that they are a *modern separation* from
 the *Jews*, who according to himself when
 he writ the *Scheme*, “ are often mention-
 “ ed in the *New Testament*, and supposed
 “ to be co-temporary with the *Sadducees*.”
 Or will he stand to it, that they did not
 ground this single article of the *Messias* on
 the meer letter of the bible, while he sup-
 poses that *they* with the *Sadducees* did re-
 p. 22. ject many other prevailing *Jewish* notions,
 not founded on the *letter* of scripture, and

as

as *letter-men* that they constantly opposed the Hellemptical way of allegorizing the scripture? Sect. I.

IF he doth, the contrary shall be shewed by other arguments, than his own authority; but let us first examine the reasons for his present assertions.

1. *Saith he*, the *Karaite* books are *all modern*, and withall *so few*, that the *Jews* speak of the *Karaites* as *dumb dogs*, for publishing so few books, too few to shew that their method of interpreting the bible with relation to the *Messias*, is according to the *mere letter*.

TO this I answer,

1. THAT were it allowed that their books are all modern, yet the notions dispersed in those books are all antient, and were read in much antienter books that were formerly writ by the early Doctors of that sect, and were carefully preserved among them, before their great misery from the repeated persecutions of the *Jews*. The frequent quotations of the elder *Karaites* by the modern, shew that they wanted no opportunities of knowing the sentiments of their Ancestors; and the passages cited thence agreeing with what they say against

Z 2 tradition,

Chap. I. tradition, are an evidence, that they do
 not differ with them.

*Moses called
 Beschitzi a-
 pud Trigl.
 c. xi.*

It is by the help of those writers before their times, that they have been able to carry up the succession of their Doctors to the days of *John Hyrcanus*, son of *Simon Maccabeus*. One *Karaite* writer on that subject, who lived near two Centuries ago, tells how he travelled over *Assyria*, *Chaldea*, *Egypt*, *Palestine*, and all the lands where he could hear of any *Karaite* congregation; to get a sight of their books; and that he learned from the books they had, which were above 300 years old, the original of their separation from the *Jews*, and of their points in dispute, which he found from them did begin under the second temple.

*Wolffj prefat.
 ad Accessi-
 ones ad notit.
 Karæorum.
 p. 11.
 p. 56.*

As to what he farther objects, that their books are *few*, he surely speaks of their printed books; for *Wolffius* assures us, that there are many *Karaite* books extant both in publick and private Libraries, which he there names. They must have been very numerous, since *R. Mordecai* in his *notitia* of that people relates, “ That in the syna-
 “ gogue of one City in *Egypt*, there was
 “ a collection from a hundred to a thou-
 “ sand

“ sand of their books, in the *Arabick* and Sect. I.
 “ *Greek* tongue. And for other books com-
 “ posed by their wise men, in the most anti-
 “ ent and middle ages, they were all in the
 “ *Hebrew* tongue, and were dispersed
 “ throughout the several synagogues in the
 “ dominions of the *Turks*, at *Constanti-*
 “ *nople*, *Grand Cairo*, *Damascus*, the ho-
 “ ly land, *Tartary*, and the city *Calaja*. ”

2, THERE are *Karaite* books still in being, that were writ in the 9th and 10th, and in the 12th Centuries, which are full of their expectations of the *Messias*, and which they there contend to deduce from the *letter* of the scripture. And it should be observed, that the universal prevalency of the notion of the *Messias* among the *Jews*, is dated in the *Scheme* some time afterwards, *viz*, from the 11th Century. Scheme, p. 20.

R. Schalmon was a famous *Karaite* Trigl. c. 9. Doctor in the 9th Century, and master to *Saadiab Gaon* as famous a *Jew* in the generation following. These two engaged in a written dispute upon the necessity of tradition, for ascertaining some points of practice and belief. And *Saadiab* having instanced particularly in that of the *Messias*, the *Karaite* thus answers, “ The
 Z 3 “ know-

Chap. I. “ knowledge of the last term of our re-
 “ demption, and of the resurrection of the
 “ dead consequent thereto, is contained
 “ in the *hymns*, and the *prophets*, and the
 “ *Seers*, so that we have no need to de-
 “ duce it from words of your invention”—
 and then he proceeds to shew that their
 Oral law hath no foundation.

Trigl. c. xi.
 Rabbeni Me-
 nachem epi-
 stol. ad Aquila
 iam profely-
 tum.

So another *Karaite* in the next Centu-
 ry concludes his epistle with this prayer,
 “ That God would soon send the *Teacher*
 “ *of righteousness* [by which name they un-
 “ derstand either the *Messias* or *Elias* from
 “ *Joel* ii. 23.] and reduce the hearts of the
 “ fathers to the children, and of the chil-
 “ dren to their fathers, and put an end to the
 “ *Misna*, *Talmud* and their decisions, &c.”

Trigl. c. 10.

ONCE more, *R. Japhet*, another *Ka-
 raite* Doctor in the end of the 11th Cen-
 tury, (whose disciple *R. Abenezra* the *Rab-
 banite* was,) in his comment on the *Jewish*
 creed, makes two of their ten articles,
 “ To be the resurrection of the dead, and
 “ the salvation of the *Jews* from Captivi-
 “ ty by *Messias* the son of *David*.”

AND these articles they thought to be
 so plain in scripture, and to be therefore
 so necessary to be believed, that it is de-
 clared

clared by one of their later eminent writers, Sect. I.
 “ That whoever doth not believe them, ^{R. Eliahu}
 “ is not to be accounted an *Israelite*, or ^{the Karaite in}
 “ to be called a brother—that whoever as- ^{Trig. ib.}
 “ sents to them upon scripture proofs and
 “ demonstrations, and *not by the authority*
 “ *of tradition*, he is an *Israelite* indeed.”
 And as they believed so they prayed. The
coming of the *Messias*, and the building of ^{ib. c. x.}
 the temple, are the subject of one of their
 daily prayers in their synagogues.

Now they that know how cruelly this
 people was used by the *Jews* from the 8th
 Century, will not easily conceive that they
 should borrow from the *Jews* their noti-
 on of the *Messias*, if it had not otherwise
 a foundation in the scriptures, which they
 interpreted literally, and as they insist it
 had.

3. IT is very evident in the *New Tes-*
tament that the *Scribes*, *Lawyers*, or old
Karaites, which are different names of the
 same sect, had the same belief as to the
Messias in the time of *Jesus*, that the mo-
 dern *Karaites* have professed since, which also
 they derived from the same scriptures. If the
 modern *Karaites* expect salvation by *Messias*
the son of David, as it is written of him in

Chap. I. the *hymns* and *prophets*, we know it was the question of *Jesus* to their forefathers, *how say the Scribes* that *Christ is the son of David*, when *David* himself in the 110th *Psalms*, calleth him Lord? We know that another time they joined with the *Pharisees* in demanding of *him* a sign from *heaven* to prove that he was the *Messias*, and the *son of David*: and that upon *Herod's* summons to them, to tell where the Christ should be born, the *Scribes* answered, in *Bethlehem* of *Judea*, from the prophet *Micah*. If the *modern Karaites* look for *Elias's* coming before the advent of the *Messias* *, to did the *Scribes* of old, and upon their authority the disciples of *Jesus* asked him, whom they took to be the *Messias*, when he spoke of his death and resurrection †; *why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come*? These are too full, and too strong testimonies of the ancient faith of the *Karaites* in the *Messias*, to be controverted. And yet we have antienter than these. For,

4. *Juda Ben. Tabbai*, who was the chief head of the *Karaites* under *Alexander Jannæus*, about 139 years before Christ, and opposed vehemently the introducing of

Mark xii. 35, 37.

Math. xii. 38. with ver. 23. and xvi. 1, 26, 40.

Math. ii. 4, 5.

* R. Menachem in 9th Cent. & R. Elias Libr. Addereth apud Trigl. p. 160. & decem fundamentis. ib. grounding this hope on Mal. iii. 1. † Math. xvii. 10.

of the *Pharasaick* traditions that *Simeon* Sect. I.
Ben. Setab espoused, was no less zealous 
in his hope in the *Messias*. We have it
from the *Talmud*, that he used commonly
to attest the truth of a thing, by strong
terms expressing his *desire* to *see the con-*
solation promised to the *Jews*. So let me Lightf. ii. p. 393. from Chagiga, f. 16. & Mac-coth. f. 4.
see the consolation, if I did not do or say,
or *see this* or *that*. The *consolation* and
the *redemption* of *Israel* were equivalent
phrases before Jesus's time for the Advent
of the *Messias*, *Luke* ii. 25. 38. and are
often used in the *Jewish Targums* to the
same purpose. And therefore where *Je-*
remy reads, *there shall be a day that the*
Watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall cry,
arise, let us go up to Sion unto the Lord
our God— and say, O Lord save thy people
the remnant of Israel; the *Targum* ren-
ders it, “ They that desire the consolation
“ of the days to come shall say, &c. ”
Hence it is that [*Menachem* or] *Comfor-*
ter is one of the names whereby Christ is Jer. xxxi. 6; 7.
described by the *Jews*.

THIS testimony to the *Karaite's* belief
of the *Messias* from an Adversary, is in
my opinion of great account. The *Talmud*
upon this occasion could not fail to have
blackened

Chap. I.  blackened this Doctor, who was father of the sect of the *Karaites*, had not the writers thereof known, that the *Karaites* were from the beginning orthodox in the article of the *Messias*.

A N O T H E R reason in the *answer to the letter-writer*, why the *Karaites* cannot ground the expectation of the *Messias* on the scripture is, because they expect a temporal *Messias*, which is an *invention of men*, that hath no foundation in the primary sense intended by the prophets.

T H E answer to this is very short. An interpreter sticking to the mere letter of the scripture, doth not become thereby infallible. Nay sometimes by being too close a *letter-man*, he may understand words and sentences too *literally*, so as to mistake his author, who uses those words and phrases in a *figurative* sense. I do not mean by that, that the author is to be interpreted *allegorically*. But as all writers, those of the scripture especially, abound with metaphors and figures, which by common acceptance give the proper and literal sense wherever they are so used : so to construe those passages otherwise, according to the simple and primitive signification of the words, will be to deviate from the intention

tion of those writers, and be the occasi- Sect. I.
on of gross errors. From this origin the 
notion of a temporal *Messias* did I think
first spring. What the prophets spoke in
figurative expressions, of the kingdom and
other circumstances of the appearance of
the *Messias*, many of the *Jewish* nation
at a distance from the age of the prophets,
apprehended that it ought to be taken in
the strictness of the letter. But even so,
this doth not prove, that there was no
foundation nor colour in the literal sense
for the belief of a *Messias*, but only that
the interpreters according to the letter
did not sufficiently attend to the style of
the sacred writers, nor sort the different
things which seemed to be spoken pro-
miscuously of his first and second coming.

HIS third reason is, “ that the *Ka-*
“ *raites* are a poor low *ignorant* small peo-
“ ple, that have written but few books :
“ and out of *Fry’s* extracts from one of
“ their books, which was in MS. in the
“ library of the *Oratorians* at *Paris*, he
“ observes that the *Karaite* author gives
“ an *allegorical* sense of some passages in
“ the *Pentateuch*, out of regard to his
“ friends (the *Karaites*) who desired it,
“ and approved of that method of inter-
“ pretation

Chap. I. “pretation—and also joins *Traditions* to
 “his expositions, rejecting some *traditions*
 “and receiving others.” And as he goes
 on, thus another *Karaite* author in *Trig-*
land states the matter: “You will not at
 “present find such a difference between
 “us and our brethren the *Rabbins*, as to
 “constitutions, cautions, fences, and tra-
 “ditions, which we have both received
 “from our holy fathers, but only in those
 “(*traditions*, &c.) which have no ground
 “in the (*written*) law, or, rather which
 “are contrary and repugnant to the
 “law.” From whence *he* infers that the
 difference between the *Jews* and the *Ka-*
raites in interpreting the scriptures *allego-*
rically, lies only in the *Karaites* paying
 less regard to *allegories* and *traditions*
 than the other *Jews*.

It happens that in almost every thing
 advanced here by the *Answerer*, he is mi-
 staken. The number of their books is not
 so *few*, as hath been already taken notice
 of: And those we have of theirs upon
 scripture, either modern or antient, shew
 no mark of their *ignorance*, but generally
 express more good sense, acuteness, close
 reasoning and candor, than is to be found
 in

in all the comments of the *Rabbanists*. Sect. I.
 If they be now *poor*, there is no room for
 arguing from their poverty, to their loss
 of sense. Nor were they always so. Time
 was when they were numerous and power-
 ful, and a ballance to the *Pharisees*: and
 it is from the notions that they *then* enter-
 tained of the *Messias*, that their authority is
 urged. *He* hath been reprov'd by the
writer of the *second letter*, for saying the
 extracts of Professor *Frey*, which are print-
 ed, are a MS. in the *Oratorians* library at
Paris. And I will now undertake to
 shew, that *his* two *Karaite* writers, who
 are brought in proof that the *Karaites*
 are friends to *Allegories* and *Traditions*,
 say no such thing, but the contrary, even
 in the passages that he quotes from them.

AARON the Elder, lived in the end
 of the 16th Century, out of whose com-
 ment on the *Pentateuch*, *Frey* hath printed
 his extracts. And just before the quotati-
 on newly taken from him, he hath these
 words; “ I have disputed often with them,
 “ that they would relinquish this way [of
 “ Allegory] because the literal sense is
 “ that which is fundamental, all *Israel*
 “ confessing, that the scripture is to be
 “ confined

Wolffj. Aæ.
 cessiones, p.
 37.

Chap. I. “ confined to its simple sense.” But as he
 goes on, “ To indulge my friends” [not
 the body of the *Karaites*, but *some parti-*
cular people, who hoped, by complying so
 far with the *Rabbanites*, to have better
 quarter from them. *Wolfsj Access. p.*]
 “ which I think I may do without re-
 “ proach, I have interspersed here and
 “ there Allegorical interpretations with
 “ the literal, some of my friends being
 “ pleased therewith.

Wolfs. 10. p. 38. WHAT is there here that shews the
Karaites paid regard to *Allegories*, when
 the only author that uses them disclaims
 the general use of them, and ascribes what
 he hath done in that way to a mere desire
 of gratifying *some* friends, for fear lest
 while he doubts, he should lie open to
 censure for it from others?

THEN for *Traditions*, the same author
 adds, “ that he admits none, but those
 “ that are supported by good reasoning
 “ upon the text, or at least are not re-
 “ pugnant thereto,” *i. e.* as he explains
 himself, the traditional explications of his
 ancestors founded in the words of scripture,
 which are no more than literal interpre-
 tations made to his hand, or as another

Karaite expresses it, *hereditary transmissi-* Sect. I.
ons of argumentation, which they were at
 liberty to examine and weigh, and not
 bound to receive absolutely for the sake of
 authority.

NOR is *his* other Author in *Trigland* Trigl. c. 9.
 [*R. Caleb* the *Karaite* in the 15th Cen-
 tury] more favourable to *his* side. Even
 as he is cited, he declares in the name of
 the *Karaites* his Ancestors, *That they re-*
ceive no traditions except those that have
ground in the (written) law. Nothing can
 be more express than his own words,
 which yet that I may not prove tedious,
 I must abridge.

“ ONE great cause of the difference
 “ between the *Karaites* and *Rabbanites* is
 “ this ; The *Rabbanites* maintain many
 “ things to have been dictated on *Mount*
 “ *Sinai* by word of mouth to *Moses*,
 “ which were propagated by tradition, till
 “ long after they were put in writing,
 “ lest they should be forgot. Whereof we
 “ *scripture* men believe not a tittle, re-
 “ ceiving only those things which *Moses*
 “ writ in his law. Another cause is their
 “ expounding texts in the law by an ar-
 “ bitrary Cabala, which hath no other
 “ foundation

Chap. I. “ foundation than in their own decrees and
 “ allusions. But we know, that scripture
 “ carries its own interpretation with itself,
 “ and is to be expounded by itself. A
 “ third cause is their claim of a power to
 “ add, or take away from the precepts in
 “ the law, as shall seem expedient to their
 “ wise men in every age. But we adhere
 “ *strictly* to that which is *written*. And
 “ if we oblige our selves to some things
 “ to be done, that are not so *plainly* and
 “ *explicitely* determined in the law. Or if
 “ some things there written, are not to be
 “ understood in the literal sense, which ap-
 “ pears to be so upon first sight : We then
 “ compare that place with others in scrip-
 “ ture, we search and trace out inferences,
 “ which by rules of reason and wisdom
 “ are deducible from the law. For the
 “ law was given to men of understanding,
 “ that they might conclude one thing from
 “ another. Nor may it be said that when
 “ we do thus; and go upon inferences ;
 “ there is a defect in the law, or additions
 “ are made to it : since these are the very
 “ means, whereby we fence and secure
 “ our selves against the danger of *Additi-*
 “ *ons*. And when these deductions are
 “ rightly

“ rightly drawn, we believe that God in- Sect. I.
 “ tended to injoin what is so deduced, at
 “ giving the law, and that it is thus fig-
 “ nified to us.” It is not to be conceiv-
 ed, that a sect of such noble sentiments as
 to the rule of interpreting scripture: or
 that their Writers who speak so clearly of
 their method of interpretation, should dif-
 fer no more in these points from other
Jews, than that they paid *less regard to*
Allegories and Traditions than the other
Jews. Their traditions differ as widely,
 if their own words may be taken, as do
 the opposite quarters of the heaven.

3. His next proof, that the expectation
 of a *Messias* by the *Jews*, was not so ge-
 neral, is taken from *Josephus* and *Taci-* Scheme, p.
tus, the one a *Jewish* historian, and the 22, 23.
 other a *Roman* Gentile.

“ JOSEPHUS represents other
 “ *Jews* as well as himself, as not *expect-*
 “ *ing* a *Messias* to arise out of his nation,
 “ and thought it *only* a *mere* rebellious
 “ notion of some of his countrymen, as
 “ *appears* by his saying that the chief mo-
 “ tive to this war with the *Romans*, was
 “ an ambiguous oracle in *the Scriptures*,
 “ importing in those days, one should

A a

“ come

Chap. I. “ come out of *Judea* that should have the
 “ command of the whole world: which
 “ prophecy, they [the *Jews*] applied to
 “ one of their own nation, and many wise
 “ men were deceived by the interpretation,
 “ though it was intended of *Vespasian*,
 “ who was created Emperor of *Judea*—
 “ And *Tacitus* confirms his state of the
 “ fact, affirming only, that *most* of the
 “ *Jews* had a persuasion grounded on a
 “ prophecy of their sacred books—that
 “ some body from *Judea* should gain the
 “ dominion, &c.

IT would have been matter of astonishment, if this *writer* throughout his books had not used us to it, that any author should so expose his reputation, as knowingly to produce witnesses for him, that directly depose against him. But no where is the contradiction more evident than in this passage of the *Scheme*.

JOSEPHUS, saith he, represents the notion of a *Messias*, “ as a *mere* rebellious notion of *some* of his countrymen.” But *Josephus* even from *his* own citing of him, saith the contrary, *viz.* That this notion was taken from a *scripture prophecy*, which had this effect upon the

the *Jews*, (his nation, and upon himself, Sect. I.
who was very early and deeply concerned 
in that war in *Galilee*) as to excite them
to withstand the *Romans*. If it was found
in their sacred books, and that *antiently*
and *constantly* according to *Suet.* it was
not *only* a *mere* rebellious notion, nor in-
vented for *this* occasion, since abstracting
from this notion, they had a right as well
as other nations to defend their religious
and civil rights, against all invaders.

JOSEPHUS, saith he, “ represents
“ other *Jews*, as well as himself; as not
“ expecting a *Messias* should arise out of
“ his nation.” But whatever expectations
they had after their desolation, it is plain
from the words of *Josephus*, that before
the destruction, he and they did expect such
a person as the *Messias* of out their nation,
upon the credit of a scripture prophecy.
They could not be *deceived* in the inter-
pretation of that prophecy, if they had not
so applied it before the event. Upon see-
ing things go cross to that expectation, and
to flatter the conqueror, *Josephus* saith,
that prophecy was intended for *Vespasian*.
He speaks his own opinion at that time,
but he gives no intimation, that the *Jews*

Chap. I. gave over expecting the *Messias*, either from this, or from the other prophecies. The contrary is asserted by his other testimony *Tacitus*, who observes, that even their *disappointments* could not cause the body of the *Jews* to *forsake this persuasion*. And if *most* of the *Jews* had this persuasion before the war, and did not relinquish it afterwards, *Tacitus* is then a witness for the general and rooted prevalency of that persuasion: *Tacitus* needed not to change his form of expression, though he had known there were a few *Sadducees* among them, that upon principle could not give into the same expectation. But the *many* in *Tacitus*, and the *Jews* in *Josephus* (which imports the body of the *Jews*) that expected the *Messias* before the war, are words of far greater extent, than the *some* in the *Scheme*, to whom upon the authority of *Tacitus* and *Josephus* he would confine this persuasion.

Tac. Hist. sed
vulgus [Ju-
dæorum] —
ne adversis
quidem adve-
ra mutaban-
tur.

BUT if the event happening contrary to their interpretation of this prophecy, that their *Messias* should deliver them from the *Roman* yoke, did give him and some of them a shock that confounded their former notions; it did not however root up
their

their persuasion of a *Messias* in the general: for they soon recovered from their surprize, and returned to their former expectations of him.

Sect. I.



THIS appears from a subsequent action of the *Jewish* nation, which is a good indication of that belief. Within half a Century after their destruction by *Titus*, the whole body of the *Jews* throughout the *Roman* empire began to stir all at once; and thinking *Bar. Cochba* was the *Messias*, joined themselves to him, with a resolution and cruelty, that was very near ending in their utter extinction.

AND so for *Josephus*, whatever his real sentiments were, at the time of his Writing his *Wars of the Jews*, wherein he made the above-mentioned application to *Vespasian*; when he came to write his *Antiquities* under *Domitian*, he seems firmly attached to the *first* belief of his nation, and declared it as openly as he dared, in his circumstances.

IT is in his interpretation of the fourth kingdom in *Daniel*, that I have had occasion to mention. This, as he understands of the *Roman* kingdom, whose fate under and from the kingdom of the *stone* he refers to

Ant. x. 10.

Chap. I. *future times*, and the interpretation thereof
 to the book of *Daniel* itself, for reasons
 very obvious: so it is as plain, that he
 who takes the *fourth* kingdom to be the
Roman, doth conclude that the kingdom of
 the *Messias* is represented in the kingdom of
the stone, especially if he follows *Daniel's*
 clue, which *Josephus* advises all lovers of
 truth to follow, though he thought it not
 expedient for himself to explain it farther.
Josephus therefore did not utterly abandon
 the national notion, though he relinquished
 or dissembled it for a while.

Sch. p. 16.

L'Estrange
 version. But
 the chief mo-
 tive to this
 [unfortunate]
 war, was the
 ambiguity of
 another text,
 importing,
 &c.

AND thus it is further proved, that the
Jews had more prophecies than one for the
 support of the belief of the *Messias*: and
 that it is not very fair in the *Scheme* to
 quote *Josephus* for saying, “ That *Jews*
 “ built their expectation of the *Messias* but
 “ on one ambiguous prophecy”, when
 neither the *Greek* of *Hudson*, nor the *Eng-*
lish version of *L'Estrange* (with whom he
 fills his margin to mislead his readers)
 give him any colour for it, but rather say
 the contrary. *Josephus*, who thought the
 destruction of the *Romans* was foretold in
Daniel, must believe there was one other
 prophecy at least that concerned the *Mes-*
σίας.

σίας. And when he says with *Tacitus* in this very place, that the *Scheme* urges to the contrary; “ That it was found in the “ sacred books, that at that *very time* he “ should arise,” (which circumstance is not found in the *text* in *Numbers*, from which I think the main of the prophecy is cited) it seems as if his author had tacked several prophecies together, those especially which marked the time of his coming, to be before the destruction of the second temple, or the expiration of some term that had been assigned to his coming. And this is a sense very agreeable to the *Greek* word in *Josephus* for *prophecy*: which may mean a general prediction collected from many texts or prophecies, as well as a single text. Be that as it will: He that says “ they built their expectation “ on *a* prophecy,” doth not imply there were no *more* prophecies than this; but adding that they expected him to arise *at that very time*, which the text *Josephus* seems to refer to is silent in; he implies that there were other scriptures which he had then in view, wherein the time of his coming was more fully expressed.

AND this the *Jews* remind *Josephus* of, when from some of the prophets that

Chap. I. darkly promised success to the *Romans*; he was persuading them to submit quietly to those conquerors, in whose power they were already, by the taking of *Jotapa*. “They all with one voice replied,” saith the Historian, “Where then are all the (good) things which *God hath promised the Jews?*—How soon have you forgot your self, who was the encourager of so many people to dye for their liberty?”

AND disconsolate under the like disappointment, *Eleazar* when the city was ready to be taken, exhorts his countrymen to dye manfully, from this consideration, *de bell. vii. 28.* “That the no small hopes which had drawn them on to promise themselves revenge upon their enemies, were now all vanquished.”

UPON the whole, I see no reason to retract any thing I said from *Manasseh Ben. Israel*, as if it derogated from the universality of the *Jewish* expectation of the *Messias*, when he divided the *Jews* at the destruction of *Jerusalem* into two opinions. For as well they, who submitted to the *Roman* General, in belief that he was the prince that was to come before their final destruction, as those others that expected salvation to the last hour from a *Messias* of

of their own nation, did believe in a *Messias* to come from the prophecies, antecedently to this Catastrophe, which is the point in question; and if they formed to themselves wrong notions of this *Messias*, which some afterwards found themselves mistaken in, that is not to be charged upon the prophecies, but the error of their interpretations: the original notion of the *Messias*, and their ancient expectation of him remains notwithstanding unshaken.

Sect. I.

HOWEVER, to add mites to his scale, he produces another single evidence to the contrary, which after his *manner*, he multiplies *into many abettors* among the *Jews*. And that is,

4. Of the famous *R. Hillel*, as he calls him, “ who flourished in the beginning of
“ the third Century, and was dignified
“ with the great *Jewish* title of *a prince*
“ *of the Captivity*. This *R. Hillel* assert- Schem. p. 24.
“ ed it as a maxim, that there was to be
“ no *Messias* in *Israel*, because they had
“ him in the days of *Hezekiah* king of
“ *Judea*,—and he had *many* abettors a-
“ among his brethren *Jews*, and was
“ not excluded *from their communion*
“ for it, as *F. Simon* observes from some
“ *Rabbins*, who *themselves* affirm, That
“ the

Chap. I. “ the belief of a *Messias* to come, was not
 “ deemed *then* a fundamental article, as it
 “ hath been since *Maimonides* in the 11th
 “ Century, particularly *R. Albo*, who
 “ maintains that *R. Hillel* was no apos-
 “ tate, though he denied the coming of
 “ any other *Messias*, but *Hezekiah* who
 “ was already come : and for this reason,
 “ because the coming of the *Messias* is no
 “ fundamental article of the *Jewish* religi-
 “ on, and depends only on tradition.

IF all that *he* saith of *R. Hillel* were admitted, what is there in the opposition of one or more *Jews* in the third Century, to disprove the generality of the belief of a *Messias* in the time of *Jesus*, which is the proper point in dispute. A *Jew*, who yet doth not deliver this paradox as the sense of any of his nation in his own age, or from the ages before him, and which may well be thought to be the rash effusion of a man reduced to despair, from a vain expectation of *such* a *Messias*, as he or they figured to themselves, after all the computations for his coming were run out !

BUT in truth all the decorations of this story are purely *his* own. There was but one famous *R. Hillel*, and he lived many
 years

years before Jesus. This that he speaks of Sect. I.
 was only master of the School at *Tiberias*, Ver. Coch.
exc. in San-
hedren, p.
367.
 without any mark of eminency, and he
 lived in the 4th Century, ten generations
 from the *famous R. Hillel*. But whether
 he was the same person that lived then at
Tiberias or not, is more than we can cer-
 tainly tell. And they, from whom we
 have this story, are so far from owning
 that he had *many*, or even *any* Abettors,
 that they mention his opinion as very cri-
 minal, as an opinion that needed God's
 forgiveness, or for want thereof would shut
 him out of his portion of bliss at the com-
 ing of the *Messias*.

W H E T H E R it deprived him of the com- Talm. Sanh.
c. xi. §. 36.
 munion of the *Jews* of that age, as they
 thought it would exclude him from all
 communion with the *Messias*, the only an-
 cient writing that speaks of this affair, is
 silent. *F. Simon* gives no proof for his
 saying it did not. And I believe no *Jew*
 ever said it before *Albo* in the 15th Cen-
 tury, and he gives a very weak reason for
 it, *viz.* For that *Hillel* is stiled *Rabbi* in
 the *Gemara*, a title, as he says, very un-
 likely to be given to one that was excluded
 from their communion. As if he who had
 been

Chap. I. been once disguised with that title, might not retain the title, after he had been deprived of it, and the cause of his deprivation was forgot by them, who long after had preserved an imperfect account of his sentiments.

BUT should the fact be as *he* tells it, all that is to be collected from it is this, that many things are borne with, from the circumstances of times and places. It doth not infer any favourable regard to his opinion, or indifferency in the article he dissented from, for which he is noted with infamy by the *Jews*, from whom we are told the story. Would it not be thought a very weak argument in the next age, to shew Christianity was not generally received in this, because the *Schematist* had openly declared against it, even if it should have happened, that he was distinguished with a better civil title, than that he bestows on *R. Hillel*.

IN short, the first, and only ancient account we have of this matter is from the *Gemara*. There *R. Gidel* reports from *Rab*, “ That hereafter *Israel* shall enjoy
“ the years of the *Messias*. That is plain,
“ saith *Rab. Joseph*; but who of them
“ shall

“ shall partake of that happiness? All, but Sect. I.
 “ *R. Hillel*, who said the *Messias* is no
 “ more to be expected, *Israel* having had
 “ him in the days of *Hezekiah*.—Again,
 “ *R. Hillel* said, the *Messias* should not
 “ be given to *Israel*, they having had him
 “ while *Hezekiah* was living. *R. Joseph*
 “ replied, Forgive him, O Lord, for this!”

THUS they who deliver his opinion condemn it at the same time, and give not the least hint that he had many followers in his opinion, or even any man of note to countenance him in it.

INDEED the whole relation seems to carry a contradiction with it; and is so treated by *R. Joseph* next to the words newly cited. He is at a loss how to make sense of them. “ For when, as he asks, did
 “ *Hezekiah* live? under the first temple.
 “ But *Zechary* prophesied of the *Messias*.”
 [*i. e.* under the 2d temple.] As much as to say, The *Messias* was spoke of by the prophets after the days of *Hezekiah*, how then did *Israel* receive their *Messias* under *Hezekiah*?

THERE is the more reason to suspect some mistake in the representation of this notion of *Hillel*, if what some learned
 * men

Chap. I. men have thought be true: viz. that
 he was the same person with *R. Ellet* the

Buxt. Com-
 ment. Maso-
 ret. c. 7.

Epiph. her. xx.
 Ebion from
 the mouth of
 the Bishop of
Tiberias.

Basn. II. of
 the Jews, lib.
 iii. i.

Jewish Patriarch at *Tiberias*, who in *Con-
 stantine's* time became a Christian, and
 was privately baptized on his death-bed,
 by the Bishop of that place. The least in-
 timation of this fact was ground enough
 to blacken him as an infidel. And being
 incapable of suffering from their discipline
 for an opinion he declared so late as up-
 on his death-bed, to save the honour of
 their School, the rumour of his believing
 in Jesus as the *Messias* already come, was
 improved into the charge of saying, the
Messias was come in the days of *Heze-
 kiah*. However it was, the School of *Ti-
 berias* broke up with *Hillel's* death, as if
 it had received some fatal stroke from him,
 and we hear no more of any Doctors that
 succeeded him in *Palestine*.

NOR do we hear any more of this
Hillel till the 15th Century, when *Joseph
 Albo*, distressed in his disputes with the
Spanish Christians, thought fit to revive
 his name and opinion, though without a-
 ny other evidence than what hath been
 newly laid before the reader. And for
 this he was soon called to account by *A-*

*

barbinet

barbinel another learned Jew of the same nation, who strongly opposes *Albo's* reason why *Hillel* was no Apostate, because the article of the *Messias* was not then fundamental. Sect. I.

AND what is there in this, that should give the *Schematist* the least cause of triumph? Why, as he goes on, “ The Bishop Scheme, p: “ affirms *R. Albo* maintained the doctrine ^{25.} “ of the *Messias* to be a fundamental article of *Judaism*, though at the same “ time he tells us that *R. Albo* contended, there are but three *prime* fundamental articles, of which the coming of the *Messias* is not one. Let him therefore answer his own representation of the matter, as well as the citation from “ *Albo* by Dr. *Allix*. ”

THAT the Bishop can very easily do, or rather, hath done it already, if his words in the *Defence* be compared with those in the *Scheme*. For thus he writes, “ *Jos.* ^{59.} “ *Albo*, who is cited for the contrary opinion, differs from *Maimonides* only in “ words. He contends indeed that there “ are but three prime fundamental Articles, *viz.* the being of a God, a revealed law, and rewards and punishments. “

Chap. I. “ ments. But then he owns the *Advent*
 “ of the *Messias* is a branch, though not a
 “ root, and is deducible from a fundamen-
 “ tal Article by necessary consequence.”

THE very words of *Albo* were added there in the margin, upon which if the *Schematist* had cast an eye, he should be ashamed of this misrepresentation. That he may be sure to read them now, they are here repeated. “ It is necessary,” saith *Jos. Albo*, “ that he who believes the law
 “ of *Moses*, should believe the coming of
 “ the *Messias*. For the law commands
 “ belief in the prophets, and the prophets
 “ foretell his coming.—It is certain, there
 “ are many texts in the law and the pro-
 “ phets which foretell that *Israel* is to be
 “ in a flourishing and exalted condition,
 “ which are not yet fulfilled in the whole
 “ or in part.—”

The Bishop therefore did not make *R. Albo* say what he did not say, or more than he said. And *Albo* is very reconcileable with himself, if his own definition of *primarily fundamental*, which he takes to be such principles in Religion, without which the being of the law must fail, be remembered. Among the primarily fun-
 damental,

damental, he did not reckon the coming of the *Messias*, and that is all that Dr. *Allix* quotes him for. But that it is a fundamental necessarily connected with, and deducible from the belief of the law and the prophets, *Albo* hath at the same time declared. And even this distinction did not go down well with his brethren the *Jews*. They say it is too philosophical, and is not suited as is the distribution of their Creed into more minute heads (which is followed by *Maimonides*) to every state, and order and sex of the people, who are not good at drawing consequences; that the coming of the *Messias*, is a species or branch of the 3d fundamental, concerning *rewards and punishments*; and that since it is foretold in the law and the prophets and the *Hagiographa*, to deny his coming, is to deny the authority of the law and prophets and *Hagiographa*, and therefore the belief of the *Messias* ought to be esteemed a necessary article of their religion.

Abarb. Ros.
Emuna c. 9.
10, 14.

UPON the whole, nothing hath been urged by the *Schematist* in his first chapter, that invalidates his *own concession* of the *General* expectation of the *Messias* by the

- Chap. I. *Jews* before, and in Christ's time. The words in the *New Testament* are as full and strong for the universality of this belief, by all orders of men, as words can well express it. And there is no reason to suppose the writers of the *New Testament* magnified matters, since they could not foresee, without the Spirit of prophecy, this point would ever be disputed in our age.
- 
 Luke iii. 15. There it is said, *The people were in expectation, and ALL MEN* *mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ*
 Matt. iii. 2, 3. *or not. That the Scribes and Pharisees resorted (at first) to his baptism, in belief that he was the person promised to come by baptism. That Priests and Levites were deputed from Jerusalem to know if he were not the Christ. That upon report of the birth of the Messias by the Magi, the chief Priests and Scribes were consulted about the place, and Herod and all Jerusalem were in a hurry. That a great multitude followed Jesus, as thinking the kingdom of God (i.e. of the Messias) should immediately appear: And that the twelve TRIBES, hoping to come to this promise, instantly served God day and night, or they made it part of their daily stated prayers,*
- Mark x. 46.
 with Luke
 xix. 11.
- Acts xxvi. 7.

prayers, of which some instances are produced in *Defence*, p. 60. and 67. Sect. I.

BUT as to the *twelve Tribes*, the *Schematist* insinuates, there could be no such thing, “ for ten of the eleven tribes were “ *then* lost, and had no existence, as the “ Adversaries will say with Dr. *Prideaux*, “ being mixed and confounded with the “ nations, among whom they had been “ antiently carried captive.” And for this he brings authorities from learned men that cannot find where they now are. Sch. ver. 18.

ALL this is nothing to the purpose. The *ten* tribes may be now lost, and for some Centuries past, be not distinguishable from the other *two* ; but no one can say with truth, that in and before the days of Christ, their country *then* was not well known, nor the people capable of being sorted by their tribes.

BUT St. *Paul* means here by the ten Tribes, those of them that were then, or had been of old time incorporated with the *Jews*, and dwelt in *Judea*, or the countries about it. For after the ten tribes had been carried captives by *Salmanasar*, many of them that were left behind joined themselves to the kingdom of *Judea*, and

Chap. I. were carried with the *Jews* into *Babylon*.
 And after the return of the *Jews* from thence, the number of the ten tribes that went back with them is computed by the *Jews* from *Ezra* to 4200. Many *Israelites* followed afterwards, as they saw the *Jews* were settled in *Judea* and flourished, and some that were transplanted into the north of *Media*, and continued their habitation there, came at certain times to *Jerusalem*, to worship at their solemn feasts.

CERTAIN it is, that at Christ's birth, *Phaniel* was known to be of the *tribe of Aser*, *Luke* ii. 36. and at the *Pentecost* after his death, were present at *Jerusalem* devout *Jews* from *Parthia*, *Media*, and *Persia*, places into which the ten Tribes had been carried, as well as from other nations under heaven. St. *James* would not otherwise have directed his epistle, to the
Acts ii. 5. 9. *twelve Tribes scattered abroad*, had he not known that there were many yet remaining of that diaspora or dispersion, where they continued a distinct body, or if mingled with the *Jews* in *Asia-minor*, were not swallowed up by them.
Jam. i. 1.

WHAT

WHAT I have said, appears to be the Sect. I. sense of Dr. *Prideaux*, whom the *Sche-*
matist quotes very unfairly. The Doctor ^{Prid. Con-}
^{nect. p. 31.} hath been careful to except “ some of the
 “ ten Tribes, who joining themselves with
 “ the *Jews*, in the land of their captivi-
 “ ty, returned with them into *Judea* ; ” —
 nor doth he intimate, that before Christ’s
 time, “ the rest of them were absorpt and
 “ lost among the nations where they were
 “ placed.” I much rather think, that if they
 be swallowed up, it was by mixing, and
 becoming one people with the *Babylonian*
Jews, who spread far in the East, and ne-
 ver returned to *Judea*. But whether they
 be or be not entirely lost, is more than any
 one can positively affirm. There being
 much of the midland and North-East part
 of *Asia* yet undiscovered, of whose inhabi-
 tants we know as little, as of their lan-
 guage.



Of the Samaritans belief of a Messias.

AMONG the evidences produced to shew what was the expectation of the *Jews* with relation to a *Messias* to come, about the time of *Jesus*, were the *Samaritan* nation, a neighbour people to the *Jews*, mixed with some of the race of the ten Tribes, from whom they had also received the law of *Moses*. And their expectation is so plainly declared; first by the *Samaritan* woman to *Jesus*, *I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come he will tell us all things:* and then by the same woman to the men of her Town, he told me all things that ever I did, *is not this the Christ?* And lastly, by the people of *Sychar*, in these words, *We know that this is indeed the Christ, the saviour of the world,* that it is not possible to make a doubt of it.

John iv. 25,
29. 42.

Sch. p. 27.

THE *Schematist* himself cannot deny it. “ It should seem, *saieth he*, by this discourse, that the *Samaritans* in *Jesus’s* time, generally expected a *Messias*, like
“ the

“ the *Jews* of *Jerusalem*. ” But as if he Sect. II.
 thought he had granted too much, he goes 
 on to insinuate some marks of imposture in
 the relation ; “ and what is exceedingly
 “ remarkable, those *Samaritans* with
 “ whom he conversed, said, *We know*
 “ *this is indeed the Christ the saviour of*
 “ *the world*, by which they are represent-
 “ ed to know more of the matter of the
 “ *Messias Jesus* than the Apostles them-
 “ selves, who were not persuaded till a
 “ considerable time after *Jesus's* death, to
 “ take him for a Saviour of *the world*,
 “ but only for a saviour of the *Jews*. ”

HERE again the *Schematist* would raise
 suspicions without foundation for them. For
 what if *world* here was intended by the *Sa-*
maritans of the *Jewish world*, the people
 of *Israel*, and descendents of *Abraham* ?
 So *world* seems to signify in some other
 places of St. *John* (a). And so in other
 sacred writers, *the whole earth* stands some-
 times for the country of *Judea* : Or what
 if it were admitted that the *Samaritans* had
 clearer notions of *some* things that con-
 cerned the *Messias*, than the *Jews* ? The
Jews had adulterated many of the scrip-
 ture-notions of the *Messias*, which re-

(a) John vi.
 51. vii. 3. with
 ver. 7. viii.
 26. xii. 19.
 xviii. 20.

Chap. I.  maintained the purer among the *Samaritans*, for the *Jews* having no dealings with them. Without going farther than the books of the law, the *Samaritans* might collect from thence, that *the Christ was to be the Saviour of the world*. They that read, that *in the seed of Abraham all the nations of the earth should be blessed*; that *the gathering of the nations should be to Shilo*: and that *Moses* called upon the *Gentiles to rejoice with his people* (the *Jews*.) at the coming of the *Messias*, as if there was to be a future conversion of them at that time, could infer nothing less from these prophecies. Mere prejudices in the *Jews* of that age, and partiality to their own nation, blinded their eyes from discerning the true sense of these expressions, which were obvious to the poor *Samaritans*. The *distincter* notions of the *Samaritans* about the *Messias*, are not then any reason for questioning the truth of St. *John's* relation: they prove on the contrary, that their *notions* were previous to the corruptions the *Jews* had blended with the truth, and that the *Samaritans* fetch'd them directly from the fountain of the scriptures, and not by the conveyance of *Jewish* tradition.

It is also possible that *Jesus* himself did suggest this title of *Saviour of the world* to their remembrance, in the beginning of his conversation with them. As he said it to the woman, so he might repeat it to them, *that salvation* (or the *expected Saviour*, according to *this writer*) is indeed *of the Jews*, (or to be born among the *Jews*) *but the hour was come*, when God's worship should not be restrained to the temple of the *Jews* or *Samaritans*, but the worshippers in spirit and in truth every where should be accepted. What do these words import less, than that *Christ* when he came should be the *Saviour* of all true worshippers in every place, whether *Jews*, *Samaritans* or *Gentiles*? And to this proposition the *Samaritans* assenting, apply to him the character of *Saviour*, by which *Jesus* had newly represented the *Messias*, saying, we know this is *indeed the Christ*, *ay* and *the saviour of the world*, as he hath now shewed us the *Messias* shall be.

Sect. II.

John iv. 21, 22, 23.

It is owned *Christ's* disciples lay at first under the force of the prejudices that possessed the rest of their nation, or they would have learnt much sooner than they did, that *Christ* was to break down the *partition wall* between

Chap. I. between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and that the *Gentiles* should be *fellow-heirs—and partakers of God's promise in Christ*. Some of them had been formerly disciples to *John the Baptist*, and had often heard him pronounce that Jesus was the Christ, and *Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the WORLD*. Others had heard of *Simon's* prophecy at the dedication of Jesus, that *he should be a light to lighten the Gentiles*. And all of them were frequent witnesses to Jesus calling himself *the light of the world*—and of his saying, *that he would draw all men unto him*; as well as that their scriptures foretold that he should be *given for a light to the Gentiles, and a salvation to the ends of the earth*.

THEY could not therefore be strangers to the doctrine of *Christ's* becoming the *saviour of the world*; but in what sense he was to be their saviour, whether by means of the rites and other laws of *Moses* or not, did their doubt chiefly consist. *Christ's* commission to his Apostles soon after his resurrection, *to go into all the world, and make disciples of all nations*, shews that it was *not a considerable time after Jesus's death*, before they were persuaded

John i. 29,
35, 36, 41.

Is. xlix. 6.

Mark xvi. 15.
Math. xxviii.
20.

suaded that Christ must be the *saviour of all nations*. In what other view did *Stephen preach the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus to the Samaritans* (who were reputed no better than *Gentiles* by the *Jews*)? Or did the *Apostles* at *Jerusalem* ratify his act upon the believing *Samaritans*, by sending to them *Peter* and *John* to confirm them in the faith? And this event happened the very next year to that wherein Jesus died.

Sect. II.

Acts viii. 5,
12, 14.

BUT whether they shook off their prejudices sooner or later, is not material to the point of the *Samaritan's* belief. They might assent to Christ's being the saviour of the world, upon his telling them at present that he was so: or they might have formerly deduced this character of the *Messias* from the prophecies in their law concerning the conversion of the *Gentiles* by and to him.

FOR further confirmation of the *Samaritans* expectation of a *Messias*, the pretences to that title of *Dositheus*, of *Simon Magus*, and of *Menander* among the *Samaritans*, were alledged in *the Defence*: For it must have been a very vain attempt in these impostors, to claim the character of

Chap. I. of *Messias* from a people who had not before a previous establisht expectation of *such a person* to come.

Scheme, p.
28.

To all these instances the *Schematist* excepts, ist.

“ As to *Dositheus*, he was a *Jew* originally, and going over to the *Samaritans*, made a sect among them, and pretended to be a *Messias*. But the body of the *Samaritan* nation stood firm against his pretences, accused him of *corrupting* the scriptures, and judicially censured *him* for it.”

Orig. in Joh. iv. p. 219.
Non ignorandum *Dositheum* quondam exstitisse ex *Samaritanis* [ἀπὸ Σαμαρείων ἀναστὰς] qui se ipsum dicebat *Messiam prophetarum* & quo usque nunc *Dositheani* sunt.

EULOGIUS, who is his author for all the rest of this passage, and *Origen* long before *Eulogius*, deny that *Dositheus* was a *Jew*. But it matters not, if he were a *Jew*, his being so, encreases the absurdity of his pretences still more. That a *Jew* should go over to the *Samaritans*, a people that mutually hated and had no commerce with each other, to persuade them that he was the *Messias* they expected, when they expected no *Messias* at all, is a conceit too wild to enter into any man's head, to hope he should succeed in it!

THAT “ the body of the *Samaritan* nation stood firm against his pretences,”
is

is more than the *Schematist* can tell. Cer- Sect. II.
tain it is, he had many followers down to 
Origen's time, and still lower to the 6th
Century, by the confession of this *writer's*
author. But that they judicially censured
him for pretending there was *a Messias to*
come, his author doth not say; but that it
was for corrupting the scriptures, *i. e.* by
interpolating the text with his own name;
or by applying to himself the promise God
had made of *raising up a prophet out of*
their brethren like unto Moses, which they
thought belonged to another person than
Dositheus.

AND when was this accusation and ju-
dicial censure of him given? Why? in
the 6th Century, as *Eulogius* affirms, and
in *Egypt* not *Samaria*, where they were
reduced to a handful of people, and were
like to be dwindled to nothing by rea-
son of their divisions with one another,
upon the meaning of that *prophet* in *Moses*.
A special argument this, taken from what
was done four or five hundred years after,
to shew that the *Samaritans* in Christ's
time did not in any numbers join *Dosi-*
theus, or did not expect a *Messias* at all.

BUT

Chap. I.



BUT let us ask one more question, who were they that censured *Dositheus* for corrupting the scripture? The *Samaritan nation*, one must conclude from the words of the *Schematist*: but *his author* saith not. It was *Eulogius Bishop of Alexandria*, in a synod called for that purpose, to whose decree both parties of the *Samaritans* agreed to submit.

Vide Eulog.
in Photij Cod.
ccxxx.

Orig. c. Celf.
I. Post Jesu
tempora *Do-*
sitheus Sama-
rita suadere
Samaritas vo-
luit se esse
Christum
istum a Mose
pronuncia-
rum & visus
est doctrinâ
suâ nonnul-
los cepisse.
L. v. p. 282.
Dositheus Si-
monis conter-
ranæus, & ipse
volebat habe-
ri dei filius.

I would advise the *Schematist* to consult another time the original authors that he quotes. The mean while it is to be observed from this passage, that that remarkable text in *Deuteronomy*, relating to a prophet like unto *Moses*, was understood by *Dositheus*, and some of his *Samaritan* followers, as a prophecy of the *Messias*, which he therefore applied to himself, when he assumed that character.

2. “ As to *Simon Magus*, it is without
“ any reason supposed, that the *Samari-*
“ *tans* looked upon him as the *Messias*,
“ or that he set up for a *Messias*. He was
“ accused by St. *Luke*, as giving out that
“ he was some great one; and the *Sama-*
“ *ritans* gave heed to him as the great
“ power of God: but *Justin M.* tells us,
“ that the meaning of that was, that he
“ was

“ *was God himself*: And *Simon* instead of Sect. II.
 “ taking upon him such a character as
 “ that of a *Messias*, turns Christian, or
 “ takes Jesus for the *Messias*, and is bap-
 “ tized.”

IF any credit is to be given to the an-
 tients that lived near the times of *Simon*
M. all the reasonings in the *Scheme* a-
 gainst his setting up to be the *Messias*,
 must be false. For *Hegesippus*, the most Heges. frag-
 ancient Ecclesiastical writer, reckons *Simon* ment in Euf.
 among the *false Christs* of that age: And H. E. iv. 27.
Origen in the Century next to *Hegesippus*,
 mentions him and *Dositheus*, as the two
 that assumed the title of *Messias* in the
Samaritan nation; and this, he saith, in
 answer to *Celsus*, who pretended there
 were many more *Messias*, which must
 have induced *Origen* to leave these out,
 as having no occasion to name them, if
 the evidence had not been clear to the
 contrary *.

I know there is difficulty in reconciling
 this pretence of *Simon M.* to the *Messiah-*
ship, with expressions in *Justin M.* and
Irenæus, which seem to import that he
 gave out that *he was God himself*.

* Orig. c.
 Cels. i. & vi.
 & tr. in Math.
 c. 24.

BUT

Chap. I. BUT either this was owing to *Simon's* unaccurate way of speaking, or to their misapprehension of his meaning. For *Simon* could not call himself *God*, or *Father of all*, but in a qualified sense.

It was directly contrary to his Platonic Cabbalistical Theology, (which was in the main the same with all the *Gnosticks*) so to do. It is there a first principle, that the Father, as he is taken for the $\rho\acute{o}\tau\omicron\varsigma$ and first cause, is unknown, and must be invisible to all. But the $\text{N}\tilde{\epsilon}\varsigma$ or Mind, who is the immediate derivation from the unbegotten Father, he it is who made known the hidden God, and from whom through some distant emanations the Angels and Spiritual powers were emitted, that afterwards made the world, and mankind, and for whose Salvation from the tyranny of those spiritual powers the $\text{N}\tilde{\epsilon}\varsigma$ descended to the earth.

Iren. i. 22.

Iren. i. 20.

MORE than this, *Simon's* own words, as cited by the Antients, do not imply, “ I am the Word; I am the Specious, ” [i. e. the form or appearance of God, that was seen of the *Patriarchs*, and conversed with them :] “ I am the holy ghost, the almighty
“ mighty

“ mighty, the every thing of God (a).” *i. e.* Sect. II.
 the organ whereby the Divine power operated, and discovered itself. And again he said, he appeared “ as the father among the *Samaritans*,” [meaning, that he was invested with the authority and glory of God, when he gave the law] “ as the son among the *Jews* (*viz.* in the person of *Jesus*)” “ and as the holy Spirit in the distribution of his gifts upon the *Gentiles* (b.)”

(a) Hier. in Math. xxiv. from *Simon M.* *sidōs* or *id'sa* comes from the Hebrew *יָדָא* *jadaa*, which in *Heb.* signifies to make known.

(b) Iren. i. 20.

* IN all this he affected the notions and stile of the synagogue at that time, or else perhaps he borrowed them of the *Christians*, who spoke of Christ in some such manner, after the example of the Apostles, who describe him as the Image of the invisible God, as the emergetick power of God, as the *Logos*, as the Angel-Legate that transacted with mankind in the name of God, that gave the law on *Mount Sinai*, and at last was *made flesh*.

CERTAIN it is, that at other times he imitated the language of the Apostles, and applied to himself what they said of *Je-*

* Just. M. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 151. ed. Ox. “ Nor was I concerned for my own countrymen the *Samaritans*, when in a writing addressed to *Cæsar* I affirmed them to be in an error in following their countryman *Simon M.* “ ὅτι Θεὸν ὑπερέβω πάντας Ἀρχὴς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ δυνάμεις εἶναι λαλοῦναι.

C C

sus.

Chap. I. *Just.* For so the same *Justin Martyr* asserts of the *Samaritans*, “ they thought *Simon* “ was God *above all principality and power and might*,” — which are the very words *St. Paul* uses of *Christ*, to express his exaltation to a state superior to the highest of all Angelical beings, *Eph. i. 20,* 21. God set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all Principality, and Power and Might—and every name that is named in this world, and that which is to come. And it is repeated by *St. Peter*, who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, Angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him, 1 *Pet. iii. 22.*

ὑπεράνω πάσης
Ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξου-
σίας καὶ δυνάμι-
ως. *Eph. i.*
20.

1 *Pet. iii. 22.*
ὑποταγῇ τῶν
αὐτῷ Ἀγγέλων
καὶ ἐξουσίων καὶ δυν-
αμείων.

W H E N therefore *Justin Martyr* and *Irenæus* interpret the titles given to, or assumed by *Simon*, of God, or of the father of all things ; They must be understood consistently with themselves other where, and with what *Simon* saith of himself, or with a particular regard to *Simon's* notion of *Angelick Virtues*. In pretending to be the Active power of the first cause of all things, and that whereby all things are upheld and governed, he might be called God, and the Father of all things,

as

as *Irenæus* seems to think. “ *Simon*, saith Sect. II.
 “ he, *represented himself to be the highest* 
 “ *virtue*, that is to be *He* who is father Iren. i. 20.
 “ over all things, and for that reason he
 “ permitted himself to be called by eve-
 “ ry name that the father was called by.”

These last words are the gloss of *Irenæus*, which he gives as his explication of that title of *the Highest Virtue*. Not that *Simon* called himself the *Father*, or *God*, but they are ascribed to him by the Heresy-writers in consequence of *that* title, of the *Highest Virtue* according to his or their opinion. *Simon*, and the *Samaritans* taught with some *Christians* in *Justin's* days, that Angels were powers inseparable from God; which God, when he pleased, made to emanate from him, and to return again to him, as soon as the occasion was served. They were meer occasional commands or energies of God. And thus Angel, and virtue of God, intending the same thing in the *Samaritan* theology, *Simon* in calling himself the *Highest Virtue*, or power of God, which God had exerted upon the highest occasions, *viz.* of creating the world, and of revealing his Will to mankind, did in effect call himself God, even the Father.

Reland. Dis-
 sert. Samari-
 tan, §. 10.

Chap. I. Yet did not this notion destroy his pretence to be the *Messias*, because he supposes this divine virtue did always act in or by the person of some created Being : of an Angel under the law, and of a man under the gospel. The supreme power of God descended according to him on the *Messias*, while he continued in his ministry, and retired unhurt from the body, before his crucifixion ; and again, descended on *Simon* during his preaching to the *Samaritans*, and afterwards on his disciple *Menander*, whereby they were qualified to call themselves the *great Angel*, and the *Messias* sent to that people.

Acts viii. 8,
9.
τὸ δυνάμει τῆς
μεγάλῃς.

THIS I take to be the true explication of these passages in those two antient fathers. For otherwise the titles of *some great one*, and *of the mighty power of God*, ascribed in the book of *Acts* to *Simon*, do not carry that sense the Fathers seem to put upon them, if the use of those phrases in scripture, and in writers near that time, may determine their sense.

Acts v. 36.

* So the best
Greek copies
read with
Orig. c. Cell.
i. p. 44. & vi.
p. 282.

Theudas in the same book of *Acts*, is said to boast himself to be [τὸς μέγας *] *some mighty body*, and to draw a number of men after him ; and yet St. *Luke* did not mean,

mean, nor did *Theudas* set up to be God himself, but to be the *Messias*, or the prophet that should work miracles, or as *Origen* Jos. Ant. xx. 2. interprets it, as one sent specially to mankind from God. In this sense, the Angel magnifies the office of *John the Baptist*, and saith he shall be a great one [*ἔσται Μέγας*] *Luke* i. 15. Something above the ordinary rank of Teachers, and distinguished by the character of *Elias*, which he sustained.

NOR doth the addition of the *greatest power of God* carry the idea higher, than that of first born, and minister of God, one in and by whom the mighty works of God are wrought and manifested. In *Origen* it is equivalent to *son of God* or *Messias*. “Some men, as he expresses Orig. c. Cels. p. 44. & 64. himself, pretending to imitate *Jesus*, declared themselves to be the sons of God, or the power of God [*Θεῶν δυνάμειν*.] But *Gamaliel* [*Acts* v.] said of such, that they were not the persons that the prophets had characterized, nor were they the sons nor powers of God; but *Jesus* proved himself to be the power of God by his miracles”

Chap. I. AND very strongly he adds in another place, “ The *Simonians* do not confess *Jesus* to be *the son of God* ; but they affirm that *Simon* is the *power of God*.” These authorities leave us no room to doubt that *Simon* might pretend to the *Messiaship*, notwithstanding that he was looked on as the *Highest power of God*. Nay, that very title doth truly import the character of *son of God* or *Messias*, though some of the Antients chose to explain it rather of *God himself*, in consequence of, or in reprehension of *Simon’s* and the *Samaritan’s* notion, with relation to the *Angellick powers*, or *Virtues* of God.

HERE our *Author* hath another fetch, (if that will not do that he made himself God) to prove he could not however pretend to be the *Messias*. “ For he owned *Jesus* for the *Messias* ; he turned Christian, and was baptized.”

THE *Schematist* should for shame have passed over this objection, which he is well able to answer himself. They are not all *Israel* that are of *Israel*. Every man that formerly undertook to be a *Christian* did it not in sincerity, nor is every man the more a *Christian* in our days, for

for his frequent professing himself so to be in the most solemn and avowed acts thereof: Neither Baptism, nor the Holy Communion, give the grace of final unconditional perseverance. He could not be ignorant, that St. *Luke* relates in this chapter of the *Acts*, that *Simon* was presently after baptism rejected out of the Christian communion, for evident proofs of his hypocrisy in desiring baptism. And from that time, he probably returned to his former pretences, wherewith he had imposed on his countrymen. But he that thus overlooks the latter part of *Simon's* story, his hypocrisy, which would have prevented his cavil, doth not therein much recommend his *own sincerity*.

WHATEVER is the true meaning of *Justin's* interpretation of the *highest power of God*, which the *Samaritans* thought *Simon M.* to be, the same *Justin M.* is very clear and home, in the *Samaritan* belief of a *Messias* from the scripture prophecies, which is the main point that was to be proved, and to which the pretences of *Simon M.* were introduced as accessory. His words are these, in this Apology, from whence the *Schematist* would contradict

Chap. I. all the Antients that say *Simon M.* did give out that he was the *Messias*: “ The
 Just. Apol. i. §. 69. “ *Jews* and *Samaritans*, who had God’s
 “ promise for it by the Prophets, and who
 “ at all times expected the *Messias* ac-
 “ cording to this word, did not yet re-
 “ ceive him at his coming, and during
 “ his presence with them, a few ex-
 “ cepted.”

Sim. Crit.
 Hist. of the
 N. Test. ii.
 1.

To make it more credible to our *author*, I will back *Justin’s* testimony with that of *F. Simon*, who frankly declares, That the *Samaritans*, acknowledging only the *Pentateuch* to be divine and canonical scripture, did yet believe in a *Messias* to come, at the time that *Jesus* lived, and do still to this day believe in a *Messias*.

WHY it should be urged against such a belief, that nothing is said of it in a late chronicle of the *Samaritans*, put together at several times in the third Century, and of which we have only the *Arabick* version since *Mahomet*, I cannot guess. The *Jews* have not a word of their *Messias* in their Chronicles called *Sedar Olam*, neither the larger nor the less Chronicle. One would not look into a short simple history of what is past, for any account of
 their

their faith in what is to come. Some incidental hint indeed might chance to be given in books of this kind: And so it happens in this *Samaritan* Chronicle, if we may trust *Reland's* judgement, who is one of the learned men, to whose extracts *the Schematist* refers us, for the contrary. “*Oc-*
currit, as he writes, (in hoc Chronico Sa-
maritano) & mentio Angeli maximi, per
quem Messias videtur intelligi.” It seems that according to *Reland*, the *Great power* of God which was exhibited in the chief Angelick appearances under the law, was the same *power* that was expected by the *Samaritans*, to reside in the *Messias*, and to be their Guardian and Defence the meanwhile. And this notion seems to have some agreement with the *Jewish* doctrine upon this head. The *Jews* taught from the prophets, that the *Angel of God's presence*, the *Angel counsellor*, or of the great council, and the *Angel of the covenant*, were different names of him that (having sustained the several characters, and discharged the several offices, there alluded to) should afterwards appear as the *Messias*.

So in a less *Samaritan* Chronicle beginning from *Joshua* and ending at *Mahomet*,

Reland Diff.
vii. d. Sama-
ritanis, §. 10.

Chap. I. *met*, which Dr. *Huntington* saw in the hands of that people at *Sichem*, the *Messias* is spoke of, and likewise honourable mention is made of Jesus and his followers.

Huntington,
ep. 33.

Walt. prole-
gomena ad
Polygl. p. 81.
Cast. animad-
vers. in Pen-
tar. Samar.
Castel. præf.
in Lex.

THEIR *expectation* might probably be further cleared, were it needful, from the *Samaritan* liturgy, which the excellent Archbishop *Usher* lent to Bishop *Walton*, and bestowed on Dr. *Castel*. But though *Castel* left this and two other MS. of their prayers behind him, I cannot be informed into whose hands they fell, after making a diligent enquiry for them.

Scheme, p.
31.

THE *Schematist* would persuade us, the practise of the *Samaritans* hath been a denial of this faith. “ Had they been
“ possessed with a belief of the *Messias*,
“ they would surely have taken up arms,
“ under the conduct of some pretender to
“ this character, They who living together
“ were better qualified to set up for a *de-*
“ *liverer*, than the dispersed nation of the
“ *Jews* were, and who upon divers occasi-
“ ons revolted, and even endeavoured to
“ set up a *king* among them.”

AND why must the belief of a *Messias* dispose them to revolt? What if they did
not

not expect a temporal deliverer as the *Jews* did? The woman of *Samaria* and the rest of her town, expected him as a *prophet* to instruct them in the necessary duties of religion, and as the *saviour of the world*. And to this character *Dositheus*, *Simon M.* and *Menander*, the pretenders to the *Messiahship* among them, seem to have accommodated their own behaviour. Sect. II.

AND yet that no *Samaritans* were ever stirred up into tumultuous Actions, in consequence even of the expectation of such a *prophet*, is more than this *Author* ought to say. *Josephus* the *Jewish* historian, doth, I think, imply the contrary. Ant. xviii. 5.

HE tells us, that in the last year of *Pilate*, a certain impostor excited the *Samaritans* to an insurrection, and this was his pretence. There was a place on *Mount Gerizim*, (a mountain most sacred to the *Samaritans*) where *Moses* hid the sacred vessels of the Tabernacle. This he promised to discover to them, and to dig out the vessels, if they would meet him on the mount together. The credulous took arms upon it, and one part sat down before a village near it, waiting the gathering of the rest, that they might ascend the mountain

Chap. I. mountain in one great body. But *Pilate*
 got there before them, and with his army
 slew, took, or dispersed them all.

DOTH the *Schematist* take this to be a
 mere civil revolt? or that the pure hope
 of recovering the sacred vessels was the
 only motive to it? There was more need
 of spades and pick-axes for such a work,
 if that was all they had in view: and a
 deputation from their priests and elders in
 a peaceable manner was fitter to attend
 the proceeding, than an army prepared to
 fight.

IT is therefore very probable, there was
 in those days some connexion between the
 discovery of those vessels, and the appea-
 rance of the *Messias*, and that they thought
 the perfection of the divine worship insti-
 tuted by *Moses*, should be restored about
 the time of Christ's appearance. Such a
 notion is found among the *Jews* in the
 time of *Judas Maccabæus*, which is
 grounded on a tradition as old as *Nehemi-
 ah*. They supposed that *Jeremy* hid *Mo-
 ses's* tabernacle and ark, and many of the
 sacred vessels at their going into their first
 captivity: and that they should continue
 unknown till the time that God should
 gather

2 Mac ii. 4,
 5, 7, 8.

gather all his people together again, which did not return after the first captivity, and then the *Lord* should shew them these things, and the glory of the Lord should appear in a cloud, as it was shewed unto *Moses*. This future gathering of the people again from captivity was their belief in the days of *Judas*; and was expected to be brought to pass as the *Targ.* on the *Pentat.* saith, by the *Messias*. And as the hiding of these things is also mentioned in the *Talmud* *, so their expectation to find them again in the last days, at the coming of *Elias*, who is the fore-runner of Christ, is likewise mentioned in *Ben Gorion*.

Sect. II.

Targon on
Deut. xxx.
4.

+ Cod. Sheka-
lim c. 6. §.
2.

Ben Gor. Hist.
Jud. i. p. 27.

ABOVE 500 years after this, they attempted to set up a *king* provoked by the oppressions of the *Greek* emperor. But how he improves this action into an argument against the *Samaritan's* belief of a *Messias* in *Pilate's* days, is hard to explain. There are many reasons besides this *one*, for a people's taking up arms, and it is natural for men that engage in such practices, to set up a head or king to carry them on. Besides, who can tell what influence this *expectation* might have on the *Samaritans* in that last rebellion?

Historians

Chap. I. Historians are wont to relate great events,
 ~~~~~ and the obvious occasions that led to them, they seldom dive into the true causes and springs of the movers therein.

Now enough having been offered, to shew the antient faith of the *Samaritans*, should that faith appear more muddy and confused, in the few present remains of that people, at 1700 years distance, oppressed and persecuted as they have been the best part of this time, it is not to be wondered at nor much regarded. They are much in the same state with the modern *Greek* christians, to whom no one would go to learn the belief of the antient *Greek* church.

YET since the *Schematist* hath been at pains to make people imagine the present *Samaritans* are not in the belief of a *Messias*, and hath the assurance to argue from thence, that the *Samaritans* did never in any age expect him, I will not think it too much to follow him to the end, that so it may come out at last, that every particular, which he advances throughout this chapter, is of equal weight and truth.

THE knowledge in *Europe* of the *Samaritans*, is owing to the inquisitiveness of  
*Joseph*

*Joseph Scaliger.* Upon the first hint that there were such a people in *Sichem*, he wrote to be informed by them in the *manner* of their celebration of their solemn festivals, of *the rites* with which they observed other precepts of *Moses*, and of *the name by which they spoke of their Messias*. Sect. II.

THEIR answer did not reach *Europe*, before the death of that most learned Enquirer. Since that loss, the Original letters came into other hands, and a *Latin* version of them hath been printed, wherein it appears that the *Samaritans* still adhere to the same rites, and the same manner in keeping their festivals, which the *Jews* condemned them for in the old times, and that their *faith is as little changed* as their rites.

FOR thus they answer his question about their name for the *Messias*, “ His name is *Hasheab*: and who but God understands this?” The answer shews that they had a knowledge of the Person whose name was interrogated, and that they had an ancient expectation of his coming. They readily declare the name he was known to them by, though why he was at first called so, it was either forgotten

Antiq. Eccle-  
sia Orientalis,  
Ep. I.

Chap. I. gotten among them at that time, or for  
 ~~~~~ prudential reasons they were cautious not  
 to declare it. It is not possible to rack
 their words into ignorance, or a denial,
 or even doubt of the *Messias*. A person
 or thing, they had no knowledge of, they
 could give no name to. And if they
 could not account for the reason of his
 name, *that* rather proves that the name
 and notion of *Messias* was not new, nor
 of their invention: but that it came down
 to them with their rites, which were an-
 tienter than the rise of the sect of the
Pharisees.

SOME years after their answer to *Scaliger*, a correspondence was begun with
 this people and the University of *Oxford*,
 through Dr. *Huntington's* means, who
 was in those parts; and was afterwards
 carried on by Dr. *Ludolph*: And in both
 the replies of this people, they express
 their belief of the *Messias* uniformly and
 steadily. In one to *Ludolph* particularly,
 there are these words, “ You would know
 “ whether *the Messias* be come, and whe-
 “ ther it be He that is promised in our law
 “ as the *Shilo*—Know that the *Messias* is
 “ not yet risen, but he shall rise, and his
 “ name

Vide Ludolfi
 epistolas Sa-
 mariticas.

“ name shall be *Hathab*. But secret things Sect. II.
 “ belong to God, and those that are reveal-
 “ ed, to us and to our children.” If this
 be not an express acknowledgement of their
 faith in a *Messias*, I despair of finding a-
 ny one.

AND yet the *Schematist* overlooks the
 evidence, and from these letters suggests
 the contrary. “ It is most remarkable, sch. p. 30.
 “ *saith he*, in their long letter to their
 “ supposed brethren in *England*, where
 “ they are giving the state of their religi-
 “ on at *Sichem*; they *say nothing of the*
 “ *Messias*, of whom one would think they
 “ should naturally speak, as a matter of
 “ belief and comfort. They mention the
 “ four particulars, which they had before
 “ sent in one of their letters to *Europe*,
 “ as the *only* articles of their faith, *viz.*
 “ Belief in God, in *Moses* his servant, in
 “ *M. Gerizim*, and in a future state of
 “ rewards and punishments.”

IT is much more remarkable, that the
Schematist should be so hardy as to affirm,
 they say nothing of the *Messias* in their
 letters, where they expressly declare *his*
name, and their *belief* that *he shall come*.
 If they declare it not in form, in every
 D d letter,

Chap. I.


letter, as an *article* of faith, it is because they saw no occasion for it. Their answer is suited to the Enquiries that were sent to them, and go no farther. When it was asked them, by what *name* they call the *Messias*, they say *Hasbab*. When it was further asked, whether the *Messias* was *already* come, they answered, no, he is not, but he *shall* come. Where it is asked wherein they differed from the *Jews*, they confine their reply to that head, by comparing the points wherein they differed. And as they differed *not in the expectation of the Messias*, it had been improper to bring that in by head and shoulders. That this is the whole drift of their letters, may be observed in their reply to *Scaliger*, and to *Ludolph*. In the one they say, “ But the
 “ *Jews* believe in others,” (than *Moses*)
 “ and worship with their faces toward the
 “ dry starved seat, which is south of *M.*
 “ *Gerizim*.” In the other, “ But the *Jews*
 “ trust in others : *We* act according to
 “ God’s (written) commandment in *Moses’s*
 “ law ; *they* by what their wise men and
 “ Elders tell them.” And this is the
 ground of that summary of their belief,
 which takes in only the main points upon
 which

which the *Jews* and *Samaritans* were divided, and was not intended for their general creed. We believe in God, as it is taught by *Moses* in his written law, and we worship him on *M. Gerizim*, (not as they do on *M. Sion*) and moreover we look for a future state of rewards and punishments: 'as if they had added, though we be slanderously reported by the *Jews* to believe neither. And under the *state* of retribution and vengeance, very probably the coming of the *Messias* was comprehended. The *Jews* do so, and it is agreeable to the *Samaritan's* expectation from the *Messias*, to reduce his coming to that article.

Sect. II.



THE whole reasoning then of the *Schematist* from these letters may be put in this light. The *Samaritans* in answer to those letters, that particularly enquired into their sentiments about the *Messias*, professed a *knowledge* of *him*, and a *belief* in *his coming*. In other letters, that gave them no occasion to speak of him, they are silent, except he be included in the general confidence which they express of a day of retribution and vengeance. Comparing these letters, it is *therefore* a question whether the belief in a *Messias* to come

Chap. I. is an article of *faith* and doctrine of *com-*
 *fort* among the present *Samaritans*, and
 whether their forefathers had any expecta-
 tion of him !

IF the world can be imposed on with
 a conclusion so contradictory to the
 premises, I shall only add that they are pre-
 pared for a greater delusion.

I do not forget, that the name *they* call
 the *Messias* by, is represented by the *Sche-*
matist as unintelligible ; as sometimes call-
 ing him *Hasbeab*, sometimes *Hathab* ;
 who argues from this, that their ideas of
 him were confused and unlike. But even
 this remark is groundless. *Hathab* and
Hascheab are the same word, only the one
 is pronounced according to the *Syriack* and
Chaldee sound, the other according to the
Hebrew, T. and S. are known to be per-
 mutable letters in those tongues. The
 learned Dr. *Huntington* is of opinion, that
 this word is an Abbreviation made out of
 the initial letters of part of a verse in the
 Gen. xlix. 1. *Hebrew* of *Genesis* [*Ha Shiloh ha-ba*]
 השילה הבא
 that is, the *Shilo* that cometh. To me
 it seems more natural to understand the
 word as a Title or Epithet of the *Messias* :
 and

and to be taken from those passages in Sect. II. *Deuteronomy*, that promise the Lord shall turn their captivity [שב] and [ושב] and gather them from the nations whither he scattered them—which promise they, as well as the Jews, expect to be fulfilled by the *Messias*.

Deut. xxx. 3.
and xxviii. 68.
השיב

IN this expectation, the *Messias* came to be called *Hasbab* and *Hathab*, that is, the *restorer*, to wit of their captivity: and in allusion to that title, the Apostles, full of the ideas of their nation, asked *Jesus* after his resurrection, whether he would at that time *restore* the kingdom to *Israel*? Nor doth the unaccurate writing of the word, by the *Samaritans*, with an H. or A. in the middle of it, make any alteration. Such misspellings are obvious in all their writings: and the *Samaritan* bibles wanting points, they not only use consonants of the same sound instead of them (a), but write consonants of the same sounds for one another (b); which gave occasion for *Benjamin's* saying of them in his *Itinerary*, that they wanted three letters, *He*, *Chet*, and *Ajin*, because they

Acts i.

(a) Walton proleg.
(b) Morini Epist. Th. Combero. 201.

Chap. I. sounded all like *Aleph*, and put one for
 the other in their books *.

As the thing itself, *their return*, was known to the *Samaritans* from the law, so I little doubt that the *title* of the *restorer*, was founded on the part they supposed the *Messias* should bear in their *restoration*. And thus the *secret things* which in the scripture words they ascribe to God, seem to refer merely to the time and circumstances of that transaction, and not at all to the *person* or his *name*, that should accomplish it. Or it might be a form of speaking, to avoid a more explicit declaration of their mind in these matters, as remembering by past experience, where they lived, and under whom, and how precariously.

Sch. p. 29.

3. As to *Menander* the *Samaritan* disciple of *Simon M.* since this *author* allows his pretences to be the very same with those of *Simon*, and those have been very amply proved to ascend no higher than to the

* The *Jews* improved the story, and calumniated their Pentateuch for reading *Gen. i. 1. ashim*, which according to the sound is an *As* created the heaven and earth, but was meant by them *hashim*, the *name of God*, which is not to be pronounced created, &c. *Hunting. Epist. ib.*

Messiaship.

Messiaship. I shall pass him over as briefly Sect. II.
as the *Schematist* hath done, with one re- 
mark, in the words of *Irenæus*, “ That he Iren. l. 21.
“ took upon him to be sent to be the saviour
“ of men— with the promises of immor-
“ tality, and by means of baptism in his
“ name.” It was not then without rea-
son, that both *Tertullian* and *Epiphanius*, Tert. d. pre-
reckon him in the number of the false script. 16.
Messias's. Epiph. Hel. 12.

Let me conclude this section with a summary of the argument delivered under it. The *Samaritans* in the days of our Lord Jesus, did expect the coming of a *Messias*, that should be a prophet and saviour: and from this expectation some of their own people, took occasion to pretend to be that *great* person who they looked for. Amidst all the misery, and distress, and oppression this nation hath undergone, they have constantly retained the same belief, down to their present remains, as is evident as far as we have any records. The hatred and jealousy between the *Jews* and *Samaritans* which was as old, as some of the eldest *Ptolomeys*, and went so far with the *Jews* as to account them one of the two nations, *which their heart abhor-* Ecclus. l. 26.

Chap. I. *red*, will not permit us to suppose that the
 John iv. *Samaritans* borrowed this *notion* from the
Jews, with whom they rejected all communication in holy things, as well as in the ordinary affairs of life. And there being no other way of deriving it than from the books of *Moses*, that were in their hands, at least before the *Jews* went into captivity at *Babylon*, and which they themselves alledge for the *origin* thereof: And their adherence to the literal sense of those books, and their rejecting the method of *Allegory* used by the *Jews* of *Jerusalem*, as (as it is acknowledged in the *Scheme*) not hindering them from discovering the *Messias* to be *there* promised: my former assertion, that the coming of the *Messias* was believed by the *Samaritans*, in and before the time of *Jesus*, stands unshaken, and it now appears that faith was grounded, upon their literal interpretation of the law, and not upon tradition, which the antient * as well as present *Samaritans* † disclaim.

* Maim. Ben 8. §. 8. Bartenora, ib. c. 7. §. 1.

† Epist. Samarit. ad Scalig. & Ludolphum.



CHAP. II. SECT. I.

That the notion of a Messias was spread among the Gentiles by the Jews, before the appearance of the Lord Jesus.

THE truth of this Assertion hath been so fully justified from the testimony of *Suetonius*, that one cannot but wonder to see it so positively denied by the *Schematist*, without his offering one word to take away the credit of that *Gentile* writer, or to lessen the force of his testimony.

Sect. I.
~~~~~

“ It was, saith he, an antient and uninterrupted opinion, very commonly known throughout *all the East*, that it was foretold in the (book of) Fates, the *Jews* (or those that come out of *Judea*) should be Lords of All. ” A persuasion throughout all the East, must take in the knowledge of a great part of the *Gentiles*, and especially of those in the neighbourhood of *Judea*, with whom the *Romans* had most acquaintance and much dealing.

Suet. in Vesp.

T H A T

## Chap. II.

THAT *Arabia* or *Persia*, or the country, be it what it will, from whence the *Magi* came, was included in these general words of *All the East*, is past doubt; but it being supposed in my *Defence*, that these *Magi* came from *Arabia*, I there offered some concurrent proofs to shew the expectation of the *Messias* was known in those parts before the birth of Christ. For this I quoted the journey of the *Magi* to *Jerusalem* to enquire for the new-born king, whose favour they hoped to merit by their early coming to worship him. The notion therefore of a promised birth of a king of the *Jews* had reached them; and there is no way to account for their knowledge of it, but by special revelation to them, or by communication of the *Jews*, that dwelt among, or traded with them. For the starry appearance was not the means of their coming to the knowledge of his intended Advent, but the intimation or sign that he was then born, whose approaching coming they were before apprized of.

To invalidate this evidence, the *Schematist* displays all the skill in cavilling and spite to the gospel that he is master of.

And

And first he lays down, that the history of the *Magi* gives no greater antiquity to the *Jewish* notion of a *Messias*, than is allowed by him in his former chapter. Sect. I.

2dly, THAT the whole history of the *Magi* in St. *Matthew* is highly improbable.

As to the antiquity of this notion allowed by him in his former chapter, I know not what it is, since the concession be there began with, *viz.* “ that *this* notion in and about the times of *Jesus* “ was very great, ” throughout the same chapter he makes it his business to dispute away and deny as far as he was able. But without regard to what his real sentiments are, the instance of the *Magi* clearly proves the notion of a *Messias* to have been older than the birth of *Jesus*: and some considerable time before that, is required for the spreading of that notion among the *Jews* at home before it was received by the *Jews* abroad, and propagated by them to the nations remote from *Judea*.

AND as to the high improbability of the history, he hath offered mere flirts and quirks only, to support that. He would have it believed that the second chapter of  
St.

Chap. II. St. *Matthew*, where this history is found, is *supposed*, and that even in the judgement of the Bishop himself. Why? hath the Bishop said any thing like that? No, he disproves the supposition, and proposes several reasons to evince, that the history was originally a part of St. *Matthew's* gospel. How then? Why, speaking of some men of great learning and judgement that thought so, he calleth their sentiment “ an “ *ingenious solution of the difficulty*, ” adding, “ if it would indeed answer all the “ difficulties, which it doth not.” Unless then the speaking civilly of an Adversary's opinion, which is at the same time rejected, be an allowance of that opinion: all this is pure calumny in the *Schematist*. It is not my way, to give hard names to any opinion, or any man for his opinion's sake, where I see the least appearance of sincerity in the proposer, especially if that be joined with worth and abilities in other respects. But I always thought, many things may be called *ingenious* that are neither *solid*, nor *true*. And my opinion is not altered as to the *solution* I mentioned: which was neither offered by me out of any esteem for it, nor by the Patrons of it,

as untrue, or not written in those times, but only as not written by St. *Matthew*. Sect. I.

Now to his reasons, they are taken from the circumstances of the history, and none of them shall pass without due consideration.

1. “HE asks how could *wise men*, or “others be led by a star to a house?” Change *wise men* into *Magi* which is the *Greek* word, and the proper technical *English* word, (but that will spoil his *sneer*) and why may not such men, addicted to the study of nature and observation of the heavens, and believing their influences or portentous significance upon earth, why may not such persons be led by the duct of a new light to *Judæa*, which was supposed by their rules to be the stage of some great Event? Why may not *they*, taught before to expect this great Event, and interested in the consequences thereof, take any hint to go satisfy themselves of the truth of what they judged by their art was come to pass?

2. “BUT, how could a star point out “a house, and direct where to find him?” A fixt Star, or a Planet, could not direct  
very

Chap. II.  very distinctly, as I conceive, except by its disappearance, or withdrawing its light, when they came near the place where the house stood (*a*): but the star that led the *Magi* was not one of those heavenly bodies, its motion being contrary to the stated motion of the other stars, and its appearance being in the day-time; but probably was a luminous Body, that was lighted in our Atmosphere in the form and figure of a star.

NOR is this interpretation “ a change  
“ of the word, and by the Bishop’s own  
“ authority,” as the *Schematist* affirms. He might have known that the *Greek* and *Latin*, and *Hebrew* words for *Star* do signify by vulgar usage any *Meteor*, or fiery image gathered in the sky (*b*), and especially those that resemble stars, for form, bulk, and projection of light (*c*), as frequently

(*a*) Virg. *Æn.* I. ver. 386. Matre Dea monstrante viam, data fata secutus.

Varro ib. in Serv. ex quo Troja egressus est *Æneas*, *Veneris* eum per diem cotidie *stellam* vidisse donec ad agrum *Laurentium* veniret. in quo eam non vidit ulterius qua re terras cognovit esse fatales. Again Serv. on *Æn.* II 801.

(*b*) Arist. *Meteorolog.* I. 4. αἱ τε φλόγες καὶ ὀμβραὶ, καὶ αἱ διατείνοντες ἄστεις & vocati a quibusdam δαλοὶ *Trabes* & *capræ*; hæc omnia sunt idem & per eandem causam, viz. ex exhalationibus ignitis.

(*c*) *Meteorol.* I. 3. αἱ δαδόμεναι τῷ ἄστει sunt in loco deorsum (non in celo attrifero). 1.

quently as they signify those regular durable heavenly orbs that are removed far from our mundane system : The Philosophers and Poets use the same language, and call all such appearances, by the name of stars, a word, which in its primary signification imports

Sect. I.



I. 4. οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄστρες διάττειν, are only exhalations variously dispersed in longitude—As the lighted fomes extends its self in length or breadth are formed *Trabes* & *Capra* & ἄστρες. c. 5. Many Images appear in the heavens at different times, in the form of Gulphs, Ditches, &c. The cause is the same, though some seem to stand still and others to move, as beams of light and stars; and then as to their colours, they resemble sometimes the *rising stars*, sometimes the *setting stars*, c. 7. [αἱ τὴν σποράδην ἄστρων διάδρομοι] the running of several *stars* thick together is formed out of fiery exhalations. Plin. Nat. Hist. II. 28. cernuntur & *stella* (i. e. *meteora*) cum sole totis diebus, plerumq; & circa solis orbem, ceu spicæ coronæ & versicolores circuli. Senec. Nat. 22. I. 14.

Virg. II. ver. 692. —Subitoque fragore  
Intonuit lævum, & de cœlo lapsa per  
umbram,  
*Stella* facem ducens, multa cum luce  
cucurrit.  
Illam, summa super labentem culmina  
tecti,  
Cernimus Idea claram se condere silva  
Signamtemq; vias : tum longo tramite  
fulcus  
Dat lucem, & late circum loca fulgure  
fumant.  
Hic vero victus genitor se tollit ad auras  
Affa-turq; Deos & sanctum *sidus* adorat.  
Serv. here. *stella* hujus cursus  
Significat Trojanos conglobatos ad do-  
mum  
Eneæ, &c.

Chap. II. imports no more than light (*d*). In them  
 we often read of shooting, running, fly-  
 ing, and falling stars (*e*): of stars, that  
 wander a while upon the sea, or upon the  
 land, and afterwards perch upon the tops  
 of Spears, the masts of ships, or the piles  
 of a fortification (*f*), and sometimes en-  
 compass the heads of men (*g*). THE

(*d*) *Stellare* hath the sense of *luceo*, Ovid. Fast. V. &  
 Mart. II. So ἀστέρας from ἄσπερ signifies *fulguro*.

(*e*) Vide Arist. supra.

Manilius Astr. I. p. 26. ——— precipites stellæ passimq; volare  
 Quum vaga per liquidum scintillant  
 lumina mundum  
 Et renues longis jaculantur crinibus  
 ignes.

Virg. Æn. V. 525. ——— cœlo seu sæpe refixa  
 Transcurreunt, crinemq; volantia side-  
 re ducunt.

Georg. I. ——— Sæpe etiam stellas vento im-  
 pendente videbis  
 Præcipientes cœlo labi, noctisq; per  
 umbram  
 Flammæ longos a tetgo albescere  
 tractus

Plin. II. 36. Fieri videntur & discursus stellarum.

(*f*) Plin. Nat. Hist. II. 37. Existunt *stellæ* & in mari,  
 terrisq; Vidi nocturnis militum vigilis inherere pilis——  
 Et stellæ antennis navigantium aliisq; navium partibus, Ge-  
 minæ autem salutare & prosperi cursûs prænunciæ: Qua-  
 rum adventu fugari diâ illam ac minacem (stellam) ap-  
 pellatamq; *Helenam* ferunt.

Senec. Nat. Quæst. I. 1. In magna tempestate apparent  
*stellæ* velo insidentes. Aliquando feruntur ignes, non se-  
 dent Gylippo Syracusas petenti, visa est *stella* super ipsam  
 lanceam constitisse. Horat Carm. I. Ode 12. Dicam &  
 Alcidem puerosq; Lædæ Quorum simul Alba nautis *stel-  
 la* refulsit. Senec. Argumentum Tempestatis Nautæ putant  
 cum multæ transvolant *stellæ*. vii. 14.

(*g*) Plin. ib. Hominumq; quoq; capita vespertinis ho-  
 ris,

THE observation of mariners is well known, if the star called *Helena*, when it appears single, comes near their ship, it foretells a storm; but if two stars appear, which they call *Castor* and *Pollux*, then safety is portended (*b*). And yet all these *appearances* are not *stars* in the *modern* acceptance of the word, but mere fiery exhalations resembling stars, as the same an-

Sect. II.  
~

ris, magno presagio circum fulgent. Speaking of the same Stars.

Virg. Æn. II. 682. Ecce levis summo de vertice visus Iuli

Fundere lumen, tactuq; innoxia mollis  
Lambere flamma comas——

Æn. viii. 686. Stans celsa in puppi, geminas cui tempora flammæ

Lætæ vomunt, patriumq; aperitur  
vertice *fidus*.

(*b*) Arist. Meteorol. I. 7. When the exhalation is not so strong as to kindle too soon, nor so weak as to spend itself quickly, it becomes a *bearded Star*; if in all parts it be the same, it is then termed a *Comet*: if it extends in length in one way, then it is called *bearded*. Such *Stars*, like the *running Stars*, have within themselves the beginning and the period of their being.

Senec. N. Quæst. 7, 8. 21. Placet ergo nostris (though he dissents from them) Cometæ sicut faces, sicut tubæ, trabesque & alia ostenta cœli denso aere cremari. Vide Plin. II. 28.

And yet such cometical exhalations were called *Stars*; Virg. Eclog. ix. 47. Ecce Dionei processit Cæsaris astrum, meaning the Comet that appeared at the death of *Julius Cæsar*, of which Plin. II. 23. & Bebius Macer in Servius, circa horam octavam *stellam amplissimam*, quasi lemniscis coronatam ortam dicit, quam quidam ad inlustrandam gloriam Juvenis Cæsaris pertinere existimabant.

E c

tients

Chap. II. *tients* acknowledge whenever they come  
 to explain themselves.

NAY, Comets themselves, before, and about the Age of the birth of Jesus, went under the name of Stars, though they were then vulgarly believed to be no coelestial bodies, but a collection of inflammatory vapours.

IN the same manner the sacred writers speak of *stars falling from heaven* \*: and what is thus expressed in one sacred writer, I saw Satan fall *like lightning from heaven*, Luke x. 18. is varied in another; I saw him fall *like a star to the earth*, Rev. ix. 1. We are told by a famous Traveller that the *Syrian Town Cancabe* near *Damascus*, which signifies a *star* in *Hebrew*, was so named by the people, because of the great *light* that appeared to *Paul* in this place from heaven, *which was above the brightness of the sun*, as it is related, *Acts* xxvi. 13.

\* Matth. xxiv.  
21.  
Rev. vi. 14.  
viii. 10.

Mr. Theve.  
not.

THE Bishop therefore hath not changed the *word*, nor used *star* in a different sense from that which it bears in many writers sacred and Gentile. Nor is he singular in his application of that sense to the particular text in dispute, many of the primitive

mitive Doctors of the Church went before the Bishop in the like exposition. Some of them have given their reasons why the star that led the *Magi* could not be a real star, but was ὁ ψεῦδος ἀστὴρ ὅτι φέρεται, as St. *Chrysostom* expresses it ; It had the likeness and appearance of a star, but not the truth of its nature. This appearance which the Philosophers of the East did call a star, and was vulgarly called so in that age, St. *Matthew* had a right to describe under the same name : And what the antient and most learned fathers term a *star*, though they own at the same time, it was no other than a bright Meteor, high at first in our sky, and afterwards descending so low as to serve for a guide to conduct the *Magi* to *Jerusalem* and *Bethlehem*, the Bishop might interpret after them by a *luminous appearance*, and had good authority for so doing.

Sect. II.  
St. Basil, Ambrose, Astin, but especially Chrysostom.

V. Euthymius Zigab. in loc.

2. HIS next Question is, “ What foundation is there in Nature, for such Astrological notions as the Bishop thinks these wise men were acted by, in setting forward for *Judæa*, to see the infant Jesus? ” To which I answer, I know of none, nor did I ever say there was any rational ground for them. But it was the

Chap. II. common belief in *Children*, and indeed of all sorts of people in all nations at that time, that the rise of unusual stars, of comets, and of the different shapes of blazing lights in the heavens \*, did foretell great changes upon earth, the birth of some extraordinary person, and the erection of new

\* Dio LV. Tunc ea, quæ maximas calamitates præcurrere solent signa eveniunt.—Cometa, quum malis dies imminens urbi apparuisset. in facies abiit.

XLV. Stella quædam quotidie inter septentrionem & Occidentem apparuit. eamq; Cometen vocantes nonnulli ei portendere dicebant, quæ alias hujusmodi signum sequi consueverunt.

Suet. in Nerone c. 36. Stella crinita quæ summis potestatis exitum portendere vulgo putabatur.

7. Tac. Ann. XIV. 22. Sidus Cometes effulsit, de quo vulgi opinio est tanquam mutationem regis portendat. Igitur quasi jam depulso Nerone, quisnam deligeretur, inquirebant. So before the death of Vespasian, inter prodigia Stella in cælo crinita apparuit. See Plin. Quæst. VII. 27.

And when a large Star crowned as it were with garlands and fillets, appeared on the death of *Julius Cæsar*, and the entrance of *Augustus* into power, *Beata Mater* pronounced that it was designed to render the glory of young *Cæsar* more illustrious: and *Vulcanius Aruspex* judged that it signified the entrance of a new age, and expiration of an old age. Serv. in Virg. Ecl. ix. 47. Agreeably to these notions *Augustus* himself, in the memoirs he writ of his own life, notes, *steli illius* (Cometen) *natura, seq; in eo nasci*, i. e. this Star was formed for him, and his empire, and felicity was portended thereby: upon which *Pliny* relates. from whom I take this; that to say the truth, it was a Star very auspicious to the earth, and therefore a Comet is worshipped only in one place of the world, in a temple at *Rome*, as foretelling the prosperity of *Augustus*, even in his own opinion. Plin. Nat. Hist. II. 23.

empires.

empires. The *Magi* being constant in the Sect. II. same belief, and being acquainted with the tradition or report, that about this time a great prince was to be born in *Judea*, to whom all the East should one day be subjected, they might justly conclude, from the rise of this *bright appearance*, which went under the character of a Star, that *he* was then born, and his birth was in this manner, notified to the world. Though their principle was wrong; yet admitting them to be possessed therewith, they acted very consistently, in their inference from it. Or if it did indeed so happen, that the birth of this great Person did farther agree with what they themselves collected from their Apotelesmatical operations relating to Nativities \*, to which the *Magi*, and throughout *Chaldea* they were much addicted, this might proceed from God's so ordering matters for this time; God being sometimes pleased to make use of practices in high esteem among men, whether grounded upon any, or an unwarrantable foundation, and to direct them to give witness to the truth, as the learned *Grosius* hath remarked †.

Scal. Em.  
Temp. vi.

\* Gros. here, Deum ita res disposuisse, ut ea quæ sive vere sive injuria magni apud homines sunt, interdum, tractentur veri testimonium.

## A VINDICATION of the

W  
Chap. II.

3. THE *Schematist* goes on to question,  
 “ How could all *Jerusalem* be troubled to  
 “ hear their *Messias* or deliverer was born,  
 “ (as it is said they were in *Matthew's* his-  
 “ tory of the *Magi*) when\* the *Jews* at all  
 “ times have hoped and desired to see him,  
 “ and his expected coming hath been a  
 “ great support to them under their con-  
 “ stant train of miseries, and was at this  
 “ time especially matter of great joy to  
 “ them, *Luke* ii. 10. and when the persua-  
 “ sion that he was come, hath made them  
 “ run into the most extravagant scenes of  
 “ madness, rebellion and insurrections un-  
 “ der the utmost transports of joy?”

MUCH of this exaggeration might have  
 been spared, had the *Schematist* consulted  
 his *Greek* as well as his *English* bible. The  
*Greek* word which is there translated *troub-*

\* *Ταραττω*, the *Greek* word in *St. Matthew*, is used in  
 scripture to move the soul in general, *Acts* xvii. 8, 13. xv.  
 23. xix. 23. *Gal.* i. 7. And in the passive voice to be mov-  
 ed, *Is.* xxx. 28. 2 *Kings* xxii. 8. *Jer.* v. 22. *Gen.* xl. 6. *Psal.*  
 cvi. 27.

In particular, to be in amaze, *Psal.* cxlii. 2. *Dan.* iv. 2.  
 in perplexity, *Ezrh.* iii. 15. To be betwixt hope and fear,  
*Luke* xxiv. 38. i. 12. *Matth.* xiv. 26. To be in fear, *Ezr.*  
 viii. 12. Thus *H. Stephens*. *Ταραττω*, Commoveo, proprie  
 dicitur de aquis cum commoto limo & excitato turbantur.  
 & cum medicus *Spathia* pharmacum agitat, diamicet &  
 perturbat. And is figuratively applied to men, when their  
 minds are stirred and shaken by warmth, fear or any other  
 passion, like a troubled Sea.

led,

led, hath not commonly that restrained Sect. II.  
 sense: but signifies in the general any   
*commotion* or *perturbation* of mind; any  
 ferment and hurry of thought, whether it  
 be raised with good or bad news, or even  
 anxiety about the issue of a depending e-  
 vent: It comprehends all the several passi-  
 ons that are wont to be stirred upon any  
 great occasion.

WHERE men live together in diffe-  
 rent views, designs and pursuits, the same  
 intelligence, will affect them all very dif-  
 ferently, and throw them even into con-  
 trary agitations: to include all which there  
 is not any one *Greek* word more proper  
 and expressive, than that which is rendred  
*troubled* in our translation. Such was the  
 state of *Herod*, and the people of *Jerusa-*  
*lem* upon the tidings of the birth of the  
*Messias* king of the *Jews*, which were  
 brought by the *Magi*. *Herod* and the  
*Herodians*, his Courtiers and Friends were  
 concerned for the crown; and that con-  
 cern moved fear and grief, anger and con-  
 trivance how to ward the impending blow.  
 The *Jews* that were weary of his domini-  
 on, were ruffled between hope and doubt  
 and fear for a disappointment; and even  
 E c 4 languished

Chap. II. languished under the delay of his coming  
 by reason of his present infancy : the *Sad-  
 ducees*, hitherto Scepticks, were struck with  
 amazement, not being able to guess to  
 what this thing would grow : The carnal  
 worldly *Pharisee* racked his brain with  
 schemes to advance himself under the new  
 reign, or revenge himself upon his adver-  
 saries. Those that waited for the conso-  
 lation of *Israel*, felt a religious pleasure in  
 the near prospect of it ; and the common  
 people fond of changes, and elated with  
 the thoughts of a king out of their own  
 nation, that should retrieve their lost ho-  
 nour and power, did probably shew them-  
 selves boisterous and vain in their mirth.

THUS *Herod* might be said to *be trou-  
 bled, and all Jerusalem with him*, though  
 their trouble was of a different kind from  
 his, and proceeded from different causes.  
 It was a commotion of great joy in some,  
 of amazement, suspense, hurry and noise  
 in others ; of sorrow, fear, and perplexity,  
 and vexation in the rest. A mixture of  
 curiosity, desire and impatience in the most  
 careless and indifferent to know the bot-  
 tom of this important news.

4. HE

SECT. II.

4. HE asks, “How could the chief  
 “Priests and Scribes say from the prophet  
 “*Micah*, that Christ should be born at  
 “*Bethlehem*, when the *old Jews* under-  
 “stood that place of *Zerobabel*, whom  
 “they deem’d to have fulfilled that prophe-  
 “cy, as the great *Grotius* also doth?  
 “when the *Jews* in Jesus’s time made it  
 “a part of the character of the *Messias*,  
 “not to know *whence he was*? when so John vii. 29.  
 “many *Jews* then took *Herod* for the  
 “*Messias*? and when the *Jews* have of-  
 “ten set up *Messias*’s, whom they have  
 “known not only to be born out of  
 “*Bethlehem*, but out of *Judea*—and o-  
 “thers, whose place of birth they knew  
 “not, nor enquired about, as judging it  
 “a matter of no consequence?”

THAT the *old Jews* understood this  
 text in *Micah* of *Zorobabel*, as if it was  
 spoken of and *fulfilled* in him, is doubly  
 false. For *Zorobabel* was not born in *Beth-*  
*lehem* but at *Babylon*, as the *old Jews* well  
 knew, and therefore could not think him  
 to have been intended in this prophecy:  
 nor do the *oldest Jews* that we have, re-  
 fer it to any other person than the *Messias*.

I had

Chap. II.  
 Defence ch.  
 II. §. 1.

I had already obviated this question, had the proposer of it been disposed to take an answer. I shewed him that the *Targum* on *Micah* iv. 8. and ver. 2. and on *Gen.* xxxv. 19. 21. explain this passage of the *Messiah* by name: that the *Jews* in their publick liturgy did of old, and do to this day, pray for the coming of the *Messias* under the description of the *son of Jesse the Bethlemite*: that even as low as the *Talmud* the same tradition continued, that *Christ* should be born in *Bethlehem*: and that so very old as in the time of *Jesus*, this interpretation was so certain to the generality of the *Jews*, that those who supposed *Jesus* to have been originally of *Nazareth*, made it a debate how then he could be the *Christ*, since the scripture said that *Christ* came of the seed of *David*, and out of the town of *Bethlehem*, where *David* was born. There cannot be stronger evidence of the antient uninterrupted belief of the *Jews*.

John vii. 41.

AND what hath the *Schematist* replied thereto? Not a word, but goes on repeating what he said in his former book without authority, and passes over my answer, as if he had not read it! A man may write  
 books

books without end, if he will stuff them with repetitions, and say the same things over and over again so long, as to forget at last they are not true. Sect. II.

HOWEVER this is his assertion, “ The  
“ *old Jews* understood that place of *Ze-*  
“ *robabel*, as the great *Grotius* also doth.”  
Who those *Jews* are he doth not tell us;  
nor doth *Grotius* mention one *old Jew*  
for his opinion; nor was he able, very  
knowing as he really was, to quote any  
*old Jew*, to be compared for age with the  
*Jews* of Christ’s time, the author of the  
*Targum* and of their liturgy.

PERHAPS he will say he trusted Dr.  
*Pocock* for this, whom he quotes in the  
margent, though not expressly to this Point.  
And indeed *Pocock* hath something like it;  
but it falls far short of what the Scheme  
builds upon it, when his words are consi-  
dered. “ Though by what is delivered by  
“ some antient fathers of the church, *saieth*  
“ *that learned man*, we may think that  
“ heretofore *some Jew* did avow the per-  
“ son here spoken of to be *Zorobabel*;  
“ yet those who better considered the mat-  
“ ter, and have given us their mind *in wri-*  
“ *ting*, say no such thing, but *unanimously*  
“ *none*

Chap. II. "none we suppose contradicting affirm  
 ~~~~~  
 " that person to be the *Messias*, grounding
 " their belief only on this prophecy. "

BUT his account *all* the *Jews* that have been *writers* expound this text of the *Messias*, *none* contradicting. Some *Jew* heretofore, as may be collected from some ancient fathers, thought it applicable to *Zorobabel*, but whether they did not also understand it of the *Messias*, doth not appear clearly from those fathers. But if they did, they lived later than the *Jews* I have cited, and were driven to this shift from the distress they were in how to answer the force of this text in their disputes with the Christians; in the heat whereof they are wont to advance many things rashly, that are different from the settled notions of the synagogue, and which they would not venture to say, to one of their own religion.

Gen. c. iv. §.
 2. P. 333.

BUT what is to be said to the opinion of those *Jews* in *Jesus's* time, that made it a part of the character of the *Messias*, *not to know whence he was*? Even what I said before in my *Defence*, of which this writer is not pleased to take notice. The *Greek* phrase, *whence he was*, hath no relation

relation to the *place* of his birth; but to the cause or instrument; or manner thereof. Hence the *Jews*, that asked this question, did not mean that no one should know the name of the town, or country of his birth, or who were his parents, or Ancestors. For how can such a sense be possibly ascribed to them, who in the same chapter contend, That *Christ shall not come out of Galilee, but shall come out of the town of Bethlehem, of the seed of David*. But they expressed their belief hereby, that the *Messias* should be moreover an extraordinary person, whose entrance into the world should be different, and superiour to that of common men; so that no man should be able to tell at his appearance how he was born, and whether God or Man was the immediate author of his generation.

For the *Jews*, that took *Herod* for the *Messias* (whom, by his own authority, he multiplies into many) were not of the sect of *Scribes* and *Pharisees* (who were indeed numerous) as appears by *Herod's* * constant ill treatment of them; but of the

* Grot. Sadducei illa non curabant traditionum contemptores, & ad dignitatem nisi Romanâ potestate, non auctori populari.

Chap. II. *Sadducees*, that taken all together were but few in number. And this they did to make their court the better to *Herod* and the *Romans*, being some of them indifferent to the coming of the *Messias*, or totally incredulous as to this article according to the *Schematist*, and all of them contemners of the traditions of their forefathers.

IF the *Jews* since *Jesus*, have not been inquisitive into the place of their birth that have set up to be the *Messias*, it is not the effect of their judging it to be a matter of no importance; but that having been often deceived by false pretenders, they thought it needless to enter into this enquiry, before the Pretenders demonstrated themselves by other certain proofs to be such as they expected. To be born at *Bethlehem*, is but one character among many of the promised *Messias*, and may suit several others as well as the *Messias*. Before therefore his character was otherwise established by miracles, and such like works, as it is foretold should be performed by the *Messias*; they thought it in vain to begin with this single consideration, however necessary in itself. For it is the centering

tering in the same person of all the characters given of the *Messias*, that doth finally prove the truth of their pretensions to the *Messiahship*. Sect. II.

SINCE the destruction of *Bethlehem* by the *Romans*, the *Jews* have been under a necessity of waving this enquiry, because of the difficulty for any *Jew* to be born there, or to prove his birth in that place. But these difficulties gave the *Jews* no trouble while *Bethlehem* was subsisting, and was inhabited as a town by the *Jews* in Jesus's time. And therefore, though the *Jews* did not then previously examine that point, yet, whenever they knew any person not to be born there, or thought he was not, they objected it in prejudice to his pretensions, as we read they did to our Lord Jesus, upon presumption that he came out of *Galilee*. It is possible some of the common people, who knew not the law, might act otherwise, and out of a forward zeal, did close in with pretenders that wanted this qualification; but they were neither joined, nor approved therein by the high priests, scribes and elders, who knew, and professed that the circumstance of *place* was necessary to fill up the whole character of the *Messias*.

5. AGAIN,

Chap. II.

5. AGAIN, it is demanded, “ How
 “ could this whole affair be transacted in
 “ *Herod's* time, when, according to *Luke*,
 “ *Jesus* was born eleven years after *He-*
 “ *rod's* death, *viz.* when *Cyrenius* was
 “ made governour of *Syria*, and *Judæa*
 “ was annexed as a province to *Syria*. His
 “ government began with the new tax
 “ mentioned by *Luke*, whereof we have so
 “ particular an account in *Josephus*, as puts
 “ the date of *Jesus's* birth in *Cyrenius's*
 “ time, as well as the sense of *Luke*, out
 “ of all dispute.”

IT is amazing to see the assurance the
Schematist puts on, when he knows he is
 in the wrong. “ The particular account
 “ in *Josephus* of the taxation of the *Jews*
 “ by *Cyrenius* while he was governour of
 “ *Syria*, saith he, puts the date of *Jesus's*
 “ birth in *Cyrenius's* time, and the sense
 “ of *Luke* out of all dispute.” And yet
 there is nothing in this particular account
 of *Josephus*, that connects these two e-
 vents, or necessarily determines the time of
 these two events to be the same ! For *Je-*
sus might be born in *Cyrenius's* time, and
 yet before the tax imposed by him as go-
 vernour of *Syria*, and then the particular
 account

account in *Josephus* hath no relation to Sect. II.
the sense of St. *Luke*.

AND this was indeed the case. *Josephus* only relates the time of the tax under *Cyrenius* the governour of *Syria* ; but St. *Luke* speaks of an *enrollment*, not a *tax*, which *enrollment* might be made many years before, by *Cyrenius* as an extraordinary officer, and not *then*, but *afterwards* governour of *Syria*, for any thing that can be urged from *Josephus*, or any other author to contradict it. For the silence of *Josephus* as to the *enrollment*, is no more an argument that there was no *enrollment* preceding the *tax*, than the silence of all the *Gentile* writers in the matter of the *tax* by *Cyrenius*, mentioned only in *Josephus*, is a proof that there was no *tax* under *Cyrenius*. And so far hath this passage of *Josephus* been from putting *the date of Jesus's birth* out of *all dispute*, as the *Schematist* well knows, that learned men for near two Centuries past, though they had *Josephus* before them, have all given very different interpretations of the time of the *enrollment* of St. *Luke*, from that which he says is made indisputable in *Josephus*.

Luke ii. 1.
That all the world should be taxed, ἀπογεγράφει, i. e. enrolled, as in the Margent of our bible.

F f

F O R

Chap. II. FOR the clearing of this point, I observe,

1. THAT St. *Luke* himself could not possibly write, that Jesus was born in the days of the taxing by *Cyrenius*, as governor of *Syria*.

2. THAT St. *Luke's* Greek text is capable of a very different, yea, contrary construction.

First, St. *Luke* himself could not possibly write, that Jesus was born in the days of the taxing under *Cyrenius* as governor of *Syria*, because his account of Jesus's birth, in the same gospel, is directly repugnant to that Date. He there places the birth of *John* the Baptist, and of Jesus on the same year, and makes the birth of both come to pass in the same reign, viz. in the days of *Herod the king of Judæa* (a). Now all the days of *Herod*, *Judæa* was independent of *Syria*, whose governor did neither in right nor fact intermeddle with the affairs of *Judæa*, before it was reduced into a province.

(a) Luke i. 5,
26. 57. ii. 1.

Luke ii.

LUKE adds afterwards, that while *John* was exercising his ministry in the 15th of *Tiberius* the Roman Emperor, Jesus being then about thirty years of age, i.

e. 2

e. a little either under or over thirty, came Sect. II.
 to be baptized of him. If Jesus was un-
 der thirty in the 15th of *Tiberius*; as for
 instance, in his 28th or 29th year, he must
 be born at least seven or eight years before
Cyrenius commenced governour of *Syria*:
 if he was then about thirty, namely, in
 his 31st or 32d year, as he certainly was
 at least, taking from thence fourteen com-
 plet years (without entering into a com-
 putation of months and days) that he liv-
 ed under *Tiberius*, and there will remain
 seventeen or eighteen years of his life un-
 der *Augustus*, which will carry his birth
 much higher in *Augustus's* reign than was
 the *tax*, even nine or ten years beyond it.

HE that writ this, could not say in the
 same breath, that Jesus was born, while
Cyrenius was governour of *Syria*; which is
 to place two different events on the same
 year, which he had just before separated,
 and did presently after distinguish by an in-
 terval of several years. Nor could he well
 fall into this anachronism by mistake; for
 these two great events were linked with
 two remarkable æra's of the last concern to
 the *Jews*, and not so soon to be forgot-
 ten by any one of that nation, *viz.* the

Chap. II. æra of their *liberty*, and of their *slavery*;
 of *Judæa* a *kingdom* under *Herod M.* and
 a *province* under *Cyrenius*. Either there-
 fore this verse in St. *Luke*, which is plain-
 ly a Parenthesis, was antiently a gloss that
 was added to that text by some unskilfull
 transcriber, or it hath another meaning
 than that the *Schematist* would affix to it.
 All grave intelligent writers are to be in-
 terpreted consistently with themselves: and
 when their words do not necessarily imply
 a contradiction to their other relations, it is
 not fair to stretch them into a sense, that
 they could not intend without absurdity. If
 then St. *Luke's* words are capable of a dif-
 ferent, yea, contrary construction, that is
 perfectly consistent with the other parts of
 his gospel, which the explication in the
Scheme is not, such a construction ought
 to be preferred as the true sense of the his-
 torian. And that they are so, will ap-
 pear,

2. FROM a particular consideration of
 the whole passage, which will bear the fol-
 lowing interpretations, that have been
 given of it by very learned men.

THE first is that which occurred to me
 upon a deliberate reading the paragraph,
 and

and which I am since much confirmed in, by finding it to be the judgement of others that have studied scripture, and partly of the very learned *Valesius*. For thus the *Greek* may be rendered. *And this enrollment first took effect*, or was brought to its full accomplishment * *under Cyrenius governour of Syria*. Compare this sense with the context, and it will be found very agreeable. Thus the Chapter begins, *And it came to pass in those days* (viz. of *Herod M.* to whose days the conception of *John the Baptist*, and of *Jesus* is referred) *That there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled*. Then follows, *And this enrollment was first carried into execution*, or was perfected with a *tax under Cyrenius*, &c. † The *enrollment* was properly a mere recension of every family by the head, according to their tribes, and of their substance and goods; and this was in order to the Government's coming at the knowledge of the strength, forces and riches of their people. And this was of-

Sect. II.


Prid. Connect. II. L. ix.
Mr. Whiston, &c.

Vales. in Euf. H. E. i. 5.

Luke ii. 1.
αὕτη ἡ ἀπόγραφη πρώτη ἐγένετο, ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας κυρηνίς,

* Thus ἐγένετο for fulfilled, Acts xi. 23. Luke i. 20. Luke xiii. 14. Matt. v. 18. Luke vi. 10. 16. vii. 2. viii. 1. And in other Authors τὰ γιγνώμματα signify ripe fruit, & γιγνόμεναι ἐλπίδες, hopes that are not accomplished.

† Dion. Halic. iv. 15. v. 75. Lib. iv. §. 2. ff. de Censibus. Is qui agrum in aliâ civitate habet, in ea civitate profiteri debet, in qua ager est, Agri enim tributum in eam civitatem debet levare, in cujus territorio possidetur.

Chap. II.  ten taken without any immediate subsequent *tax*, but was necessarily previous to it. Hence it is that the *Ἀπογράφη*, or *enrollment* is often used by the best writers for the *ἀποτίμησις* or *tax*. For though they were certainly distinct Acts (*a*), and done at different times, yet because they both concurred to the completion of the levy, they were sometimes treated as the same work, and went under the same name (*b*), of which the *enrollment* was the beginning, and the capitation and tax was the accomplishment.

(*a*) Jos. Ant. xvii. 2.

(*b*) Dion. Hal. iv. 10. x. 16.
Dio Lib. liii.
and LV.
Acts v. 37.

At that time under *Herod*, the decree went no farther than a simple recension, and that was a great step in *Judæa*, which hitherto was no tributary kingdom. And why it began now, and why it stopt short, and was not received till some years after under *Cyrenius*, may be collected from *Josephus's* account of those times.

HEROD for a few years before his death, stood upon very ill terms with *Augustus*. *Syllæus*, a leading man among the *Arabs*, took occasion to misrepresent him, and he managed the passion of *Augustus* so artificially, as to put him upon writing to *Herod*, That *though he had used him*
till

Jos. Ant. xvi. 11.

till now as a friend, henceforward he Sect. I.
 would treat him as a subject. He must
 have been highly incensed against *Herod*,
 when he refused audience to his Ambassa-
 dors that he sent to *Rome* to make his peace,
 and rejected the presents of a second Em-
 bassy. And though at length by the ad-
 dress of *Nic. Damascens* employed on that
 errand by *Herod*, a reconciliation was ef-
 fected; yet the wound was not so perfectly
 healed, but that *Antipater*, *Herod's* son,
 needed a second hearing of *Augustus* a-
 gainst *Syllæus* the year before *Herod* dyed,
 and to support his defence with the distri-
 bution of large sums of money, in the
 Court of *Augustus*.

THE juncture of *Herod's* disgrace, at-
 tended with his advanced age, and many
 infirmities, and the ambitious views and
 divisions in his family, hastned *Augustus* to
 enquire into the state of this, as he had
 done of other parts of his empire. I doubt
 not but in this interval, an *enrollment* was
 resolved on, which *Herod* after he was re-
 stored in some measure to favour again,
 kept a while depending, laying before *Au-*
gustus the danger of a rebellion in conse-
 quence thereof, and offering a large col-

Chap. II.  lection by his own authority, as formerly ; by which means, though he did not entirely ward the blow of an *enrollment*, he evaded the carrying it into full execution by a *tax*.

AND this seems to be the reason why the officers of *Augustus* and of *Herod*, were jointly concerned in requiring an oath of the people of *Judæa*, a little before the death of *Herod*. We have it from *Josephus*, that at that time the whole *Jewish* nation were summoned to swear to *Herod* and to *Cæsar* (for which purpose Commissioners must be supposed in behalf of both of them) and none refused beside a body of the *Pharisees*, to the number of six thousand, that were fined very roundly for their refusal. Why an oath should be insisted on with all the *Jews* at this time to *Herod*, to whom they must have sworn allegiance many years before ; and why an oath to *Herod* and *Augustus* jointly, is hard to say, except it was upon occasion of ratifying the truth of their *profession* at an *enrollment*. * For it was the *Roman* way

* Dion. Hal. iv. 15. Servius Tullius ordered all the Citizens of *Rome* to register their estates, ὁμολογῶντας τὸ νόμισμα ἔχειν, ἢ μὴ τ' ἀληθῆ καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων βελίστ' ἐπιμνησθαι, taking the

way in a recension, to require the valuation of every man's substance to be delivered in upon oath: and this oath being taken before Commissioners on the part of *Herod* and *Augustus*, was represented probably as an oath of subjection to both those kings. For this office, *Cyrenius* then governour of *Cilicia* seems to have been a more proper person than the governour of *Syria*. The governour of *Syria* could not legally have any thing to do in the affairs of *Judæa*; and his neighbourhood to *Judæa* must have given *Herod* and the *Jews*, who could not but be averse to this description, too just cause to suspect, that the *Romans* had then in view the annexing hereafter their country as a province to *Syria*. But whether *Cyrenius* was present at any part of this description or not, it being the foundation of the Assessment that followed some years after, while *Cyrenius* was governour of *Syria*, and brought by him into execution the description as well as

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the oath prescribed, that they were truly taxed according to the best of their knowledge. And so their Parents names, their own age; their Wives and Children's names; the part of the City, or the Village they dwell in were described and ratified, &c. And this was the Form of all succeeding. *Census*, Tull. Leg. iii. 3.

the

Chap. II. the tax might be ascribed to his name, even though he had no part in the description under *Herod* the great.

2. THERE is another interpretation of the text, which hath met with very learned Abettors, who read it thus, *But this description was made before Cyrenius governed Syria.* The reduction of *Judæa* into a province, which was the fatal stroke to the liberty of their country, was a most memorable *era* to the *Jews*. And this being effected by *Cyrenius* at his first coming to govern *Syria*, *St. Luke* might think it proper, to distinguish *Augustus's* decree for Censual tables under *Herod*, from the tax that was imposed and levied under *Cyrenius*, with this *note* of caution, implying, that they were not to confound the *description* he there mentioned, with the *tax* above ten years after, which was last and uppermost in their thoughts. (a) To support this interpretation Criticks go different ways, and all of them are justified from the stile of scripture. (b) They that think *πρώτη* is put for *πρωτέην*, or *first* for *prior*, prove that it is common in Greek Classical as well as sacred writers, to use *positives* and *superlatives* for *comparatives*, and

(a) Thus *Theophilact*, *Dru-*
sus, &c. from
John i. 15.
xv. 18. xx. 3,
4. Col. i. 15.
(b) *Chryst.*
from *St.* in
Matt. explains
πρώτη ὡς *Ἀξι-*
μων, by *πρῶτος*
Ἀξιμων.

and particularly that *πρώτος* occurs in that sense in the *New Testament* *. They that say *πρώτη* is to be construed with *πρὸ*, which is to be understood, or to the sense of *πρὸ*, shew the like usage of *Adjectives* and *Adverbs* for *Præpositions*, and of *πρώτος* or *πρώτον* for *πρὸ* from good Authors. And if the *Greek* words do well bear this interpretation, and import nothing more than that this *enrollment* was made *first before Cyrenius* presided over *Syria*, then the *Evangelist* is so far from saying that *Cyrenius's government* began with this new *description*, that he saith the quite contrary, and that *Cyrenius's government* began after the description. I might mention several other interpretations of this passage, whereby also it would appear that *St. Luke* is consistent with himself; but these are sufficient. And most of the others being collected together by Mr. *Lardner* in his learned treatise of the *Credibility of Gospel History* [II. 1.] I chuse to refer the inquisitive thither, that would know more of this matter.

Now if any one of these versions be agreeable to the *Greek* text, and there is nothing in history to shake the credit of any
the

Sect. I.

* Vide Perizonius, Mr. Le Clerc. and others—*πρῶτον* for *πρὸ* or including *πρὸ*. 2 Sam. xix. 43. lxx. 1 Tim. ii. 1. Aristoph. de Avibus ἤρχε τε *πρῶτον* Δαρείω καὶ Μεγαβύ- ζα.

Chap. II. the senses they give (as there is not) how
 ~~~~~ unfairly hath the *Schematist* pretended,  
 “ That the sense of St *Luke* is put out of  
 “ all dispute by *Josephus*, and pinned  
 “ down the birth of Jesus to a date of  
 “ eleven years after the time of his true  
 “ birth?”

To conclude, St. *Luke* writ his gospel very probably in the reign of *Claudius*, long before *Josephus* drew up his *Antiquities*, which was in the end of *Domitian*: *Luke* lived near the time of the facts that he relates, and often conversed with them that might remember the birth of Christ, and the description, and the subsequent tax by *Cyrenius*. Through ignorance he could not mistake in connecting the birth of Christ with *Cyrenius*'s tax eleven years distant from it, which of himself he could have rectified by the other dates in his gospel, viz. the age of *Herod* at Christ's birth, and the age of Jesus at his baptism, had he not corrected it at the instance of others, who were better informed. And designedly he would not err, it being of no importance to his cause, whether *Cyrenius* governed *Syria* at the birth of Jesus or not, but must be visibly a certain disservice, if he

he had introduced his gospel into the world with a lye, that lay readily within the memory of *Jews, Gentiles* and *Christians* to disprove.

6. HE demands, “ How could this affair be transacted in *Herod's* time, when the æra of the birth of Christ, which hath been the only measure, and standard of the accounts of time over *Christendom*, began three years after the death of *Herod*, as he thinks is now allowed by all Chronological Divines ? ”

THIS is to demand in other words, How could they that lived in the time that Christ was born, know the time and other circumstances of that affair so exactly, as they that writ of it 500 years after, and had no certain memoirs then left to direct them to the true time ? For this is truly the import of the question in the *Scheme*.

*Dionysius Exiguus*, from whom the computation by *the year of our Lord*, began in the West, writ in the sixth Century after Christ. He having a design of reconciling the Eastern and Western Churches in the observation of *Easter*, by taking in the Cycles necessary for fixing the Paschal-moon, and having made use of a Cycle  
of

Chap. II. of 95 years for that purpose, he chose to  
 mark the years of his great *Paschal* Cycle by the years of the birth of our Saviour, rather than by the *Epoch* of *Diocletian*, that had been hitherto used. His new *Epoch* was so liked, that many afterwards followed it, though never generally till several hundred of years after it was invented. But it is to be observed that neither he, nor they from whom he might take the year of Christ's birth, with which he began his æra, had any historical evidence for it, but built it entirely upon false reasonings, wherein they were followed by them that knew no better, till the restoration of learning brought in a reformation of chronology.

BUT what is there in this, that hurts the truth of christianity, or overturns the credit of *Luke's* history as to the *Magi*? When *Dionysius* invented the use of that æra, the true time of Christ's birth was certainly lost, and they had not skill enough in *Dionysius's* age to retrieve it. And well it might be lost, since the first Christians did not reckon from the birth of Christ, but kept to the *Epochs* of the several countries where they dwelt. The  
memory

memory then of his *birth* depending on Sect. II.  
tradition, it was soon varied by different  
computations of the years of *Herod* and  
*Augustus* in several provinces, and of the  
different names of the consuls, with which  
they joined this great event. So that in  
*Jerom's* time the world was divided about  
the true day, month, and year of his nati-  
vity; and there were as many different o-  
pinions concerning it, as there was variety  
of traditions.

Diverſa qui-  
dem fertur  
opinio in  
mundo, &  
pro traditio-  
num varietate  
ſententia eſt  
diverſa.

OUT of theſe it happened that *Diony-  
ſius* or his friends that he followed, choſe  
the worſt opinion. But their doing ſo, is  
by no means concluſive for their being in  
the right, or for St. *Luke's* being in the  
wrong. For the eccleſiaſtical writers before  
*Dionyſius*, in the ſecond and third and  
fourth Centuries, who lived nearer the  
time, and had better means of informati-  
on, place the birth of Chriſt ſome two  
years, ſome three, ſome more years, be-  
fore the *vulgar Æra* \*, none of them,  
as

\* Vide in Fabricii Bibliothec. Antiq. c. 7. Varias ſen-  
tentias de anno quo natus eſt Chriſtus. In which enume-  
ration, *Ireneus*, *Clem. A.* and *Tertullian*, and the old *Alex-  
andrians*, make Chriſt to be born three years before the  
Æra

Chap. II.  as we know of, brought it so low as *Dionysius* hath done, who did not reflect that *Herod* was then dead before the year he assigns to Christ's birth. His blunder so late after the fact hath not sufficient authority, to take place of the earlier traditions that remove his birth some years higher, much less to prejudice the relations of two Evangelists who lived in the same age with Christ, and agree in saying he was born under *Herod the Great*, and was an infant in the first year of *Archelaus* the son of *Herod*, according to one of those Evangelists, and was 30 years old in the 15th of *Tiberius* the Roman emperor, and in the days of *Herod Tetrarch* of *Gallilee*, according to another of them. And it is to be noted, that all the ecclesiastical writers did admit every one of these facts, though

*Æra of Dionysius: Eusebius, Jerom, and Epiphanius, two years; Sulpitius Severus, four years.*

\* Euthalii  
Prolog. in S.  
Pauli Episto-  
lus. apud  
Zacagg. mo-  
numenta, T.  
I. p. 357.

To which may be added the Testimony of *Euthalii*\* as to the old *Egyptians*. They reckon, as he observes, from Christ's Advent to *Arcadio IV.* and *Honorio III. Cæss.* and from thence to the first consulship of *Leo Augustus* (which was 63 years from the aforesaid Consulship of those emperors) 462 years. Count so many years from *Anno Domini*, and they will make but 459 years. They therefore by this reckoning carried the birth or advent of Christ three years higher or more.

they

they misplaced them by their false calculations. Sect. II.

7. FROM questions, the *Schematist* proceeds to this positive assertion, “ That the  
“ affair of the *Magi*, and the facts con-  
“ sequential to it, *viz.* the slaughter of  
“ the infants, Christ’s journey into *E-*  
“ *gypt*, his return thence to *Nazareth*,  
“ and his stay there for fear of *Archelaus*,  
“ (a train of facts recorded in *Matth.* ii.)  
“ cannot well be reconciled with the si-  
“ lence of *Luke* in relation to them all;  
“ nor can these transactions be placed in  
“ any part of the 40 days after *Jesus’s*  
“ birth, consistently with *Luke’s* history of  
“ those 40 days.” To all which I an-  
swer—

*First*, If this position be admitted as a rule whereby to judge of the truth of any historian’s narration, *viz.* that every fact recorded in one writer must be false, unless it be corroborated by the testimony of other cotemporary writers, or that the silence of coeval authors shall spoil the credit of facts expressly mentioned by any single author, there is an end of a great part of *Gentile* history, and of many considerable relations that we read in *Josephus*,  
G g which

Chap. II. which there is no reason otherwise to  
 ~~~~~ doubt of.

BUT no man did ever yet lay this down for a rule universally. And there is the less reason to insist strictly on it with the sacred writers, since their intention was not to give an exact history of Christ, from his birth to his death, according to the series of things and order of time, or to collect all the circumstances and actions of his whole life; but to propose such a short specimen of these things, as might be easily born in memory, and were deemed most efficacious to prove to the satisfaction of every capacity, that Jesus was sent from God, and did the works and taught the will of God.

Agreeably to this view St. *John* declares the end of his writing his gospel; and it is applicable to that of all the other Evangelists: *These things are written, that you might believe, that Jesus is the Christ the son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name.* To be more particular, he did not think needfull. For he had very many more materials, out of which he selected these few, with which he might have amplified his history

history into large volumes ; as he saith Sect. II.
 himself in this gospel. *Many other signs*
truly did Jesus in the presence of his dis- John xx. 30.
xxi. 25.
ciples, which are not written in this book.
 So many, that to imply they were out of
 the reach of being numbered or remem-
 bred all, he speaks of them again in an
 hyperbolical style. *And there are also ma-*
ny other things which Jesus did, the
which if they should be written every one,
I suppose that even the world it self could
not contain the books that should be writ-
ten.

FROM hence the cause is evident, why
 the same historical narrations, the same facts
 and the same discourses, are not always to
 be found in the several gospels. Each
 Evangelist followed his own method in
 writing Christ's life, under the direction
 nevertheless of the spirit of God, which
 they began from different stages of his life:
 Some from the circumstances of his con-
 ception and birth, some from his entrance
 on his publick ministry and prophetick of-
 fice, some from the state whercin he pre-
 existed before his coming into the world,
 and his divine original antecedent to his
 creation of all things. They do not there-
 fore,

Chap. II. fore, nor could not carry on the like thread
 of story, as not setting out from one and the same beginning. And when they concur in the same periods of time, they are not wont to observe the same connexion of facts and circumstances, or even of discourse, as would become Diarists or Annalists, but use the liberty which is allowed to writers of memoirs, to relate things as they occur to their memory, or are subservient to their other design of writing.

SOME events relating to Jesus's birth, some of his miraculous works and heavenly discourses were more in their thoughts than others, as having made a deeper impression on their own minds, or been observed when they happened to strike most the beholders and hearers, and to prove powerful means of their conviction; these they were sure to commit to writing, as most likely to make posterity become believers also, though they had not seen them. Or writing as they did in different countries, where some facts and circumstances concerning Jesus were best known and attested, or most talked of, and were most operative toward their faith in Christ, each Evangelist would find he best pursued the
end

end of his writing, by inserting these things in their respective gospels with a preference to the rest. And sometimes he would see it expedient in one place, which another Evangelist saw no occasion for in a different place, to remark certain passages touching Christ, that tended to remove prejudices or disputes that prevailed in those churches, for whose more immediate use he intended his gospel. Sect. II.

FROM what cause soever it proceeded, so it is, one Evangelist relates pieces of Christ's history and parts of his conversation, that are entirely omitted by the rest. *Luke* joins the history of *John the Baptist's* conception and birth with *Jesus's*, he notes how it fell out that *Jesus* was born at *Bethlehem*; he mentions the first notification of his birth to the shepherds that kept watch in the fields, his circumcision, his dedication at the temple, the several prophecies spoke over him at his dedication, and his journey again to *Jerusalem* at the age of twelve; which are all passed over by *Matthew*, even while he is writing of the same times. On the other hand, *Matthew* records the coming of the *Magi*, and the confusion of *Herod* at the news,

Chap. II.  Christ's danger from *Herod*, his journey in-
to *Egypt*, and his return thence, and the
slaughter of the infants in *Bethlehem* the
mean while, of which *Luke* hath not a
word: Shall we then conclude, that nei-
ther of their accounts are credible, where
they stand unsupported by each other? No
certainly. It is not in this part only of
Christ's story, that the Evangelists are single
in their narration. The same thing is to
be remarked in several other places of e-
very one of the four gospels; things that
cannot be contested are found in one gos-
pel, and not touched on in the rest. St.
John especially writing after the other
three, gives almost an entire new account
of Christ's history from his own know-
ledge; and yet it would be absurd to
question the truth thereof, on pretence
that the facts in his gospel are not to be
reconciled with the *silence* of the other
Evangelists in relation to them all. It is
by comparing the different memoirs by se-
veral hands of the life of any person, that
we come to a full and true knowledge of
all the circumstances of his life. The
mere silence of one memoir-writer is no
ground to deny what is expressly affirmed
by



by another. The one might better know or remember the fact he records, or have special reasons, which the other had not, to perpetuate it. Only when there is something in one account, that evidently contradicts or is inconsistent with the relation of the same times in another, may we reasonably suspect and controvert the truth of one of those historians.

INDEED the *Schematist* goes on to represent this to be the present case, as if St. *Matthew* must be inconsistent with St. *Luke*, from the impossibility (as he apprehends) of disposing the facts consequential to the affair of the *Magi*, within the forty days from Christ's birth to his dedication in the temple according to *Luke*. But herein he is much mistaken, as I shall shew,

2dly. For first what need is there for crowding all these consequential facts within the compass of forty Days? Doth St. *Matthew* say, that the *Magi* came to *Bethlehem* before the fortieth Day of Christ's dedication at *Jerusalem*? Or doth St. *Luke* say, that immediately after those forty days, and the ceremony was ended at the temple, the parents of Jesus never returned to *Bethlehem*? No. Neither the

Chap. II. one nor the other is intimated by them. *Matthew* leaves the time of the coming of the *Magi* so at large, that for any thing to the contrary in him, it might happen six, eight, or ten months after the birth of Jesus. Jesus was born, before they saw the star that published his birth: The *Magi* might observe the manifestation or rising of the star, some days before they considered what it might portend, or could prepare for such a journey. Some time was spent upon the road from their own home to *Jerusalem*, where they might be a while detained, before they gained admittance to *Herod*, who did first convene and consult a special council of the *Jews*. Reflecting on all this, one cannot well doubt that more than forty days were spent, before the *Magi* reached *Bethlehem*. It was the law of *Moses*, that after forty days, the mother that had brought forth a son was to offer a sacrifice at the temple for her purification, and the child to be presented there before the Lord. The parents of Jesus might fulfill this law in due time, and that being over, might easily return with the child to *Bethlehem*, (where probably they had some property,) and where surely they minded to dwell

dwelt after their return out of *Egypt*, but that they feared *Archelaus*. And here being come back from *Jerusalem*, they did continue until the arrival of the *Magi*. Sect. II.

For St. *Luke*'s words are these, *when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee to their own city Nazareth*. The historian is not precise in the time: he doth not remark how soon it was after they had complied with the law. It might be at the distance of some months after they had been at *Jerusalem*, by the words of St. *Luke*. For such is the use of the particle *ὡς* in this place, which we render *when* or *after*. It ties not down to a very near determinate time, but leaves some latitude in point of time, as it doth when joined with words of age and measure, and signifies *then* or *thereabouts*.

BUT why doth St. *Luke* write that he *returned into Galilee to Nazareth*, after he made mention of his being *presented* to the Lord in *Jerusalem*, if he did not then return thither? Even because he did return to *Nazareth* within a few Weeks after, and there continued the best part of many years of his life. The intermediate time

and

Luke ii. 39.
Καὶ ὡς ἐτέλε-
σαν ἅπαντα τὰ
κατὰ τὸ νόμον
κυρίου, ὑπέστρε-
ψαν εἰς τὴν
Γαλιλαίαν.

Chap. II. and places of his abode he takes no notice
 of, as not material to his purpose in writing his gospel, and hastens to his settlement in *Galilee*, the theatre where he began to shew himself to the World, and whereon he bestowed most of his conversation, and performed most of his mighty works.

BUT *Matthew*, who chose to be more particular in relating the things that happened before Christ got to *Nazareth*, * mentions his several removes between *Bethlehem* and that place, whither he at last carries him to reside till his entrance upon his ministry ; and thus the history of Jesus as it stands in both *Evangelists* is brought near together, by their both setting him down at *Nazareth*, after the relation of his birth at *Bethlehem*, but one seeming to carry him directly thither through *Jerusalem*, and the other expressing the several routs he took, before he settled there.

THIS way of writing is common to the *Evangelists* with all other historians : They seem to connect distant Events, and points of time remote from each other, or the chief stages of a person's abode, as if the one instantly succeeded to the other, to
 avoid

* Aug. de consensu Evangelist. ii. §. 36. Sic unum quemq; Evangelistam contexere narrationem suam, ut tanquam nihil pretermittentis series digesta videatur, tacitis enim que non vult dicere, sic ea quæ vult dicere, illis quæ dicebat adjungit, ut ipsa continuo sequi videantur.

avoid tiring the reader's attention, or giving him a distaste, with meerly naming what intervened, of which they resolved to say nothing more. A Chasm in an historical narration is like a parenthesis in discourse, that may be filled up in one gospel, and may be writ and read without it in another gospel. By which means the last memorable event, after the account of which the two *Evangelists* part from each other, must appear to be immediately joined in the one *Evangelist*, with the next event wherein they both meet, though it be plain, from the digression interposed in the other *Evangelist*, before he comes up again with the event in the former gospel, that they lye wide asunder.

BUT *Secondly*, were it necessary to include the coming of the *Magi* to *Jerusalem*, and from thence to *Bethlehem* within the space of 40 days, neither is such a disposition of these facts inconsistent with St. *Luke*. They might get to *Bethlehem* a day or two before the appointed time for the dedication of the infant, and the purification of his mother. The Parents of Jesus might step to *Jerusalem* undiscovered, after *Herod's* secret discourse with the *Magi*, even

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W
Chap. II.

ven though it did happen that *Herod* was at the same time in *Jerusalem*. What the mother and son were to perform there, was the work of a few hours. *Herod* knew not every thing that passed in the temple relating purely to the sacerdotal functions. The Priests were not obliged to enquire the birth place of every child that was dedicated, or the abode of every woman that came to give thanks for her delivery : nor were they inclined to tell *Herod* of it, at this juncture, had they enquired into it. But as is most probable, *Herod* kept the *intelligence* given him by the *Magi*, as secret as he could, and was at this time abroad at *Jericho*, where his thoughts were employed how to deal with his rebellious son *Antipater* (which was his more immediate danger) and in whom to settle the succession of his kingdom. He did not expect the return of the *Magi* so soon from *Bethlehem*, where many unforeseen accidents might detain them three or four days ; and the mean while *Joseph* might be warned at *Jerusalem*, to fly to *Egypt*, as *Matthew* writes he was warned in a dream, without saying *where*, to hasten and save the child's life. If so many of these facts are very possible



possible to be placed within the forty days, as indeed I see nothing to the contrary; the rest of them, such as Christ's flight into *Egypt*; the slaying of the infants at *Bethlehem*, and Christ's coming back from *Egypt*, again into the land of *Israel*, may as consistently follow the forty days; for there is no limitation of time prescribed in the gospel to the doing of these things, besides that of *Herod's* death, and the beginning of the reign of *Archelaus*, which pass much beyond the forty days.

Lastly, To clog the history of the *Magi*, the *Schematist* sets himself to aggravate the difficulty, in accounting for *Herod's* ordering children from two years old and under to be slain, and asks, "How could such an extraordinary thing be done, and no historian, but the supposed second chapter of *Matthew* mention it? particularly how could *Josephus* omit it if true, who seems a great enemy to *Herod*, and willing to tell every thing he knew to his disadvantage, especially all his various acts of cruelty?"

I have already observed how fallacious a way of reasoning it is, to conclude narrations of facts in one writer to be false, from their

Chap. II.  their being not mentioned by other writers about the same Age. It is still more unreasonable, to make the silence of writers whose books happen to come down imperfectly to our days, an argument that neither they any where else, nor any other ancient Author took notice of occurrences that we do not at present find in them.

OF the historians of those times that have been preserved, *Dion*, where we most want him fails us. These books of his that treated of the latter end of *Herod's* reign, and the events subsequent to his death, are lost. *Suetonius* is known to be too brief, and to omit many things: and after the life of *Julius* he tells nothing in order, but digests his historical collections in the way of Common-Place. And the Annals of *Tacitus* begin with *Tiberius*.

THERE were certainly other gentile records of these times of *Augustus* and *Herod*, which have perished, as did many writers of other Ages before them. And from some of these, extant in the fourth Century, it is reasonable to believe, *Macrobius* took *Augustus's* jest, which he spoke upon hearing the news of *Herod's* cruelty to his son, and to the infants in *Bethlehem*.

Saturn ii. 4.

hem. For among the facetious sayings of and against that Prince, he mentions this, *Sect. II.*
 “ It is better be *Herod's* hog than his
 “ son.” And this he said, when he heard
 that *Herod's* Son was killed among the in-
 fants under two years old, whom *Herod*
 had ordered to be slain.

THIS story *Macrobius* could not have
 from the gospel, which takes not the least
 notice of *Herod's* son ; and besides, there
 are such evident marks in his *Saturnalia*,
 that *Macrobius* was a *Pagan* and no *Chris-*
tian, nor ever read the gospel, as will not
 let us suspect he borrowed any part of this
 story from St. *Matthew*. The slanderous
 insinuation therefore against *Christianity*
 thrown into the *Scheme*, upon presumpti-
 on that *Macrobius* was a Christian, is ground-
 less, viz. That the authority of *Macrobius*
 is not the better for his being a Christian. *Sch. p. 37.*
Macrobius was no Christian, and appears to
 be a mere transcriber of this saying of *Au-*
gustus *, and no inventor. Although had
 he been a Christian, I see not why his au-
 thority should be the worse for it : Since
 by his *profession* he lay under the strongest
 obligations to truth, while a Pagan Fatalist
 sits loose to all ties of conscience and bands
 of religion.

V. Spanheim
 Dub. Evang.
 i.

* Grot. in
 Math. Macro-
 bius Augusti
 dicta ex alio
 transcript &
 non ex Evan-
 gelio.

BE

Chap. II. BE he what he will, the *Schematist* is determined, his testimony shall go for nothing.

FOR 1. saith he, “ *Augustus* could not
 “ break such a jest, as implies his igno-
 “ rance of his own sentence against *Antipater*, who, when *Herod* submitted the
 “ matter to *Augustus*, *Augustus* himself
 “ gave orders for his death.”

How unfortunate is the *Schematist* in most of his foundations! *Josephus*, from whom alone the *Schematist* could say what he did, saith the contrary, and that *Augustus* determined nothing in his cause.

Ant. xvii. 9. THESE are his words, “ Letters came
 “ from *Cæsar*, wherein he left it to the
 “ pleasure of *Herod* the father and king of
 “ *Antipater*, whether he would banish him
 “ or put him to death.” Is it not plain
 from hence, that *Augustus*, gave no order
 for *Antipater*’s death, but left his punishment to *Herod*’s choice? At the same time
 he inclined him to the merciful side, viz.
 to banishment, by reminding *Herod* of his
 relation to *Antipater* as his *Father*, though
 as his *king* he might proceed to the utmost
 extremities. After this, *Augustus*, who
 was a prince of great clemency and tender
 disposition,

disposition, might well wonder to hear, Sect. II.
that *Herod* the father had chose to kill his
son; an action that carries horror with it,
and of which *Herod* himself, cruel as he
was, presently repented, when it was too
late to help it.

2. “ *AUGUSTUS* knew that *Anti-*
“ *pater* was then a grown man, and there-
“ fore could not make a reflection, which
“ if pertinently understood, implies him to
“ conceive *Herod's* son to be under two
“ years old.” *Augustus* certainly knew
Antipater to be at man's estate, it being but
a few months before that *Antipater* parted
from his Court at *Rome*, and his *jest* doth
not imply the contrary. But *Macrobius* in
his relation of it, mingles two facts toge-
ther; which by the way shews, that the
murder of the Infants and of *Antipater* was
perpetrated about the same time, though
not on the same occasion. For the truth
of the matter appears to stand thus. Both
these facts being done pretty near the same
time, and the news of both reaching *Aug-*
ustus at once, that which most struck him
was *Herod's* unnaturalness, from which being
recovered, he threw out the raillery upon *He-*
rod's religion and cruelty which is preserv-

Chap. II. ed in *Macrobius*, *It is better be his hog,*
 ~~~~~ *than his son.* Here is no inconsistency between *Augustus's* knowledge of the grown age of *Antipater*, and his words upon the news of his death. It is *Macrobius's* blunder in the recital of *Augustus's* words, if he intended to say that *Herod's* son was killed *among*, and not *with*, or at *the same time* the infants were slain; which is an interpretation that very able Criticks have defended. However even his blunder shews, that he did not feign the story, nor learn it from the gospel, for then he would have been careful to make all the parts of it consistent with one another, and with the gospel.

3. “ The remark of *Augustus* hath no  
 “ relation to the slaughter of the Infants,  
 “ but only to that of *Herod's* son.”

AND what then? The news that introduced the remark of *Augustus*, hath according to *Macrobius* a relation to the slaughter of the infants, and is connected with it. But the slaughter of the infants would not bear *Augustus's* jest, as the death of *Antipater* did. *Macrobius* designed to relate only the ingenious sayings of *Augustus*, not all his sayings or serious reflections, nor even a summary of all his speeches.

ches. From this instance, the *Schematist* Sect. II. may satisfy himself that no inference lies from the silence of a person about any fact, to his ignorance of it. *Macrobius* assures, that *Herod's* son, and the infants under two years old were slain by *Herod*: but *Augustus* who knew both the facts, doth yet reflect only on *Herod's* murder of his son. It is not every cruelty, that will bear raille-ry, or that is proper to be satyrized.

4. “ *MACROBIUS* lived in the  
“ end of the fourth Century, and is no e-  
“ vidence for any fact or saying in the  
“ beginning of the first Century. It is an  
“ unanswerable objection to the authority  
“ of *Macrobius*, that what he says occurs  
“ in no Author before him.”

Pray how many authors in the beginning of the first Century doth the *Schematist* know to be now extant? or how many writings concerning that Age, are come to us entire in that part of *Augustus's* reign, where we should look for this story, or witty saying of *Augustus*? And how many more books of those times might there be in the days of *Macrobius*, of which we have no remains at all? Till these questions be truly answered, *Macrobius* in the fourth Cen-  
H h 2 tury,

Chap. II.  tury is a good evidence for facts or sayings in the first, because he copies the words of an Author of the first Century, and so far stands in his place.

BUT what is it that doth not occur in any writer before *Macrobius* ? *The slaying of the infants* ; that is expressly related by *St. Matthew*, a writer in the beginning of the first Century ; one that lived by the place of this execution, and well knew all the circumstances of it. And *the slaying of Antipater* the son of *Herod*, about the same time with the slaying of the infants, is at large in the *Antiquities* of *Josephus*, a writer in the end of the first Century. *Macrobius* in the 4th Century joins both these facts, and relates that when the news of both came together to *Augustus's* ears, he said a merry thing upon occasion of one of the murders. Where is the difficulty in taking his authority for this saying of *Augustus* ? Or why should *Macrobius* be supposed to forge this single raillery for *Augustus*, when there was a collection then known of many others of this sort that were spoken by *Augustus*, to which *Macrobius* seems to refer ? For as to the facts themselves, they rest not on the single credit



dit of *Macrobius* : each of them stands attested by a writer of the first antiquity : and whether *Macrobius* had not other as antient authorities for them both that lived near the age of *Augustus*, whose words he transcribed, is what the *Schematist* ought not to deny, before he gives better reasons than he hath done, for that opinion.

*Lastly*, “ How could *Josephus* in particular omit the slaughter of the infants “ if true, who seems a great enemy to “ *Herod*, and willing to tell every thing to his disadvantage ? ”

HE might as well ask, if it were true that *Jesus* was born in *Herod's* days, and gathered disciples, and did surprizing works, and was put to death in a very publick manner in the reign of *Tiberius* ; how comes it to pass, that *Josephus* writing of these very times, did omit this entire history, as the *Schematist* will say he did ? And my answer to both questions would be the same. Why ? *Josephus* was a true *Jew*, and an utter enemy to the sect of Christianity : and therefore was careful not to enter into a detail of facts, that had relation to *Jesus*, or might lead him to speak at all of him and his works. *Iustus Tiberiensis*

Chap. II.  that had a part in the wars of the *Jews* with *Titus*, and writ the history of it, did neither mention *Jesus* nor his followers. The like caution the other writing *Jews* near that age did probably observe, as may be gathered from the very imperfect knowledge the early *Jews* after them discover to have of *Jesus* and his affairs, when they first fell into disputes with the Christians. This was the sense in which they took the precept of the son of *Syrach*, viz. *Let the memory of the wicked rot*, which they fulfilled by avoiding to do any act in word or writing, that should perpetuate their names to posterity.

*J O S E P H U S* had indeed no good will to *Herod*, but writing as he did his *Antiquities* under *Domitian*, above ninety years after the death of *Herod*, he must take his information from others, who lived before him; some of whom might be willing to cover *Herod's* faults, and draw a curtain over some of his actions, that must represent him in his true colours: As others might run into the contrary extreme, and favour the government of the *Jews* in all events against him, and in their bitter prejudices against the Lord *Jesus*. O

OF the first sort was *Nicol. Damascenus*, the writer of *Herod's* life. He was a favourite and friend of *Herod* (a), and of *Archelaus* (b), that ruled after him, and said all he could to flatter the house of *Herod*, and to extenuate if not conceal his crimes (c). And yet he is *Josephus's* principal author and guide in most matters that concern that prince. And though sometimes he pretends to differ from him, when he would indulge his pencil in painting his cruel acts. Yet truth is but a little gainer thereby, for then he gives himself up to the passions of the governing priests of the *Assamonean* race (d), who were

(c) xvii. 11. Ejus operis (scilicet Salomonis sepulchri) Nicolaus illius temporis scriptor meminit: sed non item de discesu regis (Herodis in sepulcrum ejus ad thesauros effodiendos) preter decorum id factum existimans; idq; more suo fecit. Vivi enim regis hæc auribus dedit captans gratiam & ea tantum attingens quæ ad gloriam illius pertinere visa sunt. Quin & multa ejus aperte injusta facinora, aut aliâ specie afficta fucavit, aut quantum potuit occultare studuit. Quando quidem etiam crudelitati in Mariamnem & filios speciosam causam adstruere conatur: Illam impuditiæ, hos insidiarum patri paratarum insimulans. Et hoc toto opere facit perpetuo. Quæ recte & justè res gessit nimis extollens laudibus, contraria vero diligenter excusans. Sed illi ob quam dixi causam danda venia, non tam ad posteritatis cognitionem, quam ad gratificandum suo regi scribenti.

(d) Ant. xvi. 11. Nos qui & generis propinquitate Assamaneos reges asingimus, & sacerdotii honore fungimur in-

Chap. II. were disposseſs'd by *Herod* of the crown, and who, we may venture to ſay, would be as little pleas'd as *Nicolaus Damasce-nus*, to have *Herod's* ſlaughter of the infants aggravated, ſince it was intended to deſtroy that *Jeſus*, whom they refus'd to accept for their *Messias*, and afterwards crucified.

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### CHAP. II. SECT. III.

*Of the tradition of a great king to come, among the Greeks and Romans.*

AFTER the *Arabians*, the *Greeks* and *Romans* were appeal'd to for ſome knowledge of this tradition of the future *Advent* of a great victorious king, that ſhould rule the world. This knowledge is thought to have been firſt communicated to them, by the canal of the verſes that went under the name of the *Sibylline verſes*, which for many years before Chriſt were

corruptè res geſtas exponimus, ſalvâ reverentiâ poſteriorum regis illius qui etiam nunc rerum potiuntur; majorem tamen veritatis rationem habentes, cum ipſorum quoque veniâ.

were had in high esteem, and as may be Sect. III. collected from what the *Gentile* writers  say, contained several predictions of this nature.

It seemed to me very probable that these verses were drawn up in *Greek* and scattered by the *Jews* in *Asia Minor* and the *Greek* islands, and taken from their own scriptures, though publish'd under a name much set by, that of the *Sibyls*, in order to prepare the way for the reception of their *Messias*, whose coming about that time they thought might be approaching. And I hoped my *Adversary* would not reject this notion, for the sake of the truly learned *Grotius*, who was before me in that sentiment (a). I was it seems deceived, for thus the *Schematist* attacks me.

“ALL this is mere imagination and conjecture, and though the Bishop asserts it as a fact, he doth not pretend to give us history to support it.”

It

(a) Grotius in Mat. ii. 1. Sibyllina Oracula, non nova illa quæ citant Christiani, sed vetera Romæ a xv. Virg. asservata, nihil aliud mihi videntur fuisse quam versus Græci *Judeorum*. Ex his autem deprompsit illud quod Cicero recitat, ut *si salvi esse vellent, eum qui rex esset, regem agnoscerent*. Itemq; Virgilii Idyllium quartum novi cujusdam regni pollicitationem continens & quidem iisdem ferme verbis, quæ prophetæ hebræi usurpant.

Chap. II.



It would indeed be strange if history could be produced for it. The *Jews*, did they contrive these verses under a borrowed name, were the last men that should confess it; for by telling the world that they were the Authors, the very design of writing them was defeated. The verses being got into reputation, the *Gentiles* enquired not into their origin till it was too late to trace them to the first composers; and the *Roman* senate having once received them as the work of that prophets, would not be forward, even had they seen their error, to lessen the authority of their judgment, by owning they had been imposed upon. We must be content therefore to wave historical evidence for this fact. But such evidence as the matter is capable of hath been offered. The subject of these verses was the same with what the *Jews* expected out of their prophets: The time of their being first known was late, long after the days wherein the true

Jos. Ant. I 5. *Sibyls* lived that were taken notice of by the *Gentiles*, and not before the *Jews* went to settle in *Asia Minor*: And the places from whence they were collected were the countries and cities where the *Jews* most inhabited.

inhabited. To which may now be added, Sect. III. that *Josephus* cites the *Sibyl* as mentioning the building of the high tower of *Babylon*, the confusion of languages, and the naming of the place where all these things happened *Babylon*, from this incident. The history and the expressions are scriptural, and therefore shew that this pretended *Sibyl* who writ some time before the present collection of *Sibylline* verses were made, was only a disguised *Jew*.

“ But if they were of *Jewish* composition, they could not have been received by the *Roman* priests, who were to examine what was brought home as critically as they could, in order to distinguish the genuine ones, wherein they must be supposed to have acted by *Pagan* notions and rules, and to have rejected all *Anti-pagan* prophecies, if there had been any such brought before them.”

IF they had known before-hand, that they were of *Jewish* composition, the *Schematist* guesses right, that the *Roman* Priests would not have received them so greedily as it appears they did. But whether it was their earnestness to obtain these

Chap. II. these verses, that made them overlook some passages in them at that time, certain it is, with all the critical discernment, this *writer* supposes they used to reject *anti-pagan* prophecies, they left so many predictions in this first collection of the *Quindecim Viri*, that *Augustus* thought it afterwards necessary (*a*), as did *Tiberius* a second time (*b*) to cause a further and stricter review of them, and to separate the spurious (*i. e.* those that were turned to give them any disturbance) from the genuine.

WE may also add, that if *Jews* were the compilers, and that they drew them up with

(*a*) Suet. vit. Octavii c. 31. Quidquid fatidicorum librorum Græci Latiniq; generis nullis vel parum idoneis Auctoribus vulgo ferebatur supra duo millia contracta undiq; cremavit, ac solos retinuit *Sibyllinos*; hos quoq; *delectu habito*.

(*b*) Tac. Annal. vi. 12. Relatum ad Patres a Quintiliano Tr. Plebis de libro sibullæ quem Caninius Gallus xv. Vir recipi inter cæteros ejusdem vatis—Misit literas Cæsar modice Tribunum increpans—Gallo exprobrabat, quod scientiæ ceremoniarumq; vetus incerto autore, ante sententiam collegii, non ut assolet, lecto per magistros æstimatoq; *carmine*, apud infrequentem senatum egisset, Simul commune fecit, quia multa vana sub nomine celebri vulgabantur, sanxisse Augustum, quem intra diem ad Prætores Urbanum deferrentur, neq; habere privatim liceret. Quod a majoribus quoq; decretum erat post exustum Socii bello Capitolium, quæsitis Samo Illo Erythris, &c. carminibus Sybullæ datoq; Sacerdotibus negotio, quantum humana ope potuissent vera discernere.



with design to reconcile the *Gentiles* to the kingdom of the *Messias*, they would be careful not to shock them too much. And by what we see of them that are preserved in the *Gentile* writings, they meddle little with their idolatry, but run mostly in general terms upon the *coming of a king*, in some part or other of the world: And verses on that subject might be safely retained, without injury to their state or religion.

BUT this will best appear from the instances I alledged out of the *Gentile* writers, who quoting some of these verses that were known before Christ, plainly shew the subject that they chiefly had in view.

AND I. It was observed that a little before the death of *Julius Cæsar*, after he had been appointed General of the *Parthick* Expedition, a design was set on foot to obtain for him the name of king, under this colour, that *it was writ in the book of fate*, as *Suetonius*, or *in the Oracles of the Sibyl*, as *Dio* and *Tully* say, that the *Parthians* could not be subdued but by a king, and as *Tull.* adds, *they must*

Suet. in Jul.  
c. 79.

Dio Hist.  
XLIV.  
Tull. de Di-  
vin. II.

Chap. II. *must acknowledge him to be king, who was*  
 *king in reality, if they would be safe.*

Sch. p. 44. To this it is replied by the *Schematist*,  
 “ That this was no genuine sibyllin verse,  
 “ because it was wholly suited to the *Ro-*  
 “ *man* affairs at that time.” It was so  
 suited by *Cotta* one of the *Quindecim Viri*,  
 I allow. But it appears to have no view  
 to the *Roman* affairs, by the Composer.  
 And this *Cicero* did inform him, who ar-  
 gues from hence, that the composer acted  
 cunningly when he spoke this verse, and  
 not under a prophetick impulse. “ If  
 “ this is found in those books of what  
 “ person, and of what time is it intend-  
 “ ed? For he who made them acted cun-  
 “ ningly, that whatever happened, it might  
 “ seem to have been foretold, no particu-  
 “ lar men nor times being determinately  
 “ pointed out. For he designedly conceal-  
 “ ed himself, that the same verses might  
 “ seem to suit different matters and occa-  
 “ sions.”

YET the *Scheme* goes on to ask, “ Can  
 “ any thing be more precarious, than to  
 “ suppose this sentence which was so suit-  
 “ ed to a war the *Romans* had then on  
 “ foot, and to *Cæsar’s* usurpation should  
 “ be

“ be writ by a *Jew*. ” As if a sentence of Sect. III. general intendment and written upon one occasion, might not be accommodated to another ! The *Sibyl* spoke of a great king that should arise and subdue the *Parthians*, the most fierce untamed nation in those days : A *Roman* officer applies what was so said to a particular case of their own that then happened. How doth that disprove what the same person says, that it was written by a *Sibyl*, and might be so though it was then wrested to serve the ambitious views of *Cæsar*, and might equally serve the purposes of a hundred other princes ? It could not relate to the *mere Roman affairs*, as is affirmed in the *Scheme*, because it doth not relate to the *Roman* affairs at all. Any king, as well as a *Roman* king, or a *Roman* king at that time, would serve according to *Cicero*’s sense of the *Sibyl*, to overcome the *Parthians*.

HE then chicanes about the latter part of this prediction, *viz. and by a king only we may be saved*, which he saith, “ is the “ comment or interpretation of *Cotta* the “ xv. *Vir.* and not as the Bishop thinks, “ the words of the *Sibyl*. ” If I did mistake in that, it was not to take  
any

Chap. II. any advantage by it to the argument;

 The words allowed to be the *Sibyl's* are sufficient for my purpose. And very great men, *Grotius* and *Valesius* understood the whole passage, as I did, to be the *Sibyl's*.

Grot. in Mat.  
ii. 1. Vales  
in Euf. p.  
266.

But I think I did not mistake. As there were more verses than one in every prediction, and all to the purpose of the first sentence, what he supposes to be the comment of *Cotta*, I take to be the matter of the second verse in the *Sibyl*. And I am confirmed in this opinion, by *Plutarch's* report of this prediction, who though he blends together the words of the *Sibyl* and *Cotta's* application of them to the *Romans*, yet gives intimation enough to the reader for distinguishing the *Sibyl* from the *Sibylline Priest*. For thus he represents *Cotta's* saying out of the *Sibyl*, “ That the *Par-*  
“ *thians* were liable to be beaten by the  
“ *Romans*, if they made war upon them  
“ with a king: otherwise there was no  
“ withstanding them.” (a). The last line appears in his account to be as much a part of the prediction, as the first, and is less disguised

(a) Plut. vit. Jul. Cæsaris ὡς ἀλασιν μὲν τὰ ἑ Πάριον φαί-  
νετο Ρωμαίοις σὺν τῷ βασιλεῖ Σεκτενομήνῳ, ἄλλως ἔφυκτα ὄντα.

disguised with *Cotta's* words. On the Sect. III. contrary, *Dion* (b) gives us the first part  more pure than *Plutarch* doth, and *Cicero* (c) throws *Cotta's* application into the 2d verse; and this hath given the occasion of thinking the 2d verse was merely the comment of *Cotta*. *Suetonius*, according to his manner of writing briefly, mentions only the first verse, that being the substance of all that followed. But his silence is no prejudice to what is carried on in *Plut.* and *Cicero*, as the contents of another verse.

THE *Scheme* goes on to correct another mistake of the Bishop, whom he charges, “ as speaking so absurdly of this single “ verse of the *Sibyl*, as to call it an Acrostick.” I should profit by his correction, if I thought, as I do not, that there was occasion for it. My words were these, “ *Cicero* indeed doubted whether this was

(b) Dio XLIV. xv. Viri perhibebant, sibyllæ vaticinio prædictum esse, *Parthos nisi a rege subigi non posse* ii igitur xviri, de appellatione regis Cæsari tribuenda relaturi, quoniam id oraculum verum esse judicarent—Igitur Brutus & Cassius, quum neq; contradicere, neq; tacere sibi integrum fore cernerent, insidias ante quam de eo negotio quidquam statueretur, maturare decreverunt.

(c) Cic. de Divin. II. Sibyllæ versus observemus—quorum interpretes (*Cotta*) nuper dicturus in senatu putabatur, eum quem re verâ regem habebamus, appellandum quoque esse regem, si salvi esse vellemus.

Chap. II. “ so writ in the true genuine *Sibyls*, for  
 “ these good reasons, 1. *That the verse*  
 “ *was an Acrostick.*”

AND pray where is the absurdity of this? I render the word *Versus* in *Cicero* literally. Whatever *Cicero* meant by it in *Latin*, the same thing is imported by it in *English*. If by *Versus*, he intended the whole poem or composition, as he seems to do, and as *versus* and *carmen* are elsewhere often used, so did I: or if he understood thereby the *first Verse* of the poem which gave the subject or argument of the entire prophecy, and moreover the capital letters that began every following line, as in the next passage it is plain *Cicero* did; I am also intitled to use verse in the same sense: having no where explained my own meaning, but done the part of a mere translator.

*Carmen* pro  
 libro Sibyllæ  
 Tac. An. iv.  
 Lecto per  
 magistros, e-  
 stimaloq; *car-*  
*mine*—igitur  
 tunc notioni  
 xv. Virum is  
 liber subicitur  
 Item. Tull. d.  
 Div. II.

*CICERO* is arguing both against this sentence of *Cotta*, and the *Sibylline* prophecy it self from which it was said to be taken. There he adds, \* “ That this is not the poc-

\* Cic. de Div. Non esse autem illud carmen furentis, quum ipsum poemæ declarat, (est en immagis artis & diligentiae quam incitationis & motûs) tum vero ea, quæ Acrostichis dicitur, quum deinceps ex primis versus literis aliquid connectitur, ut in quibusdam Ennianis.

“ tick composition of one under prophe- Sect. III.  
 “ tick fury, partly the poem it self de-   
 “ clareth (which is rather the fruit of art  
 “ and diligence than impulse and motion)  
 “ partly the Acrostick as it is called, when  
 “ a sense is made to arise out of the initial  
 “ letters of a *verse* (or *poem*) as they suc-  
 “ ceed in order.” The *Schematist* doth  
 english this comma by *every verse*, insert-  
 in *cujusque* before *versus*, which he hath  
 no right to do without the authority of a  
 Manuscript, nor no occasion, if *verse* be  
 taken for the whole *poem*.

THEN *Cicero* proceeds, “ And so, (or  
 “ *but*) in the *Sibylline* books, out of the  
 “ *first verse* of each sentence (or prophe-  
 “ tick subject) the poem is so composed as  
 “ to begin every verse with the first letters  
 “ (of the words) in that sentence.”

THERE appears therefore to be a dou-  
 ble art in the composition of each *Sibyllin*  
 prophecy. The first line was so contriv-  
 ed, as out of the initial letters of the words  
 in that line, to give a sentence or sum of  
 the poem, and with the same letters and  
 order to begin every following verse in  
 that poem. And thus there being the same  
 artifice found, and the same letters in the

Chap. II. top verse, as in all the side verses, the top  
 verse or sentence may deserve the name of Acrollick, though no single succeeding verse did, as containing the Acrostical letters that begin the lines of the poem, and the like artifice in joining them together, and the same sentence or meaning when put together.

2. THE other reason for which *Cicero* was said to doubt if this sentence came from the *Sibyl*, is, “ for that it favoured the  
 “ abolishment of their old Religion which  
 “ the true *Sibyl* (namely in her books that  
 “ were burnt with the *Capitol*) confirm-  
 “ ed.”

Elond de Si-  
 byl l. 11. - 12.  
 (Cicero) con-  
 clud que les  
 poems com-  
 mis dans  
 Rome a la  
 garde des xv.  
 Virs. tendoi-  
 ent a l'impietè  
 plutôt qu'a  
 l'affirmè-  
 ment de la  
 religion.

THE *Schematist* interprets *Cicero's* words in the quite contrary sense, understanding by *religiones* Religious fancies, and leaving out *ne* before *valeant*, which I supply from the former comma. The sense then depending on the construction, the reader will judge of it. The learned *Blondel*, who was better skilled in the *Latin* tongue than both of us, interpreted, as I did, this passage ; and formed the same remark upon it. And to me it seems not very consistent to move the laying aside, and keep-  
 ing

ing books locked up that they may be of Sect. III.  
service, rather to the putting down of old,   
than setting up of new religious fancies,  
or to speak so contemptibly of religious  
rites or customs then in vogue with the  
people, under a popular government, and  
at a time he needed most their favour to  
ballance *Cæsar's* party, as is implied by the  
interpretation in the *Scheme*.

HOWEVER it be, the subject of this  
sentence appears clearly to be the coming  
of *a king* hereafter, that should be success-  
ful against the most formidable nation then  
in the world, and that was all I alledged it  
for. And though *Cicero* would doubt  
whether it was found in the *Sibyllin* books,  
as *Cotta* pretended : yet *Virgil* admits it, Virg. En. VI.  
and applies the same prediction to *Au-* 791.  
*gustus*, as often promised by the *Sibyl*. —Tibi quem  
promitti sapi-  
us audis.

AND even *Cicero*, whatever his judg-  
ment was now concerning the impos-  
ture of these verses, himself some years  
before owned his knowledge and regard  
of them, and grounded part of his accu-  
sation of *Lentulus*, upon his using their  
authority, to set himself up for *king* \*. For

I i 3 it

\* Cicero. Orat. contra Catilin. III.—se sibi confirmasse ex  
fatis

Chap. II. it was discovered in the examination of *Lentulus*, that he and the *Gauls* had secret discourses concerning the meaning of the *Sibyllin prophecies*, and therefore *Cicero* charges him with it, that he (*Lentulus*) had promised himself, that he was the third *Cornelius*, to whom it was decreed by the *Sibyl's prophecies*, and the answers of the South-sayers, the kingdom of *Rome* and the whole empire should come, *Cinna* and *Sylla* having been the two before him. He also said this was the fatal year of the City and Empire, which was the 10th from the acquitment of the (vestal) Virgins, and the 20th from the burning of the capitol.

THINGS predicted by different persons, are here mixed together in *Cicero*. For as † Bell. Catilin. *Salust* †, who is more accurate, tells this piece of history: They were the *Sibyllin* books that foretold the *new kingdom*, and destined it to three C's. \* (which *Lentulus*

*fatis Sibyllinis* Haruspicumque responsis se esse Tertium illum Cornelium in quem regnum hujus urbis & imperium per venire esset necesse, &c.

\* Dio Hist. R. LXII. omnes commovebat recordatio oraculi, quod decantatum fuerat Tiberii temporibus id erat. " Hinc ter trecentis circum voluentibus annis—seditio " perdet Romanos " Cumq; Nero hos versus nusquam repertos esse diceret mutatâ sententiâ hos versus ut vere sibyllinum canere cæperunt, ultimus Æneadum matrem necat Induperatur.

*tulus* probably explained of three *Corneiii.*) Sect. III.  
But they were the prodigies of the South-  
sayers that declared that 20th year would  
be fatal to *Rome*.

THEY both agree that the hope of the  
*new expected kingdom* was deduced from  
the verses of the *Sibyl*: And to this, no-  
thing being objected in the *Scheme*, I pass  
to the

3d Instance, *viz.* THAT it was the Just. in Oct.  
common report upon the conception or C. 94.  
birth of *Augustus*, “ That nature was then  
“ in labour to bring forth a king of the  
“ *Romans.*” But this was not in any verse  
“ of any (*Sibyllin*) prophecy, according to  
“ the *Scheme*: It was the interpretation of  
“ a prodigy that happened at *Rome* a little  
“ before *Augustus* was born; which in-  
“ terpretation was exceeding natural, at a  
“ time when the commonwealth was de-  
“ generating into absolute monarchy. And  
“ therefore he cannot comprehend how this  
“ passage can be used to prove the *Jews*  
“ translated their prophecies into *Greek*  
“ verses, and thereby communicated their  
“ notion of the advent of a great king to  
“ the *Greeks* and *Romans*.

Chap. III.  THIS passage *alone* was not offered to prove the *Jews* translated their prophecies into verse, &c. But this passage confirms, and is confirmed by others of the like nature, that about this time such an expectation prevailed even at *Rome*, and was thought there to be contained in the *Sibylline* verses, of whose original no good account can be given, besides that of deriving them from the *Jews*.

It is admitted, that *Suetonius* doth here make no mention of the *Sibyl*. But when it is considered, that *Augustus* was born in the very year *Cicero* was consul, and *Lentulus* was condemned : And the discourse was hot every where in *Rome*, that *Lentulus* grounded his expectation of the *kingdom* on the *Sibylline* books ; it cannot well be doubted that this prediction in the *Sibyl*, gave occasion to interpret the prodigies in favour of *Augustus*. But here, as before in the case of *Lentulus*, the Historian confounds two things in themselves distinct. The prediction of the *king* was from the *Sibyl* \* : the application to *Augustus* was from

\* Voss. de Sibyl. Orac. c. 4. Illo ipso anno quo capta a Pompeio fuere Hierosolyma prodit Sibyllinum illud oraculum Regem populo Romanam naturam parturire.

from the Southsayer. So *Virgil* thought †, when he ascribed to the *Sibyl* the prophecies of *Augustus's* greatness. And so one would collect from some expressions in the interpretation of the prodigies relating to *Augustus*. One affirms, *Dominum terrarum orbi natum*; And *Octavius* his father dreamt, that from his wife a ray of the sun was risen. These being so like the known expressions of the *Jews* in speaking of their *Messias*, whom they call in *Oriens* and *Anatole*, the East or Sun-rising, and the future *Lord of the whole Earth*: and so many prodigies and dreams of this sort, being recorded by *Suetonius* and *Dio* to have happened this year, I cannot but think, the heads and hearts of the men at *Rome*, were at this time full of what was to happen, and that the pretence of *Lentulus's* plot from the *Sibyl*, turned all their thoughts upon the event there predicted, and made them fancy from every unusual occurrence, that it was to be accomplished speedily.

It is plain, the expectation of such a king, did not arise first from the prodigy, but was prior to it. And I therefore conclude the application of it to the person of *Augustus*, was the whole matter that the interpretation

Sect. III.

† *Æn.* vi. 791, &c. Where the Scholiast Pomp. Sabinus notes, propter hoc vult intelligere vaticinatum esse (Sc. a Sibylla) de imperio Octav. Augusti. Suet. somnavit Octavius, utero Atiæ solis juber exortum.

Chap. II. interpretation of the prodigy was concerned in. So the star or new light, did not first instruct the *Magi* that a king of the *Jews* was to come, but believing his future Advent, they interpreted the appearance of that star, as the notification of his birth in the region to which it pointed.

*Æn. vi. & Ec-  
clog. iv.*

4. ANOTHER instance to prove, that the *Sibyl's* predictions spoke of the *Advent* of a great king, and of a new kingdom that was to be set up, and of happy times that were to follow, was taken from *Virgil*, who flatters *Augustus* as if he was to be that king; and again promises to the *Romans*, that happy state and golden age, spoken of by the *Sibyl*, under the reign of a son of *Augustus*, which as he assured them, the wife of *Augustus* was then conceiving.

THE *Schematist* hath many things to  
 “ except to this testimony. “ *Virgil's* ver-  
 “ ses, saith he, do not appear to be any  
 “ explication of the words about *Augustus*  
 “ before-mentioned: nor to be taken out  
 “ of any book, much less out of any *Jewish*  
 “ book: but to be a mere Pagan poetical  
 “ prophecy, suited to the state of the *Ró-*  
 “ man affairs, and particularly to their  
 “ wars, to flatter *Augustus*, founded at  
 “ most

“ most on some notion of a golden age Sect. III.  
 “ to come, which was common in poems   
 “ and prophecies. ”

BUT under his favour they do appear to be a comment on the rumours that went about, near the birth of *Augustus*, that a king was then to be born that should rule the Romans, and be Lord of the whole earth. Doth not *Virgil* say the same thing, when he points out *Augustus* as the man that they had heard so often promised, who should extend his empire to all the points of heaven, and subdue the fiercest and most distant nations? Doth not *Virgil* suppose a prediction of a *Sibyl*, to be the ground work of his verses, when he introduces them with this beginning, *Thus the Sibyl spoke?* And was not a future age and kingdom which was the subject of his verses, the same prediction that had been carried on lately in expectation from one age to another, and applied differently as the passions and interests of men led them? Even the same prediction, which the *Gentile* historians ascribe to the *Sibyl*, as that upon which *Lentulus* built his hopes, upon which *Cotta* founded his intended motion

to

Æn. VI. 791, &c.  
 V. 666. Sic est affata Sibylla.

Chap. II.  to declare *Jul. Cæsar* a king, and upon occasion whereof, the prodigies that fell out about the birth of *Augustus*, were interpreted of him?

AND if these things made in those days a part of the *Sibyllin* verses, they must be taken out of a book, because as the said historians tell us, the *Sibyllin* verses were collected into a book, and committed to the care of proper officers.

pag. 50. THAT may be, in the opinion of the *Schematist*, “ who allows that under the “ name of a *Cumæan Sibyl*, it was possible some prophecy might be extant, declaring glorious times, ” and yet *Virgil* not take his verses out of any *Jewish* book. But that is not the point we disagree upon. The question is, whether the notion of a future king and glorious times under him, were not originally derived from the *Jewish* writings? Which they that have judgement and candor, to compare the expressions in both, are best able to resolve. The *Schematist* indeed denies there is any sort of agreement in ideas between the passages cited out of the bible, and compared with *Virgil*. But the learned

learned *Grotius* (a) thought otherwise, and so did the learned *Cudworth* (b), who was as utter an enemy to all pious frauds, as this writer would be thought to be; and so did the most learned men that have considered these matters.

Sect. III.



NOR do the authorities referred to in the *Scheme*, as on his side, contradict what I asserted on this head. *Blondel* in his elaborate treatise of the *Sibyls*, intended only to shew, that the *Sibyls* were not inspired by God to speak of things to come; nor *Virgil* to prophecy of the *Messias*,  
nor

(a) Grot. in Math. ii. 1. Virgilii Idyllium quartum novi cujusdam regni pollicitationem continens, & quidem iisdem ferme verbis, quæ Prophetæ Hebræi usurpant?

(b) *Cudw. Intell. Syst.* p. 283. " There were doubtless  
" some predictions in these *Sibyllin* books, of a *new*  
" *kingdom* or Monarchy to be set up in the world: yet  
" that the *Roman* empire was not the thing intended in  
" them, doth manifestly appear from the description in  
" *Virgil's Eclogue*, wherein there is accordingly another  
" completion of them expected, though flatteringly applied to *Saloninus*—but it was no other than that of  
" the *Messias*, and the times of Christianity.—Those things  
" in the *Sibyllin* verses might have been derived some way  
" or other, from the scripture prophecies; which there  
" is indeed the more probability of, because the *Sibyllin*  
" prophet made use of the same figures and allegories in  
" describing the future happy state that are found in the  
" scripture; for instance: *Nec magnos metuent armenta*  
" *Leones, occidet & serpens, &c.*" Vide *Boxhornium*  
*Hist. Univ.* p. 24. If. *Voss. de Orac. sib.* c. 4. Satis  
mirari nequeo quid impulerit nostri & superioris ævi  
eruditos ut versus illos Virgilianos alienissimis sensibus  
interpolarent.

Chap. II. nor ought to be so interpreted as if he  
 ~~~~~ had the times of the *Messias* in view. But  
 coming to the likenesses of expressions in
 (c) Blond. c. *Virgil*, and the *Jewish* prophets (c), he
 14. confesses, “ that the prophetical writings
 “ were not altogether concealed from the
 “ *Gentiles* for 200 years before *Virgil*
 “ was born ; and if one should maintain
 “ that the *Gentiles* came to the know-
 “ ledge of some of the *Jewish* prophecies,
 “ and wrested their words to the descrip-
 “ tion of their mythological golden age,
 “ and applied them to a past age, which
 “ the spirit of God spoke of as future, no
 “ inconvenience could arise from hence,
 “ seeing that these people pronounced the
 “ sentences of these divine oracles but as
 “ Parrots, without understanding any more
 “ than the sound, to which they had re-
 “ course whenever they would recommend
 “ their particular caprices, in foreign and
 “ borrowed embellishments. ”

A N D for the very learned Mr. *Massen's*
 MS. tract of the *Sibyls*, it will be shortly
 published for the *Schematists* reproof, who
 hath so rashly presumed to give an account
 of a *book* that he hath never seen. Till
 the publication I can assure him, there is
 nothing

nothing in it inconsistent with what I have asserted in this controversy. His design is, as was *Blondel's*, to shew this *Eclogue* ought not to be interpreted of our Saviour Christ, and he carried it farther and proves in a chronological method, that neither is it applicable to *Saloninus* the son of *Pollio*: but to the wished for son of *Augustus* by his first wife. Sect. III.

BEFORE therefore the *Sehematist* communicates to the world the MS. *dissertation of his own* upon the *Sibyllin* oracles, with which he threatens the Bishop, he would do well to consider maturely what are the Bishop's notions with relation to these oracles. For if the purport of his MS. be, as he saith, “ to shew that the present books of *Sibyllin* oracles, are a forgery made in the times of the primitive Christians; ” That may be, and the Bishop nevertheless be in the right. For the Bishop hath not cited any verse from the present collection, but those remains only of the *Sibyls*, that were known to the *Romans* before Christ. Sch. p. 61.

THIS writer is disposed to *smile*, when he sees *Divûm genus* and *Adventu* cited from *Virgil*, and put in *Italick* characters,

“ as

Chap. II. “ as if the *Advent* of the son of God was
 “ under-hand imply'd; whereas, as he
 “ saith, it should be read *Divi genus*.”

* Donat. in.
 Loc.

What he gains by this criticism I cannot guess. Whether it be *Divûm* or *Divi genus*, both the one and the other import a divine extraction *; and where then is the difference in the sense? I never doubted, that *Julius Cæsar* was meant by *Divi* in *Virgil*, if that was the true reading; or if *Divum* was, that the several heroes his progenitors from *Æneas* and *Romulus* were intended thereby. But as several of *Virgil's* expressions are not unlike those of the *Jews*, when they speak of the times of their *Messias*, so this among others seems probably to be borrowed of them, and to be one of the ambiguous phrases that hath in this poem been applied to *Augustus*.

FOR the word *Adventus* it is not found often in *Virgil*, and where it is, it is usually put to express the presence, the manifestation, the *Epiphany*, the power of some Deity *. Here it seems to denote the empire

* *Æn.* VIII. 2co. Attulit & nobis aliquando optantibus ætas, auxilium, Adventumq; Dei. *Georg.* III. 92. Talis & ipse jubam cervice effundit equina, Conjugis adventu (i. e. Opis Dææ) pernix Saturnus.—

pire of *Augustus*, under the various effects of conquest, and just government. It will not be easy for this *author* to produce instances of the like usage of this word in *Virgil*.

THE *Schematist* doth indeed deny that *Virgil's Eclogue* hath any relation to the verses of the *Sibyl*, when *Virgil* begins it with *Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas*. “*Hesiod*, saith he, was born at *Cumæ*, and *Virgil* meant *Hesiod's* poem, “and not the *Cumæan Sibyl*.” But the *Scholiast* from whom he takes the hint, is not positive in that conjecture. He gives the usual interpretation in the first place, and proposes this other very modestly. Nor doth it certainly appear that *Hesiod* himself was born at *Cumæ* †, or that he might be called *Cumæus* from his father's being born there. But this is certain, that in all other places, *Virgil* speaks of *Hesiod* by the title of *Ascræus* to distinguish his true

† Plut. ex Ephori Cumæi sententiâ, contrarium refert viz. *Hesiod's* Father *Dius* did not marry before he went to *Ascræa*, his wife *Picimede* of whom *Hesiod* was born. Virg. Eclog. vi. 71. *Ascræo* quos ante seni—Georg. II. 176. *Ascræumq;* cano Romana per oppida carmen. *Æn.* III, 441, &c. Huc ubi delatus *Cumæam* accesseris urbem — In sanam vatem aspicias. VI. 98. Talibus ex adyto dictis *Cumæa Sibylla*, Horrendas canit ambages, V. ver. 735.

Chap. II. country; and of the *Sibyl* by the appellation of *Cumæa*; which makes it very unlikely that he should shew himself singular in this *Eclogue*, and confound the two titles of *Ascræus* and *Cumæus*, that he is elsewhere careful to separate.

NOR could *Virgil* have *Hesiod* in his eye in speaking of the four ages of the world, which were to be succeeded by the golden age; because *Hesiod* makes five ages before the commencement of the golden, and those not all in a gradual declension from better to worse, as doth *Virgil*, but supposes the fourth to be better than the two that went before, and the fifth to be the worst of all. They are only the *Latin* poets of *Augustus's* reign, that mention the four ages of the world, encreasing in degrees of wickedness.

“ BUT the four Ages in the Poets had
 “ nothing to do with the four Empires in the
 “ Prophets.” It is very true, if *his* meaning be that the Prophet did not foretell those four ages the Poets sing of. But the predictions in the prophet of four successive empires, that should arise in different Ages of the world, gave occasion to the Poets, who had the knowledge of these things

things only by report, to apply them to the state of the world in so many ages, and to describe the renovation of the golden Age in the expressions of the Prophets concerning the future age of the *Messias*, which in *Daniel* is the 5th kingdom. And this is all I am concerned for.

Sect. III.

WHAT he farther says, to shew the 5th or golden Age is not the last age according to *Virgil*, I think is of no weight. *Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas*, is rendred by him, *the last age in the Sibyl verses, had existed, and did then exist, but was expiring to make way for a new revolution of four ages, whereof the Saturnian times were to be first.* I own I am of a different opinion; I see no reason to believe that the pretended *Sibyl* prophesied of the iron Age, but only of the golden times. *Venit* signifies to be *near at hand*, as *Nascitur* in the next verse doth to be *beginning*. Most of the *verbs* that follow, are *futures*, and the 5th Age was not to take place but with the birth of the prince, who he compliments. The *Schematist* agrees hereto in a few lines lower, “*Vir-*
“ *gil* expressly makes the future *birth* of
“ the *child* he prophesies of, to put an end

pag. 54.

Chap. II. “ to the *last* or *iron* age, and to introduce
 “ the *new golden* age.” It is not therefore
 the Bishop’s fault, but *Virgil’s* own, that
 he spoke of the *5th* Age as the *last* Age ac-
 cording to the *Sibyllin* notion.

Æn. V. 707.
 Vel quæ fa-
 torum posæ-
 ret Ordo.

NEITHER *Virgil* nor his Author the
Sibyl, do appear to have any regard to the
Platonick year, or Stoical revolutions of the
 same four Ages over again. They carry
 the line of time on no farther, than the in-
 stauration of the golden age, which is sup-
 posed to last to the end of things. *Ordo*
seclorum doth not infer that there should
 be other Ages after the golden. It signifies
 only that the great or principal succession
 of those Ages that were defined and de-
 clared by fate to happen, was at last about
 to begin : And this might come to pass
 without new subsequent ages of degeneracy.

VIRGIL was not so ignorant, as to
 imagine that the Great *Platonick* year could
 possibly begin so soon as in *Augustus’s*
 days ; since according to *Cicero’s* computa-
 tion, it would take up 49000 years before
 the Sun and Planets could return to the
 same point, from whence they first set out.
 in which conjunction the *Platonick* year
 was founded. I may therefore say after
Is.

If. Vossius, “ Which of the antients ever Sect. III.
 “ said or dreamed, that the great *Egyptian* 
 “ year was compleat when *Virgil* writ, Voss. de Or.
 Sibyl. c. 4.
 “ which even in our days has not yet fi-
 “ nished its course? ”

SINCE then the future scene of things under the *golden age* in *Virgil*, and the Age of the *Messias* in the Prophets as understood by the *Jews*, is so near the same, and the expressions in both sometimes so alike ; allowing for one’s writing in prose, the other in verse ; and the one writing in a language of a very different genius from the other, and professing a very different Religion : since there is no foundation in nature, nor the powers of Imagination, to determine *Virgil* and the Prophets to hit in the same ideas, and sometimes in the same uncommon Eastern figures and phrases, we may conclude these notions had one common Original, and since the *Jews* were first in possession of them, of whom the *Romans*, or their *Sibyl*, had opportunity to learn them, that therefore they were originally derived from the *Jews*. After all, as I did not before, so neither do I now think, that Christianity is much concerned in the consequence, however *Virgil* be

Chap. II. understood. But very learned men having often observed a striking likeness between the Prophets and *Virgil* in this Eclogue, and some parts of his *Æneid*, I owed it to my subject and to truth, to take notice of their reasons, and let the reader see in one full view, the whole of what hath been said on this occasion: And again, to shew that the *Schematist* in all remarks upon it, hath not been able to darken or destroy that likeness. It is now time to submit it to the Reader, to take that part, to which the strongest reasons induce him.

CHAP. II. SECT. IV.

Of the Testimonies of Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius.

THE proofs in the former section receive no small confirmation from what one *Jewish* and two *Gentile* Historians relate, of the firm belief the *Jews* had of the coming of this great king out of their nation, with which they encouraged themselves to stand out the siege of *Jerusalem* to the utmost extremities.

AND

AND as to *Josephus's* testimony it is not Sect. IV.
invalidated by saying, that *Josephus* own-
ed, “ that this notion of a *Messias* was Sch. p. 59.
“ grounded on a *mistaken* passage in the
“ *Jewish* scriptures themselves. ” For whe-
ther the *Jews* were mistaken in their ex-
pectation, or not, is not at all to the pre-
sent question, which is singly this, whether
the *Jews* had at *that time* and about the
times of *Jesus*, any such expectation? And
to this *Josephus* speaks very home in the
affirmative. For three things are very
plain from this passage of *Josephus*.

1st. That there was a prophecy of the
coming of the *Messias* known among the
Jews before their destruction. And that
was never denied by him nor his country-
men afterwards.

2. THAT this prophecy was found in
the *Jewish* scriptures. And in that neither
did he or they see reason to vary.

3. THAT this prophecy before their
destruction was interpreted by himself and
many of their *Chuchams* or wise-men, of
a king of their own nation. And in this
particular *Josephus* tells us, that he altered
his mind, and we see he applies it either
sincerely or in flattery to *Vespatian* in his

Chap. II. wars of the *Jews*. But then it is to be remarked, that though he calls this opinion his own (and it might be the opinion of some few others) yet he doth not say that the *wise* men who were deceived in the interpretation, did themselves think they were deceived, or change their first notions.

JOSEPHUS hath no where treated the prophecy from whence they deduced this expectation, as a *mistaken* or false prophecy, but an *ambiguous* prophecy. *Ambiguous* wherein? Why? because as he pretended, it may refer either to a *Jew* by birth, or to one of any other nation, that should set up his empire within *Judæa*; adding that *many wise men of the Jews* received it by tradition, that it must be understood of one of their nation, and were *deceived in the interpretation*. *Josephus* being in the sentiments with the wise men of his nation, of a temporal deliverer, was led to think at the time when he foresaw the destruction of the city and temple to be inevitable, there was no further help to be looked for among the *Jews*, and that *Vespasian* must be the person meant by the promised emperor. However

Sect. IV.



ever he could not bring himself to renounce the truth of the prophecy, or to say the prophecy was not contained in their scriptures; and therefore defending the credit of both, he gives out this salvo, that they were deceived in the interpretation, and the *mistake* lay wholly in the circumstance of the person designed therein, and the manner of the accomplishment of the prophecy.

TACITUS in his relation of the same *persuasion*, observes that it was found in the *antient books of the priests*; which may intend either the sacred *prophecies* of the *Jews*, or the *Sibyllin* books in the custody of the XV. *viri*, who are said in *Dion* to be *Priests*.

Dio Lib.
XLIV.

BUT the like ambiguity is not found in the words of *Suetonius*. He saith, "it was an antient and constant opinion throughout the East, *esse in fatis ut Judæi* (or *Judeæ* as *Tac.*) *profecti rerum potirentur*," that it was foretold in the *prophecies*, (*viz. of the Sibyl*) that they of *Judæa* should be lords of all.

SO I rendred the words, from observing Defence, p. 27. that *Fata* doth often signify κατ' ἐξοχήν, the

responses of the Sibyls. And *Suetonius* Suet. in Jul. speaking c. 79.

Chap. II. speaking elsewhere of the like expectation
 of a king, contained, as he saith, in the
 [Libri fatales] the *books of fate*, is inter-
 Sch. p. 40. preted of the *Sibyllin verses*, by the *Sche-*
 Cic. Or. III. *matist* himself. To which may be added,
 contr. Catilin. what *Cicero* saith of *Lentulus*, that he
 took his hopes to be king, from the *Si-*
byllin fates.

THIS being the *Schematist's* interpre-
 tation in one part of his book, I cannot
 be much in the wrong in saying, that
 by comparing the accounts of these three
 historians, it comes out that the *persuasion*
of the coming of a great king, is found
 both in the *Jewish* and pretended *Sibyllin*
 prophecies, and as to its original may be
 traced up to the *Jews*.

FOR I can by no means agree with
Lim, that the two *Gentile* historians had
 only *Josephus's*, or some other such relati-
 on in view, (meaning, as I suppose, the
 relation of some *Jewish* writer after the de-
 struction of *Jerusalem*) when they writ
 what they did, concerning the Notion
 that prevailed in the East, of a new em-
 pire that was to be set up in the world.
 On the contrary, both these historians men-
 tion the currency of the like notion at
Rome,

Rome, before that siege was undertaken, and of the different application to or by the then reigning emperors, of which *Josephus* nor any *Jewish* writer after the siege, did, or could write. Sect. IV.

Thus *Suetonius* tells us, “ that when *Nero* was forsaken of many of his princes and subjects that rebelled against him, some promised him in this destitute condition the empire of the East ; others the kingdom of *Jerusalem* by name ; and most, the restitution of all his former dominion.” Why the empire of *the East*, or the kingdom of *Jerusalem* ? For no other reason that I can see, but that credit was then given to the prediction of the *fates*, (or fatal books) of which *Suetonius* speaks more largely in the case of *Vespasian*, “ that *the East* should rule, and they that come out of *Judæa* should be lords of all.”

Suet. in Nerone c. 40. Sponderunt tamen quidam destituto dominationem Orientis, nonnulli nominatim regnum Hierosolimitanorum ; plures omnis pristinæ fortunæ restitutionem.

It was the same prediction that encouraged *Otho* to contest the empire with *Galba*. For though some Astrologers gave him hopes, yet as the historian goes on, “ * he went upon his own skill, and took it to be foretold by the *Fates*, (that he should succeed) so easily doth the mind

* Tacit. An. I. Sed Otho tanquam peritiâ & monitu Fatorum prædicta accipiebat, cupidine ingenii humani libentius obscura credi.

“ of

Chap. II. “ of man interpret things that are *obscure*,
 (as prophecies commonly are before their accomplishment) “ in favour of themselves,
 “ out of a desire to have them fall out so.”

WITH regard to the like *persuasion*,
Vespasian is said by the same writer, to
have been pointed out by the (Sibyllin) O-
racles to be Emperor. And after *Vespati-*
an we hear no more of this expectation a-
 mong the *Romans*. They, who from the
 days of *Julius Cæsar* had been frequently
 applying the prediction to this or that great
 man, seemed to rest satisfied that it had now
 its completion, (and possibly they led *Jo-*
sephus into the same interpretation by their
 authority,) and that it was exhausted in *Ves-*
patian. If all this doth not shew, that they
 had a prediction at *Rome*, grounded on a
 prophetic book, for some time in
 sacred esteem with them, that promised the
 rise of *some great king*, which several Em-
 perors, or their friends, were willing to
 believe were meant of them, and that this
 prediction was made known to them by
 some other Canal than that of *Josephus's*
 writings; and namely, by the Books of Fate.
 I despair of offering any thing else, that will
 satisfy the *Schematist*.

I need

Tac. vit.
 Agric. c. 13.
monstratus
fatis Vespas-
rianus.

I need the less to labour this point, since this author tells us at last, it is of no use to *Jews* or *Christians* if it were granted.

“What is it to the *Jews* (as he asks) who
“never had such a *Messias*, and to whom
“he will ever be to come? And what is it
“to *Christians*, who reject such a notion of
“the *Messias*, and whose kingdom hath
“been the greatest contradiction imagina-
“ble, to the notions contained in those
“passages?”

YES, very much to both, and so the *Schematist* himself did believe, else he would not have been at so much pains to lessen and destroy the proof of such a general expectation. And so must every one else think, that attends to the state of the question, upon which this controversy turns. The question is, whether the *Jews* about the time of *Jesus*, did look for the coming of an extraordinary person, who they called the *Messias*, and whether they had any evidence or intimation in scripture for this? In what character this person should appear at his coming, that is another consideration, which is also to be decided by the same scriptures.

FOR

Chap. II.  FOR unless all the prophets speak of *him* under the single Character of a temporal prince, and no where, nor often describe him in a view very different, nay, opposite to that of an earthly king : unless the terms wherein his victories are foretold, do necessarily imply temporal victories : unless it were impossible to distinguish in the Prophets a double state of the kingdom of the *Messias*, to which the different capacities he is represented under by them, are reducible ; the *Jews* in Christ's age might be very right in the expectations of his coming, yet deceive themselves and others in the manner and circumstances of his first coming.

THE difference between the *Jews* and the *Christians* with relation to the *Messias*, lay in this ; the *Jews* that rejected Jesus looked for the coming of the *Messias* ; but then they tacked to that belief notions that were not intended by the prophets, or at least not of that time of his coming. Those that received Jesus for that *Messias*, they also waited for his coming, and the revelation of the kingdom of God. And finding all the other marks of the promised *Messias* to center in Jesus, that his doctrine was worthy of God, and that

that his works demonstrated that God was with him, they owned him for That Prophet to come who was to reform the manners of a corrupt world ; for the great Propitiation that should take away the sin of the world and reconcile them to God : for that great king, who in pursuance of the chief end and rule of his government, *viz.* to render men holy and virtuous, and like to God, and so be made meet for compleat happiness, carries on the plan of Providence upon earth ; restraining, subduing or gradually destroying every Adversary power of Satan, sin, death, and of wicked men and sinful kingdoms, till at length all enemies shall be put under his feet. Grant then that Jesus did not answer the carnal notions which the *Jews* of that age formed of the *Messias*, and which were indeed inconsistent with that pure heavenly religion he came to plant ; their expectation of his *coming* is not falsified by their mistake of his errand : Such a *Messias* as the prophets foretold he should be at his first appearance did come ; and it is their fault, that *when he came to his own, his own received him not*, who would not *believe in him for his work's sake*, nor from the event see the

error

Chap. II.  error of their interpretation of the prophecies concerning him.

As the *Schematist* will not allow Jesus to be a *conqueror* in any sense, so he denies him to have brought *peace upon earth*.

Sch. p. 62. “ There was no peace at his birth and in
 “ his time, as is vulgarly supposed by Chris-
 “ tians. And the state of Christians with
 “ one another, and with their neighbour,
 “ hath hitherto been the most disorderly
 “ scene of things, by means of that mad-
 “ ness and enthusiasm, that malice and ha-
 “ tred, that fury and persecution, that cru-
 “ elty, that bloodshed, and those wars that
 “ have prevailed on its account, that ever
 “ appeared in the world.”

THUS he confounds the *Design* and the *Event* of Christ's coming, the more colourably to asperse Christianity, as the cause of all the disorders and bloodshed that have happened, since that was the prevailing religion. Doth he not know, that before the rise of Christianity, and in countries where it is not yet known, malice and hatred, wars and cruelty, and enthusiasm have shewed themselves in very direful effects? Doth he not know that the Christian religion in particular doth not favour in the least such
 disorderly

disorderly doings; that its precepts forbid, and its threatnings discourage such practices? and all occasions of discord between private men and states would be prevented or removed were its laws hearkened to? Sect. IV.

WHENCE then has the disorderly scene of things in the Christian World proceeded? Even from the same cause, that the like scene of things did arise in the *Gentile* world, and doth still where Christianity is not received; *from men's lusts that war in their members. They lust and have not, they kill and desire to have what they cannot obtain,—they fight and war—to consume upon their pleasures.* Tho' it is God's earnest desire, and for this purpose he sent Christ into the world, to dispose men to a resemblance of him in righteousness and true holiness, yet in all his dispensations with men, he treats them as reasonable Agents; and when he hath offered them the best means and reason to induce them to such a conformity, they are left to their choice, and it is true too many often abandon themselves notwithstanding, to the sway of their passions and lusts. Carnal men for the executing of their wicked designs may take a pretence from the best of things. But surely, when they do what Christ hates and forbids, they are so far not Christians, and their actions are not to be charged on their profession of, but on their deviation from

Chap. II. Christianity. Wherever true Christianity is
 ~~~~~ received into the heart, it hath never failed  
 to root out, or abate all rancour and malice, and every disorderly work that follows these and every other ungoverned passions. And this we know was the state of the generality of Christians in the beginning. Their love of one another and their peaceable behaviour, was the effect, the recommendation and the glory of primitive Christianity.

It is the reproach of those that call themselves Christians, that it is not so still. But it must be remembered that the number of Christians as much greater now than formerly, and their knowledge and faith less : that in experience, the consent of those about us must be had before we can live peaceably with all men : that however under the present degeneracy, there are many instances of the efficacy of Christ's religion for the peace and quiet of the world ; and though all that might be expected from it towards mending the world is not obtained ; yet the world is stopped from running into the high degrees of madness it is capable of, and would run into, were it not for Christianity.

*F I N I S.*

THE  
SLAUGHTER

OF THE

CHILDREN in *Bethlehem*,

As an HISTORICAL FACT in

St. *Matthæw's* Gospel,

VINDICATED :

And the suspected CHRISTIANITY of *Macrobius*,  
who also mentions the same FACT,

DISPROV'D :

Against the *Objections* raised in the *Scheme*, &c.

WITH A

POSTSCRIPT

CONCERNING

*Virgil's* IV<sup>th</sup> ECLOGUE.

---

Cicero de Finib. Lib. IV. contra Stoicos: Perspicuisne dubia apperiantur,  
an dubiis perspicua tolluntur? Vos autem, cum perspicuis dubia debeatis  
illustrare, dubiis perspicua Conamini tollere.

---

LONDON: Printed in the Year 1728.



T O T H E

Right Reverend FATHER in G O D

E D W A R D,

Lord Bishop of *Coventry* and *Lichfield*.

M Y L O R D,



Owe so much to *Truth*, as well as to your Lordship's Kindness and good Opinion, that I cannot refuse any thing, you think serviceable against *Falsehood*.

In Obedience therefore to your Lordship's Desire and Command, I respectfully submit to your Disposal the following Remarks, which I begun to throw together last year, when I read over the *Scheme*, &c.

I wish heartily they may serve for the Conviction of those, who have started the groundless Objections, which I have examin'd, with all the Impartiality and Fairness, requir'd in such Disputes.

I hope however, that the Readers, who sincerely love Truth, will find some Satisfaction in the Observations I humbly offer. I expect it in particular of the Learned Mr. *Lardner*, whose Book of the *Credibility of the Gospel History*, your Lordship lent me af-

# DEDICATION.

ter the writing of my Remarks. He will find there in a full Answer to the Difficulties he has in few Lines (a) heap'd together, a little, I think, too hastily, against *Macrobius* his Testimony. For he has nothing new, more than what I had already fully confuted. In the rest, his Book contains many good Reflections; tho' I must confess, there are not a few, in which I am sorry to see we differ.

As the *Schematist* has thought fit to bring me into his Controversy about *Virgil's* IVth *Elogue*, as if I had writ thereon something, which might favour his Opinion; this has engag'd me to add a *Postscript*, wherein I give a short account of my *Manuscript Dissertation*, which your Lordship had before mention'd too honourably, in your Excellent *Defence of Christianity*.

If these little Endeavours of mine can at least prove, not only my sincere Search after Truth, but also my deepest Dutiful Veneration for your Lordship, and my real hearty Gratitude for undeserv'd Obligations, you have laid upon me, in so generous a manner, before I ever had ask'd or desir'd any; it will be extremely pleasing to

*My Lord,*

*Your Lordship's most Obedient,*

*Obliged, and Dutiful Servant,*

J. M.

(a) *Credibility*, &c. Tom. II. p. 198.



THE  
SLAUGHTER  
OF THE  
CHILDREN in *Bethlehem*,  
As an HISTORICAL FACT of  
*St. Matthew's GOSPEL*,  
VINDICATED, &c.

---

SECT. I.

*The silence of Josephus proved to be of no force against St. Matthew.*



THE Objection of the *Schematist*, I am now to examine, is the last against *St. Matthew*, and relates to the Fact of *Herod's ordering the children* in *Bethlehem* from two years old and younger to be slain.

Sect. I.



A 3

That

Sect. I.  
 (a) Sch. p. 36.

That *fact*, he pretends (a), *is also subject to great difficulty. For how could so extraordinary a thing be done, and NO HISTORIAN, but the author of the (supposed) second chapter of Matthew mention it? And PARTICULARLY, how could Josephus be supposed to omit it, if true?*

1. Thus the *Schematist*, to make his pretended *difficulty* appear the greater, gives his unwary Reader more than a broad intimation, that there are several old *Historians* still extant, who having writ at large of the Facts belonging to *Herod's* life; yet say nothing of the Children slain in *Bethlehem*. I blush for the *Objector*, to be obliged to make here such an observation. Sure he is not so ignorant, as not to know, that in truth there is not one such *writer* remaining, but *Josephus*, and even that before this *Jewish* Historian, there was none, as far as we can tell, but one *Nicolas*, a *Pagan*, and intimate friend of *Herod*; of whom we shall say more by and by.

2. Therefore the pretended *great difficulty* lies only in the silence of one single Author; as if we should reject all the Facts of those times, which are not supported by the express testimony of *Josephus*. But if such a method of arguing be admitted, we must also discard the most part of the  
*facts*



*facts* related by the best *Historians* Antiquity ever had, and of which yet no man in his wits can form the least doubt. In a case of this nature an *Author* is generally believed, when he tells, though alone, a thing which he was able to know, either by himself, or by good witnesses; which was transacted in his own time, or not long before, and carries along no absurdity, no impossibility, no inconsistency with other facts well supported; and when the Writer himself is known besides, to be a man of probity, and to have had no apparent reason, interest, or view, whereby he could be prompted to invent a particular *fact*. Now that all these qualifications are to be eminently met with in the Writers of the *New Testament*, has been already a thousand times proved beyond all contradiction.

3. And why *could* not *Josephus* be supposed to omit that Fact, though true? Has he undertaken to write the Life, or a general History of *Herod*? If he had, could he not have omitted some *fact*, or other? He was not an eye-witness of the transactions of that time. When he wrote his Books of the *Jewish wars*, *Herod* had been dead fourscore years, and very near one hundred when the *Antiquities* of the *Jews* were published. The Chief, and Likely the only Author whom *Josephus*

Sect. I.



could follow, and whom he quotes sometimes, was one *Nicolas* of *Damascus*, a particular *friend* of *Herod* (a), and consequently a man byass'd in his favour. And indeed his *partiality* has been noted by *Josephus* himself, particularly in his sixteenth Book of *Antiq.* There he says expressly, that *Nicolas* living in *Herod's* kingdom, and together with him, he wrote his history, (of *Herod*) with a view to please that king, and advance his interest, mentioning those things only, which were honourable to him.

So partial an Historian had then no doubt omitted the Fact of the *children* slain by *Herod*: And why could it not also be left out by *Josephus*, when he did not find it in *Nicolas's* chief Guide, though it had been a true event of *Herod's* reign?

4. Nor can we judge otherwise for what the *Schematist* adds to strengthen his difficulty; viz. That *Josephus* *SEEMS* a great enemy to *Herod*, and to tell *EVERY* thing he knew to his disadvantage, and especially *ALL* his various acts of cruelty. For the objector himself seems to confess what is certainly true, that all this is more than he can know and prove. His consciousness of that, is, I suppose, the

(a) See *Josephus's* *Antiq.* Book xvii. c. 5. and Book xiv. c. 1. where, besides that great intimacy, *Nicolas* is taxed of being a great flatterer of *Herod*.

the reason of his pointing in that place (a) at *Scaliger*: See, says he in the margin, *Scaligeri Animadversiones in Chronicon Eusebei*, p. 176. But there that great man proves nothing neither of what is affirmed above, nor does he say, that *Josephus* was a great enemy to Herod.

Sect. I.

(a) P. 37.

Besides, as *Scaliger* makes otherwise no manner of application of his *wondering*, why did not the candid *Schematist* rather interpret that *wondering*, as being an intimation, that *Scaliger* suspected in *Josephus* some want either of *knowledge* or *sincerity*?

The first may certainly be supposed, without any absurdity or unlikelihood. Nor is it possible to the *Schematist* to prove on the contrary, that *Josephus* must necessarily have *known* the Fact now in question. And we have already shewn, that it could not be in *Nicolas's* history, who was the chief, if not the only contemporary Writer, whom *Josephus* could take for his voucher. It might be also *unknown* to, or *concealed* by, the persons he consulted; the principal of whom were those of *Herod's* posterity.

As for *Josephus's* *sincerity* on the other hand, we may have in this case very good reason to suspect it. He knew without doubt, that the *Christians* had already mentioned this *fact*, and applied it to  
their

Sect. 1.  their own Affairs, which *Josephus* seems not to have approved of, as our *Objector* will easily grant; and consequently that this was a sufficient motive for tempting *Josephus* to omit the *fact*. I do not doubt but the *Schematist* looks upon what is now in *Josephus* concerning *Jesus Christ*, as being intirely spurious and mere addition to his Text. If so, we may indeed wonder at his omitting such a transaction, and admire his affected silence. But then it would be unjust and unreasonable to conclude from thence, that all the *facts* concerning the rise of the Christian Religion, are false or dubious, notwithstanding they are attested by the sacred and pagan Historians.

But let us moreover suppose, that *Josephus* was very well apprized of the murder of the Babes in *Bethlehem*, and even that he was *a great enemy of Herod*, as the *Schematist* adds of his own; though *Josephus* tells equally the good and bad of that King's actions: Yet for all that, and all his supposed sincerity, he might easily have passed over this particular instance of *Herod's* cruelty, having given so many others, which were more, or at least as eminent. Add, that *Josephus* was not engaged to tell every individual action of *Herod*.

rod. And he declares himself, (a), *That* Sect. I.  
*though he looked upon truth, to be peculi-*  
*arly the duty of an historian; there may*  
*be yet some bitter truths, which a grave*  
*and a modest author will make some dif-*  
*iculty to mention, even in the case of the*  
*worst of men, &c. Which is the very case*  
*of Herod.*

To inforce those just observations, there is no need to repeat here at large all the objections already made, by several learned men, against *Josephus*, to shew his unfaithfulness, partiality, &c. in many passages of his books. Nor shall I insist upon what he owns himself (b), that some *writers* had related many things otherwise than himself; and especially one *Fustus* of *Tiberius*, a cotemporary *Jew* with him, and who had lived with King *Agrippa* the younger, as his *Secretary*, though he published his History after the death of that Prince.

For all that, I easily grant *Josephus* to be true and sincere enough in the most part of his narrations, particularly in the *facts* of his own times, and of the latter age before him.

5. But

(a) *Joseph.* in his *Life*, p. 1013. in Sir *Rog. Lestrangé's* Version.

(a) See *Josephus* in his preface to the history of the *Jewish* wars, and in his *life*, p. 1013, 1015.

Sect. I.



3. But then it is also certain, (and this is a new observation to be added) that for the greatest part of his *facts* there is *no historian* to confirm them. Consequently the same pretended *difficulty*, brought against *Matthew* from *Josephus's* silence, may be with greater strength retorted against *Josephus* himself. And even when some facts of his history are also found in *Tacitus*, for instance; yet 'tis agreed among men of learning, that *Tacitus* had borrowed them from *Josephus*; and so there is for the same, but the single authority of this writer: Which if it be admitted, sure there is no reason why we should not receive St. *Matthew's* authority, notwithstanding all the silence of *Josephus*.

In short, 'tis a sophistical method, as unjust as unreasonable, to endeavour to discredit the express testimony of an Historian, by objecting only the *silence* of a later Writer; which might proceed from many causes; though it be impossible at such a distance, as in our case, of above seventeen hundred years, to guess at the true cause and reason, with any certainty. Therefore 'tis equally unjust and absurd to pretend, that no other cause of such a silence, or omission, can be assigned, but the *falsehood* of the fact omitted.

S E C T.

## SECT. II.

*The testimony of Macrobius justified.*

BUT is there indeed no *Author*, besides St. *Matthew*, who took notice of the *murdering the children in Bethle-  
lehem*? Why, truly 'tis plain the *Schema-  
tist* would fain make his Readers believe it is so. For though he knew there is such an *Author*, yet he throws his testimony into a marginal note, whereon he may suppose few of his Readers, if any at all, will cast their eyes, after he had assured them in the text, that *no historian* mentions it. Besides in that note he is positive, that passage alledged, *is of no authority*, and then makes a shew of proving it, though his objections are as ill grounded, as the former against St. *Matthew*. I shall demonstrate this after I have represented the passage of *Macrobius*, as our adversary brings it.

“ It is pretended, he says, that this  
“ slaughter of the Infants is confirmed by  
“ *Macrobius*; who in a Chapter of the  
“ *ingenious sayings of Augustus against*  
“ *others, and of others against him*, (Sa-  
“ turn. l. 2. c. 4.) tells us, that *when*  
“ *Augustus heard that Herod's son was*  
“ *killed*

Sect. II.



Sect. II. *“ killed among the infants under two  
 “ years old, whom Herod had ordered to  
 “ be slain, he said, It is better to be He  
 “ rod’s hog than his son.*

Herein an impartial Reader will at first sight perceive it is plain, that *Macrobius*, as to the *fact* in hand, says the very same thing we have in *Matthew’s* History; viz. that *Herod had ordered some infants, under two years old, to be slain.* What then can all the difficulties and objections imaginable avail against so clear an evidence? Can they make *Macrobius* unsay what he declares so clearly, so positively? Consequently it cannot be true, that *when this passage is considered, it will be found to be of no authority*, as the *Schematist* affirms. The contrary of his assertion will clearly appear, if we fairly examine his critical *considerations* upon that passage.

The first is thus expressed :

1. *“ Joseph Scaliger tells (a) us, that  
 “ though Antipater, Herod’s son (who was  
 “ killed about the time when the infants  
 “ are said to be slain) was convicted of  
 “ treachery to his father Herod, yet He-  
 “ rod submitted the matter to Augustus,  
 “ who himself gave orders for his death.  
 “ Wherefore Scaliger justly wonders, how*  
 “ a

(a) Animadv. in *Eusebii* Chron. p. 177. See also *Prideaux’s* Connect. Vol. II. p. 654.

“ a saying could fall from Augustus, which Scat. II.  
 “ implies his ignorance of his own sen-  
 “ tence.” 

*Ans<sup>w</sup>.* I will not be so severe upon our Objector, as to make a long expostulation with him, for his representing here the expressions of *Scaliger* differently from what they were delivered by that great man. I own, that for the main point, *Scaliger* insinuates that *Augustus* had approved of the judgement given by *Varus* governour of *Syria*, against *Antipater*. But I maintain that *Scaliger* is therein strangely mistaken, that his *wondering*, instead of being *just*, as our adversary affirms, is built upon nothing; and 2<sup>dly</sup>, That consequently there is no room in this for the least difficulty, by which *Macrobius's* authority can be invalidated.

1. *Scaliger's* blunder has been already exploded many years ago (a); and 'tis indeed

(a) Besides *Christ. Noldius*, (Hist. Idum. n. 26. p. 151. Ed. 1. An. 1660. Franeg;) a very learned man of this nation, *J. Gregory*, has this remarkable passage, which I remembered after I had writ my following observation.

“ It is enough to draw some doubt upon the tradition  
 “ of *Macrobius*. *Joseph Scaliger* believeth it all; but yet  
 “ his wonder is, that *Augustus* should make such a return  
 “ upon *Herod*, seeing that he himself did the murder, not  
 “ only upon this, but upon all the three sons. I do not  
 “ perceive that the learned man hath cause enough. *He-*  
 “ *rod* did but cast the envious part upon the Emperor,  
 “ (and officiously too) but left the main and principal  
 “ guilt upon his own head, and therefore nevertheless, to  
 “ all

## Sect. II.



indeed so gross, that it may be easily discovered by any one, who has read in *Josephus* the account of *Antipater's* condemnation and death: If our difficulty-maker did not remember it better, than *Scaliger*, when he was reading this learned man's *Animadversions*; should he not afterwards have consulted again *Josephus* himself, when he was arguing in so grave a matter against the authority of St. *Matthew*? I think really that a lover and searcher of Truth, a free thinker, and a man careful of his own reputation, should have done it.

*Josephus* then, far from telling, that *Augustus* had given an absolute decisive sentence of death against *Antipater*, and had himself given orders for his death; quite contrary he assures us, that *Augustus* left that business so far to *Herod's* discretion, as to let him chuse either *death* or *exile*, for his son: Here are the words of *Josephus* in his *Antiquities*, B. XVII. c. ix. *When Herod was thus giving his last orders to his kindred, he received letters from his Embassadors at Rome, whom he had sent to Cæsar, [Augustus]. The substance thereof was; that Acme had been*  
put

“ all this the Emperor might very fitly retort as he did,  
“ That it were better to be *Herod's* hog than his son.

*Episcop. Pueror*, p. 101. of *J. Gregory's* Tracts, printed after his death, which happened March 13. 1646.

put to death by Cæsar's order, for her plotting with Antipater ; and that Antipater himself was left to his judgement, as his Father and his King, either to send him into Exile, or put him to Death, as he would (a).

2. The Case being thus stated, how could *Scaliger* wonder, that *Augustus* was surprized, when he heard, that *Herod*, instead of choosing to banish his Son, and acting like a *Father*, who ought to feel still some pity for one so near him ; had rather chosen to slay him, and had thus acted more like a Butcher than a Father ? Might not *Augustus* justly reflect upon the barbarity of such a Father, when he heard the issue of his Permission given to *Herod* in respect to *Antipater* ? Might he not justly say, *it was better to be Herod's Hog than his Son*, without having forgot his own Judgement and Sentence ? How then could our Objector approve so much of *Scaliger's* Blunder, and say that his wondering was just upon this matter ?

B

3. There-

(a) Ταῦτα δὲ ἐπισέλλοντο αὐτοῦ πρὸς τοὺς Συγγενεῖς, γραμμαῖς παρῆν ὑπὸ τῶν εἰς Ῥώμην Πρέσβειων ἀποσταλμένων εἰς Καίσαρα καὶ ἀναγνωσθέντων, τὸ κεφάλαιον ἦν, ὡς τῆς τε Ακμῆς ὀργῇ τῇ Καίσαρι ἀνηρημένης, ἐφοῖς Ἀντίπατρον συγκακουρήσειν : αὐτοῖς τε Ἀντίπατρον, ὡς ἐπὶ γνώμῃ τῇ ἐκείνου ποιεῖτο, ὡς Πατὴρ καὶ Βασιλεὺς, εἴτε φυλάττειν ἐθέλῃσιν, εἴτε κτείνουσιν.

Sect. II.



3. Therefore the *Schematist* could not neither justly pretend that *Macrobius's* Authority suffers in the least from such a mistaken Difficulty. Does it not rather appear, that his account of *Augustus's* sharp and severe Reflection upon *Herod's* cruelty towards his Son, is very agreeable to *Josephus's* History in this Point, and is thereby strongly confirmed?

4. Besides, *Scaliger* never intended to carry his *wondering* fit any further, than what relates to *Augustus's* Joke; and for all that he makes use of *Macrobius's* Testimony for the slaughter of the *Infants* (a).

The same Observation is to be applied to Dr. *Prideaux*, though the *Schematist* is pleased to join him here with *Scaliger*, as if both united in rejecting *Macrobius's* Evidence, or in the same Objection against it. On the contrary, that learned *Dean* brings in the Testimony of *Macrobius*, for the *slaughter of the Infants*, and the *Sarcasm* of *Augustus* upon *Herod*. He finds only some Difficulty therein concerning the *Age* of *Herod's* Son, said to be slain with those *Infants*. His Words are these

(a) Quod puerorum cædes non multò præcesserit Antipatri casum, tum ex Evangelio constat, tum etiam ex *Macrobio*, qui infantes ab Herode cædi iussos, & inter illos filium quoque ipsius Herodis pœnas dedisse, refert. *Scalig. Ibid.*

these following: “ *Macrobius*, a Writer Sect. II.  
 “ of the fifth Century (a) tells us, that a-  
 “ mong those Innocents *Herod* slew a  
 “ young Son of his own, and thereon  
 “ *Augustus* made this Reflection, that it  
 “ was better to be *Herod's* Hog than his  
 “ Son. But it is not likely, that *Herod*  
 “ should have a Child so young, as those  
 “ Innocents, at the Age he was then of.  
 “ The Death of *Antipater*, which hap-  
 “ pened about that time, considered with  
 “ that of *Alexander* and *Aristobulus*, for-  
 “ merly put to Death by him, may rather  
 “ be thought to have given the occasion  
 “ for that *Sarcasm*. (b) ” Thus the pious  
 Doctor in raising the Difficulty, offers at  
 the same time his Thoughts for its Soluti-  
 on; so far is he from making use of it  
 against *Macrobius's* Evidence and Autho-  
 rity, as the *Schematist* does in his next  
*consideration*, whereof that Difficulty is  
 the Foundation.

II. *Secondly*, says he, *Augustus by being acquainted with the Treachery of Antipa- ter, and himself condemning him to Death,* (c), *knew him to be a Man grown; and therefore could not make a Reflection, which if pertinently understood, implies him*

B 2

(a) Saturn. Lib. II. Chap. 4.

(b) *Prid. Connect.* Part II. Book IX. p. 654.

(c) How false this Assertion is in particular, I have just now shewed.

Scct. II. *him to conceive Herod's Son to be under*  
 two years old.

In my Answer to this *Consideration* I shall avoid, as much as possible, a tedious Dispute, being willing to make more Concessions than even our *Considerer* can reasonably desire.

1. I grant then, that *Augustus* knew certainly *Antipater* to be at his Death (*a*) past *Childhood*; and yet we cannot affirm upon any other historical Ground, that *Herod* had at that time any Child about *two years old* (*b*), or that he was slain among and with the *Innocents*; as some *Po-pish* modern Writers have asserted (*c*), from *Macrobius*.

2. The Question and Difficulty only lies about the true meaning of *Macrobius's* Expressions (*d*), which indeed seem to signify,

(*a*) Which happened *five Days* before his Father's; *Joseph. Book I. c. 21. Antiq. xvii. c. 10.*

(*b*) I would not say the thing is *impossible*, or *unlikely*, as it has been supposed by Dr. *Prideaux*, and before him by the famous *Casaubon*, Exercit. cont. Baron. §. xvi. p. 173. *An autem putandus est Herodes, qui septuagenarius, aut non multis mensibus minor obiit, ante biennium genuisse filium, qui bimulus cum ceteris sit occisus?* We see every Day Men older than *Herod* was, at that time, have Children.

(*c*) *Baronius Annal. ad An. Ch. I. n. 50. Decherius Annot. 10. in 1. p. Thes. Disput. de Ortu. Salvat. Serarius Opusc. T. I. de Herod. c. 21.*

(*d*) In the Original *Macrobius* has it thus: *Cum audisset [Augustus] inter pueros, quos in Syria Herodes Rex Judæorum intra bimatum jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum ait; Melius est Herodis porcum esse, quàm filium.*

nify, that a *Son of Herod* was also slain *among the Children two years old.* Sect. II.

It is stated and answered by the learned *J. Gregory*, above quoted, in the following manner; “ But what Son of *Herod’s* could this be? It must be *Antipater*, or it must be none at all. But *Antipater* was more a Man than to be reckoned among the Children of two years old and under. And moreover then that, *Antipater* was not at *Bethlehem*, nor thereabouts at that time.

“ I know not upon what terms to make this hold, unless it be thus. *Herod* had obtained of *Augustus* the killing of two Sons already, and now solicited for the third. It was presently upon the killing of the Infants that *Herod’s* Messenger came to *Rome* with the Accusations of his Son *Antipater*, and so both the passages came to the Emperor’s ear at the same time, and this later, for the nearness, was misreckoned into the bargain.”

Which is as much as to say, that there is a *mistake* in *Macrobius’s* insinuating, that a *Child of Herod* had been slain *among, or with* the other Children. To the same confession must amount what *Dr. Prideaux* advances in his Solution above recited.

## Sect. II.

3. Another way has been offer'd by the learned *Noldius* (a). According to him, *Macrobius* means only, that the murder of the *Innocents*, and that of *Antipater*, having been committed at some few days distance, both were told together at *Rome* to *Augustus*; and not that *Antipater* was kill'd together, and at the same time with the *Innocents*. As if *Macrobius* had said, *Augustus* heard at once, that *Herod* had, besides those *Children*, slain also his own *Son*. And it is not a good consequence, to conclude, that a person is but two years old, because he is reported to have been kill'd, *with* some others of that age (b).

At least, I am sure, we may affirm, that *Macrobius's* expression [*Inter, &c.*] is frequently used by Latin Writers, to signify that *when*, or *while* some things had been a doing, others happen'd, or were transacted, tho' of a different nature, and even at some distance, both of time and place. For to prove this,

(a) Si *Macrobius* statuit *Bimulos* simul interfectos cum *Antipatro*, utique hallucinatur. Sed nihil opus hoc de ipso Suspiciari: Cum dicere possit, *Bimulorum & Antipatri* credes, quod paucis tantum diebus differrent, uno tempore *Romæ* auditas, sed non uno factas. Ut illud *Macrobii*: *Inter pueros, &c.* possit exponi, *præter pueros, &c.* *Christ. Noldi. Hist. Idum. p. 68. Ed. An. 1660.*

(b) *Noldius* L. C. p. 148. Ex hoc Loco *Macrobii* Decherius malè elicit hunc paralogismum: *Herodes cum Infantibus bimulis suum quoque filium interfecit; ergo cum bimulum interfecit.* Nam præcisè ex verbis *Macrobii* illud non potest confici. Qui *inter Bimulos* occiditur, non statim *Bimulus, &c.*

this, many instances (a), could be brought, Sect. II.  
 if it were necessary. Therefore I hope,   
 that Interpretation will not appear to the  
*Schematist* to be forc'd and out of the  
 way. Otherwise he may remember here,  
 what he says afterwards, That *Macrobius*  
*liv'd in the end of the 4th Century*, that  
 is to say, when the purity of the *Latin*  
 Tongue was almost lost ; and also that  
*Macrobius* himself expressly declares, he was  
 not a *Latin* born, and begs his Reader's  
 pardon, if in his *Discourses* be not found  
 the *original Roman Elegancy* (b).

4. Nevertheless I am willing to suppose,  
 that *Macrobius* implies that he, at least,  
 conceiv'd *Herod's* Son had been kill'd a-  
 mong the *Infants*, under two years old.

But then I maintain, that nothing is more  
 unreasonable than the consequence our Ob-

B 4

jector

(a) Among which may be reckoned these two Passages  
 of *Macrobius* himself : Lib. I. C. VI. INTER HÆC Avi-  
 eni dicta Flavianus & Euſtathus ——— ingreſſi alacriorem  
 fecere Cætum, &c. Cap. VII. INTER HÆC Evangelus,  
 petitu omnium temperatus, M. Varronis, inquit, Librum  
 vobis arbitror non ignotum, &c. To which I ſhall add  
 only two more of a much antienter Writer : *Vel. Pater-  
 cul.* Lib. II. C. 83. INTER hunc apparatus belli, Plan-  
 cus non judicio recta legendi, ——— transfugit ad Cæſarem.  
 Et C. 45. Peridem tempus P. Clodius, homo nobilis, —  
 Et actus inceſti reus, ob ſinitum INTER religioſiſſima P.  
 R. ſacra adulterium, &c.

(b) *Macrob. Saturn.* L. I. *Pref.* Niſi ſicubi nos ſub alio  
 ortos Cælo Latinæ Linguae vena non adjuvet. Quod ab  
 his, ——— petitu impetratumque volumus, ut æqui boni-  
 que conſulant, ſi in noſtro ſermone nativa Romani Oris  
 elegancia deſideretur, &c.

Sect. II.  jector would draw from thence ; as if therefore it follow'd, that *Augustus* never utter'd such a *Fest*, and that there never was such a slaughter of the *Infants*. Why do not he rather conclude, that *Herod* never had a Son, whom he put to death ? Sure this consequence would be much more *Logical*, since that Son of *Herod* is the principal matter *Macrobius* has here in view. But then this consequence must affect the authority of *Josephus*, upon whom the *Schematist* builds here his chief Objections against *Matthew*. However, as notwithstanding *Macrobius's* suppos'd Blunder, in putting two things together, which should be distinguish'd, *viz.* The slaughter of the *Infants*, and the death of *Herod's* Son, who was a *man grown* ; yet it is most certain, he had good authority for the truth of the *fact*, concerning the killing of *Herod's* son : So we may very justly believe, that he had also his authority, both for the *Fest* of *Augustus* on that occasion, and for the *Fact* of the *Infants* slaughter. And these two *Facts* cannot be rejected, no more than the murder of *Herod's son*, tho' the Blunder of *Macrobius* should be never so great. We have in the best *Historians* many instances of like Blunders, and want of attention ; and yet the *facts*, misplac'd by them, are not, singly taken, the less true for all that misplacing of them. If  
the



the want of memory, or due consideration, were a sufficient ground for casting the reproach of Falschood upon a writer, What would become, for instance, of *Scaliger's* reputation, whose blunder and want of memory, (tho' he had so vast a one) we have seen in the passage, quoted above upon this very Subject ?

III. The following *Consideration* will not detain us so long, because of its striking weakness, and because the ground of it may be reduced to the former.

*Thirdly*, says the *Schematist*, *The remarks of Augustus, as Grotius (a) observes, has no relation to the slaughter of the Infants, but only to that of Herod's Son. And I add, that, Augustus reflecting only on Herod's Cruelty to his Son, evinces, that he knew nothing of his Cruelty in destroying the Infants. And as Augustus could not have been ignorant of it, if it had been true, so he could not have omitted the mentioning of it, when he was satyrizing Herod's Cruelty.*

1. To shew, how little pertinent all this is to the purpose, we need but to join with it the consequence intended by the Objector, and which ought to contain the Position he has undertaken to prove, viz. *That the Fact of the Infants slain by Herod's order is not confirm'd by Macrobius ; and that*

(a) Ad. Matt. ii. 16.

Sect. II.



*that his Passage*, wherein however it is certainly found, *is of no authority*. For how, pray, does this follow from what *Macrobius* says not, or from what he should have said more, according to the fancy of any one, who has a strong itch of contradicting? Why forsooth, because *Macrobius*, as his design, in the Chap. quoted, required it, relates only the Sarcasm of *Augustus* upon *Herod's* cruelty to his Son; does it therefore follow that *Augustus* knew nothing of the Infants slaughter, which yet *Macrobius* assures that Emperor heard at the same time; or that he said nothing at all of it then? Who in cold Blood can draw such Inferences from *Macrobius's silence*; when it does not appear, he was obliged, by the design of his Narration, to tell more Circumstances? Who can reasonably, from that *silence*, affirm what *Augustus* omitted, or omitted not, and what he should have added to the only reflection *Macrobius* thought fit to record? How then can the Objector be so positive, that *Augustus reflected only on Herod's Cruelty to his Son*, and that this reflection evinces, that *Augustus knew nothing of Herod's cruelty in destroying the Infants*? And why, pray again, could not *Augustus have omitted reflecting upon this Fact*, when he was satyrizing *Herod's Cru-*  
*elty,*

elty, not in general, as the Objector so fairly insinuates, but in particular *to his Son* ?

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In short, *Macrobius* is at present the only Ancient Writer, who speaks of this satirical Jest, and his Design, in relating it with some other witty Sayings, was not to give us all the Circumstances attending every one of those Jest. He does not neither tell us, whether *Augustus* uttering the same was standing, sitting, or lying down upon his Couch ; and yet he must have been in one or the other Posture. Why then does not the *Considerer* conclude, that the omission of such a necessary Circumstance *evinces*, that *Macrobius* knew nothing of the matter, and that *Augustus* never made any of those *Jests* ? This Consequence would certainly be as reasonable, as any of the *Schematist's* Inferences.

2. For what concerns *Grotius*, whose Authority is here brought in, he neither argues against the *Fact* it self, nor reasons against *Macrobius*, as the *Schematist* does. *It seems*, indeed to him, that *Macrobius*, by a mistake, has put together two different Stories of the same time. But to make that Conjecture of his likely, instead of affirming with our Objector, That *Augustus* could not have been ignorant of the *Infants slaughter*, if true ; quite contrary he assures, That it was too inconsiderable, to have reach'd *Augustus's Ear* ; “ because it  
“ was

Sect. II.  


“ was done in a place of few Inhabitants;  
 “ or it might be pretended to have hap-  
 “ pened in a Tumult and Sedition, with-  
 “ out the King’s Command; or lastly, be-  
 “ cause it was obscur’d by other much  
 “ greater Crimes of *Herod*. Then *Gro-*  
 “ *tius* adds, that the killing of *Herod’s* Son  
 “ was alone to the purpose, and not the  
 “ killing of the Infants, which could not  
 “ oblige *Augustus* to say, *That it was bet-*  
 “ *ter to be Herod’s Hog, than his Son.*

There is no need, I am sure, I should enlarge here in shewing, what every intelligent Reader can at first sight perceive; that those suspicions and assertions of *Grotius* are groundless, and too weak for proving that suspected Mistake of *Macrobius*. Which after all is only pretended to be in his putting wrong together two Things, whereof one was foreign to the other; but not in having invented both, or either of them. Let any one judge of the goodness and strength of *Grotius’s* reasoning, when he reads his Words, I have put in the Margin (a); remembering at the same time, that

(a) Grot. in Matt. ii. 16. Latinè admodum quisquis ille est ex quo Macrobius Augusti dicta descripsit, *intra bimatum*: Nisi ab ipso Macrobio, qui Theodosianis temporibus vixit honoresq; gessit, ac proinde aut Christianus fuit, aut certe legit Apostolor. Libros, hoc additum majus, quod est credibilis, quia non satis rectè dici potest Antipater Herodis filius, jam provectæ ætatis, quique Bethlehemi non fuit, inter infantes Bethlehemiticos occisus.

that tho' he has been a very Learned Man, Sect. II.  
 yet he was very far from being *infallible*,  
 or without prejudice, 

3. And even supposing, that *Macrobius* was really thus mistaken, yet the *Schematist* cannot reasonably make use of it against the Truth of the *Fact* now in hand ; which is not doubted of by *Grotius*, and cannot be justly question'd by any Body else, notwithstanding all the suspected Mistakes in *Macrobius*, as I have demonstrated above in Confuting the second *Consideration*. So that I need not here say any thing more about it.

I will only give one Instance or two of such *Mistakes* in *Macrobius*, which yet cannot hurt the *Facts* he mentions. Thus *Lib. I. c. xxiii.* He cites a place from *Plato*, as being in his *Timæus* ; and yet it is not to be found there, but in his *Phædrus* ;  
 as

cifus. Adde quod Antipater occifus 5<sup>o</sup>. ante mortem Herodis die, hæc autem laniena ante aliquanto contigit, ut docent, quæ fequuntur inf. Com. 19. Videtur ergo Macrobius errore quodam Historias duas ejufdem temporis mifcuiffe. Certe laniena illa infantum, aut ob rariorem habitantium in eo tractu, aut quia tumultus Seditioñisve obtentu, diffimulato Regit imperio, fuit peracta, aut denique quod majoribus Herodis Scelerib. obfcuraretur, minus nobilis fuit, quam ut ad Augufti aures perveniret : Quippe cum nec Joſephus, ſcriptor tam diligens, ejus meminere. Deinde ſola filii cædes ad rem pertinet : Scævitia autem οἷς τῆς διερῆς καὶ ἡμέρας, efficere non potuit, ut diceret Auguſtus malle ſe Herodis porcum eſſe quam filium.

**Sect. II.** as the most Learned *John Rainold* (a) observed 130 years ago. Again, *Macrobius Lib. II. c. xii.* quoting a Passage of *Pliny* the Elder, who wrote under *Vespasian*, he puts him under *Trajan*, and so confounds him with *Pliny* the younger, the former's Nephew and adopted Son; in which Mistake he follows a much older Writer of the Emperor *Severus* his Reign; one *Sammonicus Serenus* (b). But for all that, it is a matter of Fact most certain, that the very Things and Passages cited by *Macrobius* are in those Authors he names.

IV. The *Schematist's* last Consideration against *Macrobius*, runs thus :

1. " Fourthly, *Macrobius* liv'd in the  
 " end of the 4th Century, and is no Evi-  
 " dence for any Fact done in the begin-  
 " ning of the 1st Century, or any Sayings  
 " of *Augustus*. And it is an unanswer-  
 " ble Objection to the Authority of *Ma-*  
 " *crobius*, that what he says occurs in no  
 " other before him. "

2. " Nor is the Authority of *Macrobi-*  
 " *us* the better for being a Christian, as  
 " some [ *Barthii Adversaria*, p. 2258. &  
 " *Grotius* ad *Matth.* ] suppose he might  
 " be. "

Here

(a) *Lib. de Eccles. Rom. Idol*, Li I. C. 5. p. 198. Edit. Oxon. An. 1596.

(b) Sic *Jos. Scalig.* Anim. in Euseb. Chr. p. 207. & post eum *J. Fabric.* Bibl. Lat. L. III. C. 5. Vid. *Plin.* Vit. p. 26.

Here we have two different Objections Sect. II.  
 heap'd together, which I have distinguish'd,   
 and shall answer distinctly one after ano-  
 ther.

The first is properly built upon the want of an *older Author* to support the Testimony of *Macrobius*, who liv'd so long after the *Fact* in question. So this is the very same Objection made at the beginning against *St. Matthew* ; and therefore our former answer thereupon may serve here, without any further trouble. Especially if we observe, that the *Schematist* uses here the same Art, supposing again, what he must know to be absolutely false, *viz.* That we have still all the Authors, who wrote before *Macrobius*, since the beginning of the first Century. The falsehood of which supposition being so generally known, if it be but remember'd here, it wou'd be sufficient for the discovery of the Fallacy lying in that first Objection.

However, I am willing to add some particular Observations in relation to *Macrobius* ; that our Reader may the better know the Character of some Men, who now a days have such an unhappy fecundity of Imagination, in making groundless Objections.

1. It is certain that *Macrobius* cannot be brought in, as an Eye-witness of the *Facts* *done* some-Centuries before him. Nor is he

Señ. II. he cited as such in the Controversy before us. But what then? Could he not have what he says upon it, from some of those many Authors extant in his time and lost since? Does he not expressly acquaint his Readers, that this Work of his is nothing but a Collection taken out of the Books he had read, either *Greek* or *Latin*, which he had made for the use of his Son *Eustathius* (a)? And even he assures his Son, that (b), *often* he produces his matters in the *very Words of the Authors he had read*, desiring that he would not blame him for it, when he shou'd find it out in his Studies, since it was done with a Design.

Hence it is, that not only he names at every Page the ancient *Authors*, whose Passages he alledges; but he often transcribes Word for Word some others, whose Names he does not mention. This is discover'd in several Instances, by the help of some of the few Books, which are now preserv'd (c); and had we more still, no doubt, but we shou'd

(a) Saturn. Lib. I. Præf. p. 154. Edit. Plaut. An. 1597. Quâ solâ utor. Quidquid mihi, vel te jam in Lucem edito, vel antequam nascereris, in diversis, sen Græcæ, seu Romanæ linguæ Voluminibus elaboratum est, id totum sit tibi scientiæ suppellex, &c.

(b) Nec mihi vitio veritas, si res, quas ex Lectione varia mutuabor, ipsis sæpe verbis, quibus ab ipsis Auctoribus exarratæ sunt. *Præf.*

(c) Thus *Macrobius* transcribes often Word for Word long Passages of *Aulus Gellius*, whom he does not name. The most part, for Instance, of *Macrobius's* third Chapter, Book

shou'd find out larger Proofs of the same Sect. II.  
kind; and of *Macrobius's* Carefulness to  
mention nothing of old times, but with  
the Authority of some or other good Writer.

2. Therefore nothing is more unrea-  
sonable, than our Objector's Pretension, that  
*it is an unanswerable Objection to the*  
*Authority of Macrobius, That what he*  
*says occurs in no Other before him.* How  
could it be found now after the loss of so  
many Writers, whom *Macrobius* had in  
his time, whercof we have not at present  
the hundredth part?

And consequently the *Objection* is by  
that Observation answer'd, as easily, as rea-  
sonably. For, tho' we have lost so many  
ancient Authors quoted by *Macrobius*; yet  
besides his Affirmation, that he collected  
the various matters of his Work out of  
former *Authors*, and often in their very  
Words; we have moreover a demonstrati-  
on of his veracity and faithfulness, by the  
concurrence of some Writers now pre-  
serv'd, in a great number of the Things  
he treats of.

3. It is then very reasonable to believe,  
that in other Places, and other *Facts*,  
where *Macrobius* omits the Name and Quo-  
tation of his *Authors*, yet he had certainly

Book I. is copied out of *Gellius*. Noct. Att. L. III. c. 2.  
etc. Lib. VI. c. 8. from *Gelli* Lib. V. c. 81. The 7th  
Book is taken from *Plutarch*; and in other Places he fol-  
lows *Alexander Aphrodisi*, verbatim, etc.

Sect. II.  some good ones, for what he says concerning the Times so long before his Age; tho' now we cannot discover and prove it, for want of those many Writers extant in his time, but entirely lost at present.

4. Otherwise the same Objection may destroy for ever the authority of all the best Historians Antiquity had, who have luckily escaped the fate, which abolished so many other Books. *Tacitus*, for instance, and *Suetonius*, must not be believ'd in any thing they write of *Augustus* above a hundred years after his death; and much less Credit must have *Dion Cassius*, a Man of so high a rank, and so justly esteem'd, who compos'd his History above two hundred years after that Emperor, and who has so many *Facts*, not to be found in any other Author.

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### S E C T. III.

*The suspected Christianity of Macrobius groundless.*

AS for the other Objection, taken from the suspected *Christianity* of *Macrobius*, it is worded somewhat strangely and ambiguously, to say nothing worse. I would in Charity suppose, the *Schematist* means

means only, that if *Macrobius* had been a Christian, his Testimony is not the better for that; because in that case, what he says of the *Innocents*, might be taken from St. *Matthew*, and therefore cannot be a new Evidence, different from that of our *Evangelist*. Otherwise, if the *Schematist* knows any thing of the Christian Religion, he must know, that a true Christian is an enemy to Lies, Forgeries, Impostures, Occasional Conformity for a Place of Honour, or Profits, &c.

Sect. II.



But let the *Schematist's* meaning be what it will, I may aver, that every impartial Reader thinks, it was the Duty of a candid Objector, before he vented such a Reflection upon *Macrobius*, as a Christian, to have offer'd some better Proof, than a single *might be*; which is all the *Schematist* brings in, and borrow'd too from a couple of modern Writers, who neither give any Reason for their *suspicion*. *Grotius*, at least, in the Passage above recited has none; and I may suppose the same of *Barthius*, without inquiring further about his Book, seeing the *Schematist* puts him with *Grotius*, as fancying only, that *Macrobius* *might be a Christian*.

Instead of that, I shall here clearly prove the reverse of that groundless *Suspicion*, by solid and strong Reasons, taken from *Macrobius* himself.

## Sect. III.



1. The *first* is from the Nature and Design of his Book, in which we find the *Fact* in question, without touching the other concerning *Scipion's Dream*, tho' it be written with the same *Heathenish* Notions, and in the same Stile.

Now then in that Work of the *Saturnals*, *Macrobius* writes chiefly of Religious *Heathenish* Matters ; and, like a thorough good *Pagan*, zealously vindicates *Heathenism*, as much as he can. In this view he endeavours, with all the artifice and learning possible, to make it appear more reasonable, than Christians represented it, when they traduc'd the gross *Idolatry* of *Pagans*. This (a), *Macrobius* would fain extenuate, by pretending to shew, that their thousand different *Gods* and *Goddeses* were nothing, but the *Sun*, the *Moon*, the *Earth*, &c.

Is all that stuff, and the like, a fit Work to prove, that the Writer of it was, or *might be a Christian* ?

2. Does he speak like one breathing *Christianity* in the least, when he says, for instance : In our *sacred Ceremonies* *IVE IWORSHIP Janus with a double Face*, &c. *In sacris quoque INVOCAMUS Janum Geminum, Janum Patrem*, &c.

(a) According to the Method of *Porphyry* before him, quoted Lib. I. c. 17. *Sicut & Porphyrius testatur Minervam esse virtutem solis*, &c.

&c. (b): *WE ADORE Apollo*; that is *Señ. III.*  
to say, *the Sun*;—*Apollinem, id est so-*  
*lem, modò sospitatem modò pestem signifi-*  
*cantibus cognominibus ADORAMUS* (c). 

I could produce a hundred such Expres-  
sions, if it were necessary. But I shall on-  
ly add, that I am ready to submit, if, by  
some other clear Passages, the *Schematist*  
be ever able, with all his cunning, to prove  
*Macrobius* a Christian.

3. In the mean while I shall put in here  
another Consideration, to shew the contra-  
ry: Which is, that *Macrobius* in the *Con-*  
*versations*, or *Dialogues*, whercof his se-  
ven Books are compos'd, has chosen, for  
his *Interlocutors* and Speech-makers, some  
Men, we certainly know to have been the  
most rank and obstinate *Heathens* of his  
time.

Let us begin with *VETTIUS AGO-*  
*RIUS PRÆTEXTATUS*, in whose  
House the *Conversations* are suppos'd to  
have been held, during the *Saturnalia*,  
those fine *Heathenish* Holy-Days, dedi-  
cated to *Saturn* (d). His *Paganism* can-  
not be more open, than it is in *Macrobi-*  
*us*, who not only makes him set forth

C 3

that

(b) *Saturn. Lib. I. C. 9. & C. 17.*

(c) *Ibid, Lib. I. C. 17.*

(d) *Saturnalibus apud VETTIUM PRÆTEXTATUM*  
*Romanæ Nobilitatis Proceres doctique alii congregantur,*  
*&c. Macrobi. L. I. C. I. in Argum. Oper. Vid. et Cap. 2.*

**Scet. III.** that long Discourse containing about XX Chapters, wherein he explains the nature of the *Heathenish* Gods and Religious Ceremonies; but besides, he has pointed out very plainly the *sacred Offices* and Dignities he was indow'd with (*a*). These are particularly recited in the Marble, which was, it seems, the *Basis* of the Statue dedicated to him by publick Authority, according to the Prayer of the Senate made in their Name by *Symmachus* (*b*), to the Emperors *Theodosius* and *Valentinianus*. The Inscription still extant has among the rest the following remarkable Words: VETTIO AGORIO PRAETEXTATO V. C. PONTIFICI VESTAE PONTIFICI SOLI QVINDECIMVIRO AVGVRI TAVROBOLIATO CVRIALI NEOCORO HIEROPHANTAE PATRI SACRONVM, &c. (*c*). It was dedicated the first of February in the III<sup>d</sup> Consulship of *Valentinianus* II. with *Eutropius*, i. e. *An. Dom.* 387.

(*a*) Saturn. Lib. I. C. 7. Hic *Avienus* in PRÆTEXTATUM expectationem cōsulentis remittens; Licet omnes, ait, qui assunt, pari doctrinâ polleant; sacrorum tamen VETTIUS unicè conscius potest tibi & Originem Cultus, qui huic DEO [*Saturno*] panditur, & Causam Festi solemniter aperire.

Cap. 17. Hic *Avienus* — Et quia sacrorum omnium PRÆSULEM esse, Te VETTI PRÆTEXTATE, divina [Scil. Imperatorum mandata] voluerunt, perge, quaeso.

(*b*) *Sym.* Ep. 32. Lib. X. Edit. Parej.

(*c*) *Gruter.* Inscr. p. MCH. n. 2.

387. Another Statue had been intended Sect. III.  
by the *Vestals*, he having been a Priest of *Vesta*, as we read in *Symmachus* (b), who  
did not spare his Praises in his Letters to  
him alive, and after his death to the Em-  
perors (c).

No wonder then if St. *Hierom* calls him  
a *sacrilegious Man*, and a *worshipper of*  
*Idols* (d); and acted so severely against  
the *Christians*, in that Dispute between  
*Damasus* and *Ursinus*, about the See of  
*Rome*, he being then Governour and *Præ-*  
*fectus* of the City (e).

*SYMMACHUS* himself, whom we  
have already often quoted, is another of the  
*Interlocutors* in *Macrobius*. His *Hea-*  
*thenism* would sufficiently appear by his  
intimacy with *Prætextatus*, had we no  
other Evidence. But it fully appears thro'  
all his *Epistles*, and especially by that fa-  
mous *Petition* (f), which in the Name of  
the Senate he presented to the Emperors

C 4

in

(b) Epist. 36. Lib. 2.

(c) See Lib. I. Ep. 44.—55. & Lib. X. Ep. 30—32.

(d) Miserabilis PRÆTEXTATUS, qui designatus Con-  
sul est mortuus, homo Sacrilegus, & Idolorum Cultor.  
Solebat Ludens beato Papæ Damaso dicere: Facite me  
Rom. Urbis Episcopum, & protinus ero Christianus. Hie-  
ronym. Epist. ad *Pammachi*. de errorib. Joan. Hieros. p.  
164. T. II. Ed. Erasmi.

(e) In the Year 367 and 368. See *Socrat*. Hist. Lib.  
IV. c. 24. & *Ammi Marcellin*. Lib. xxvii. p. 349. Ed.  
Vales.

(f) Lib. X. Ep. 61. DDD. Valentiniano, Theodosio  
& Arcadio.

Sect. III.  in behalf of the *Vestals*, and for the restoring of *Pagan* Ceremonies, and which was so zealously oppos'd by St. *Ambrosius* and *Prudentius*, the Christian Poet of that Age. We have also a shorter Demonstration in a Marble preserved to this time at *Rome* in the *Villa Casali*. Having transcribed it my self better than it had been published before (a), the curious Reader will not be sorry to see it here.

Q. AVR. SYMMACHO VC  
 QVAEST. PRAET. PONTIFICI  
 MAIORI CORRECTORI  
 LUCANIAE ET BRITTIORVM  
 COMITI ORDINIS TERTII  
 PROCONS. AFRICAE PRAEF  
 VRB. COS. ORDINARIO  
 ORATORI DISSERTISSIMO  
 Q. FAB. MEMM. SYMMACHVS  
 VC. PATRI OPTIMO.

At the top in the *Cornish* this Word is read EVSEBII. Which I take to signify, that this Inscription, tho' erected at the expence of *Symmachus's* Son, had been composed by *Eusebius*. And this may be the same Man with that brought in by *Macrobius*

(a) *Reinesii* Inscr. p. 399. *Spon.* Miscel. p. 123.

*Macrobius* among his *Interlocutors*, and praised as a famous Professor of *Rhetorick* of those times (*a*).

I shall omit another Inscription (*b*) which I have copied in the same *Villa*, and was dedicated by the same *Symmachus* the Son, to the Grandfather of his Wife, *Virius Nichomachus Flavianus*, who had the same Religious Dignity of *Pontifex Major*, and who seems to have been the Father of *Flavianus*, another of *Macrobius's* Speakers, whom he makes *Symmachus* (*c*), to extol much above the Father (*d*), whereby alone

(*a*) Facundum & eruditum virum EUSEBIUM Rhetorem, inter *Græcos* præstantem omnibus idem nostrâ ætate professis, doctrinæ *Latinaris* haud inscium Prætextatus meum in Locum [*Postumiani*] invitari imperavit; *Saturn.* Lib. I. C. 1. Vid. c. 6.

(*b*) It has been published several times, as by *J. Ger. Vossius*, de Hist. Lat. Lib. III. P. 4. C. 2. *Henr. Valetii*. Not. ad Am. Marc. L. 28. fin. and from thence by *Reinesii*. Synt. p. 441. *Spon.* Misc. p. 123.

(*c*) The Character of *Flavianus*, drawn by *Symmachus* himself, has been already observed by the learned *Reinesii*, Epist. 69. p. 624. & Inscript. p. 78. *Flaviani* quem dixi, Pontificis erga Ceremonias Deorum & festa Divinitatis imperata solenniaque Religio & Pietas, ex Epist. 34. & 53. Lib. 2. *Symmachii*, agnosci potest: Quâ munus suum, in sacris *Matris Magnæ Deum* celebrandis, imprimis callum seu jejunium *Symmacho*, ceu Collegæ (nam & hunc *Pontificem* fuisse adparet ex Ep. 41. L. I. 31. L. II. & 99 L. IX.) eum mandavisse, quòd absens istarum feriarum diebus esset, legimus.

(*d*) Tùm *Symmachus*, — ne quid ad perfectionem Cœtus desideretur, invitandos ad eundem congressum conviviumque censeo FLAVIANUM, qui quantum sit, mirandum! Viro venusto PATRE præstantior, non minus ornatu morum, gravitateque vitæ, quàm copiâ profundæ eruditionis, asserunt, &c. *Saturn.* L. I. C. 8. Vid. *Symmachii* Epist. L. II. integ. *Flaviano* script.

Sect. III.  long we can easily conclude, that he was of the same stamp, without enlarging upon what *Symmachus* himself says of him in his *Epistles*.

The like conclusion must be drawn concerning another of the Interlocutors, *COECINA ALBINUS*, whom *Macrobius* represents, as *most united with Symmachus*; having both the *same Age, Manners, and Studies*: *Et venerunt Aurelius Symmachus, et Cœcina Albinus, cum ætate, tum etiam moribus, ac studiis inter se conjunctissimi*; Satur. L. I. c. ii.

But to shorten this tedious examination, if those Instances seem not yet sufficient to the *Schematist*, there is a general Character of *all* the Interlocutors, given by *Macrobius*, Lib. I. c. xxiv. where he makes them *ALL* admire and applaud *Prætex-tatus*, after his long Discourse of the *Heathenish* Gods, and praise his *Religion*, *Piety*, profound Learning in their *Theology*, and great Eloquence, &c. *Hic cum Prætex-tatus fecisset finem loquendi, OMNES in eum affixis vultibus admirationem stupore prodebant: dein Laudare, hic memoriam, ille doctrinam, CUNCTI RELIGIONEM, affirmantes hunc esse unum arcana DEORUM naturæ consciunt, qui solus Divina et assequi animo et eloqui posset ingenio.*

Having

Having thus defeated the pretended *Christianity* of *Macrobius*, and, I hope, to the Satisfaction of the Readers, who are sincere lovers of Truth ; I shall conclude with another Remark, to shew that *Macrobius* did not take from St. *Matthew* what he says upon the slaughter of the *Innocents*. This appears from the difference, which is in their accounts. For St. *Matthew* tells us, it was done in a particular Town of *Judæa* call'd *Bethlehem* ; and *Macrobius* speaks of the whole Province of *Syria* in general, as if it had been all affected thereby, and *Herod* could have extended his Kingly Power over all that Province, where yet he had none. Had *Macrobius* been a *Christian*, he would certainly have been better instructed, by his frequenting the Christian Churches, wherein the *Gospels* were continually read. Nevertheless this inaccuracy of *Macrobius*, or of the *Pagan* Author, he follows, does not in the least hurt the chief Matter, we are concern'd for, the truth of the *Fact*, which for all that is so clearly deliver'd in *Macrobius*, as well as in St. *Matthew*, and some of the first Christian Writers, *Justin Martyr*, *Eusebius*, &c.

Sect. III.



P O S T C R I P T



# POSTSCRIPT

CONCERNING

## *Virgil's* IV<sup>th</sup> ECLOGUE.

THE Author of the *Scheme*, arguing (a) against my Lord Bishop of Coventry's *Conjecture*, (for he gives it for no more) concerning the grounds of *Virgil's* IVth Eclogue, has done me the Honour of putting my Name in a Marginal Note, as if I were one of those, who had beforehand confuted the *Bishop's* Notions.

There reciting in *part* the Title of a Manuscript Dissertation, I had mention'd in the Preface of my Book about the pretended *Universal Peace*, at the Birth of our Saviour (b), the *Schematist* adds, that my Dissertation *being yet unpublished*, the Bishop *has the peculiar advantage of consulting it, for his own Conviction*.

This, and the whole Note, I ought, without doubt, to take, as one of those  
extremely

(a) Pag. 50, 51.

(b) Jani Templum Christo nascente Referat, &c. Roter. An. 1700.

extremely witty *Sneers*, so common in the Style of the *Schematist*. For I suppose, he does not really believe, that so learned a Person as my Lord Bishop, wants my poor help for *his own Conviction* upon any Subject ; or that I am so foolishly conceited, as to think his Lordship does want it.

1. To give him a serious Answer, I shall *first* observe, that this *very Learned*, Sagacious, and Polite *Schematist* must know, that the Bishop could find nothing in my Manuscript Dissertation for *his Conviction*, against his own *Conjecture*. For since the *Schematist* says expressly, that, *if he mistake not*, the Bishop (p. 14.) *highly Commends that Manuscript Tract on another account* ; he must therefore be conscious, that the Bishop having read my Dissertation, he had also seen what the *Schematist* thinks to be therein against the Bishop's *Notions* on this matter, if in reality my Dissertation contain'd any such Confutation. Or at least in this supposition, the *Schematist* might naturally imagine, that the Bishop had not found therein any thing strong enough for a contrary *Opinion* ; and consequently, that no better *Conviction* could be got by reading again my Dissertation either in Manuscript or in Print. To what purpose then does that Author bring me, and my Writings into this Dispute ?

2. Besides,

2. Besides, the truth is, that my Dissertation confutes nothing like my Lord Bishop's *Conjecture*. For in a sort of Preamble I mention only the Interpretation of some Ancient Writers, who look'd upon this Piece of *Virgil*, as a true Divine Prediction ; such especially is the Explication given by *Eusebius*, under the Name of *Constantinus* the Great : Of which a Learned Jesuit (*a*) speaks thus: *Constantinum certè tantum Imperatorem non puduit Bucolicum istud, non pro vulgari profanoque, sed pro sacro Cælestive, sanctis Nicænæ Synodi Patribus, cœu Prognosticum, prælegere & explicare, &c.*

I mention at the same time another Interpretation borrow'd of *Servius*, that old Commentator of *Virgil*, and improv'd by most part of the Modern Grammarians and Criticks, particularly by *David Blondell*, tho' he confuted the former. They pretend that *Virgil* wrote that *Eclogue* after the Birth of a Son of *Pollio*, taking this opportunity for praising both *Augustus* and *Pollio*.

Having refer'd my Reader to *Blondell's* Book (*b*) for a further Confutation of the first Opinion, I propose another Method for entirely demolishing all, and especially the

(*a*) *Ægid. Bucherius*, in Belgio Romano, Lib. 2. C. 6. *Judicium* *Is. Casulani* vid. in Exercit. Cont. Baron. l. p. 68. & *Tan. Fabri*, Epist. P. 1. Ep. 44.

(*b*) *Des Sibyl.* L. 1. C. 13, 14, 15.

the last Interpretation ; *viz.* in giving what I thought to be a true *Historical* Explication of *Virgil's* Poëm.

In this View there was no need for me to determine, what might be the Poët's true Mind and Notion, when he brought in the pretended *Cumean* Predictions, on which he builds the Application he makes to the Subject, or Person, he had in his Eye.

Let it be a real *Oracle* of the *Sibyls* then extant and preserv'd among those, which had been gather'd in Foreign Countries, after the last burning of the *Capitol*, wherein the *Sibylline* Books were kept. Or let it be only a *Traditional* Notion, handed about from old times, and grounded upon, I do not know what. I may for all that search out what is the true Object, to which *Virgil* applies all the great and happy Things suppos'd to be hoped for, and expected by the *Roman* People, on either of those two grounds.

Nevertheless, in a short account of the fatal Accidents suffer'd by the *Sibylline* Books, I venture to observe, that *Virgil* by his *Cumean Verses*, *Cumæum Carmen*, seems rather to mean the predictions of the *Sibyl* in general, or of that in particular, who had her Seat and *Oracle* at *Cumæa*, near *Naples*.

And

And indeed, to say here something more of that, it is certain that in antient Writers that *Epithet* is constantly used for what belong'd to the *Sibyl*, and not to describe *Hesiod*. This Father of the most antient *Greek* Mythology is commonly pointed at by the Sir-name of *Ascræus*, a Town in *Beotia*, wherein he was suppos'd to be born or educated. It is used in particular by *Virgil* himself, signifying, that in his *Georgicks* he had imitated *Hesiod's* Poëm of Rural Affairs (a):

*Ascræumque cano Romano per oppida  
Carmen.*

On the other hand *Propertius*, a Cotemporary Poët, gives the *Sibyl* the Name of *Cumean Prophetess*, Lib. ii. Eleg. ii. fin.

*Hanc utinam faciem nolit mutare se-  
neclūs,*

*Etsi Cumææ sæcula Vatis aget.*

The same Phrase was not long after borrow'd by *Valer. Flaccus* (a):

*Phæbe, mone, si Cymææ mihi Conscia  
Vatis stat castâ Cortina domo.*

From

(a) *Georgic*. Lib. II. v. 176. Et *Eclog*. VI. v. 69.  
—Hos tibi dans calamos, en accipe, Musæ,  
*Ascræo* quos antè seni, &c.

(a) *Argonaut*. Lib. I. ver. 5, 6. Cum quibus confer  
*Claudian* in Imp. Honorii Consul. IV. ver. 147.

*Chaldaei stupuere sones, Cumanaq; rursus,  
Innotuit Rupes, rabida delubra Sibyllæ.*

From whence some learned Men (*a*) have justly concluded, that this Poët was one of the *Quindecimviri*, under whose peculiar Care and Inspection were the *Sibylline Books*.

My next step is to fix the time of *Virgil's* Writing his IVth *Eclogue*, which I shew to be after *Pollio* had enter'd into the exercise of his *Consulship*, that is to say in *Autumn*, the Year 714. of *Rome*, (the 40th before our Vulg. Aera) immediately after the reconciliation between *M. Antony* and the young *Cæsar Octavianus*, call'd afterwards *Augustus*. This remarkable Circumstance fill'd *Rome* and all *Italy* with the joyful hopes of a lasting Peace, Plenty, and Happiness, after several years of Civil Wars ; tho' it happen'd that the next following years did not very exactly answer their expectation.

These Chronological Observations, concerning *Pollio's* Consulship, I have since inserted in the Life of *Horace* (*b*).

Having thus settled the true *Epoch* of *Virgil's* IVth *Eclogue*, and paved my way, I proceed to propose my two *Historical* Explications.

## D

## I. In

(*a*) *J. Fred. Gronovius* de Pecun. veter. Lib. IV. C. XI. p. m. 333. seq; & post *Nic. Heinsius* ad L. C.

(*b*) *Horat. Vita*, ad An. V. C. 714. p. 77—81.

1. In the first I endeavour to shew, that the Poët's Application and Encomiums can exactly suite the young *Cæsar* [*Augustus*.] Among the rest, comparing what is said there of the happy Golden Age beginning again, with what *Virgil* elsewhere [Eclog. ix. & *Æn.* L. VI.] says in express Terms of *Augustus* ; I apply, to the Subject, the Testimony of many ancient Authors concerning the new *Star*, or *Comet*, which appear'd soon after *Julius Cæsar*'s death, when this young Heir and Successor of his was giving to the *Roman* People some fine Shews and Games in honour of the deceas'd *Julius Cæsar*. Above all the rest the Passage of *Pliny* (a) is to be remark'd, being express mostly in *Augustus* his own Words. I shall repeat here only the latter part : *Sed Augustus interiore gaudio SIBI illum [Cometem] NATUM, SEQUE in eo NASCI, interpretatus est. Et sanè, si spectetur Octaviani seculi felicitas, salutaris Cometes ille fuit.*

Hence easily appears, why *Virgil* might fitly represent the young *Cæsar*, as in a manner a new-born *Child*, besides the Reason taken from his being a meer Youth, which made them both, his Friends and Enemies call him so commonly a *Child*.

II. Not-

(a) *Hist. Natur.* Lib. II. Ch. 25.

II. Notwithstanding the great probability and fitness of that first Historical Explication, I propose yet another, by which I suppose, that *Virgil*, besides the Praises of *Augustus*, had also in his view to flatter him with *foretelling* the speedy *Birth of a Son*, by his Wife *Scribonia*, who was then with Child.

This I easily prove by good Authority, and that instead of a *Son*, there came the next year into the World the *Daughter* of his call'd *Julia*, who afterwards by her infamous Life, caus'd so much Grief and Shame to her Father *Augustus*.

III. What follows in my Dissertation is by much the longest part. Therein I fully overturn the other current Opinion concerning *Pollio's* Son, suppos'd to be born a little before, and nam'd *Saloninus* from *Pollio's* having taken *Salona* in *Dalmatia*, when he was commanding the Troops in that Province.

To demonstrate how groundless that is, I give an exact Chronological account of *Pollio's* Life, for many years before; which I have collected from his own *Epistles* and those of *Cicero*, as well as from other Historical Monuments. I make it thereby most evident, that *Pollio* never had any Command, nor made any War in *Dalmatia*, but after his *Consulship*.

I had by that an opportunity of speaking of *Horace's* Ode to *Pollio*, [Lib. ii. Od. i.] and so of confuting what *Dacier* had said upon the matter in his *Notes*. And this also I have inserted in my *Life of Horace* (a), referring at the same time (b) my Reader to the *Life of Pollio*, for a further Confutation of what concerns *Pollio's* pretended Son *Saloninus*, and *Virgil's* IVth *Eclogue*. For then I had resolv'd to change the Plan of my Dissertation, because this last and longest part of it seem'd much fitter for *Pollio's* Life. Into such a Work I had a mind to turn the whole Dispute about that *Eclogue*, as well, as all the rest found in Ancient Authors, relating to this Illustrious Man, so considerable by his Noble Birth, High Dignities, Great Achievements, and Extraordinary Parts, as an Historian, and a Poët.

Till this be publish'd in a Chronological Order, as I have done in the Lives of *Horace*, *Ovid* and *Pliny*, or the Dissertation it self be printed; I hope the short account, I have here offer'd, will be thought sufficient, to answer that sort of Call in the *Scheme*, without which I had never given

(a) Horat. Vita p. 91.—105.

(b) Ibid. p. 99. in the Margin *Vide Nostr.* Pollionis vitam, ad An. V. C. 714

given this trouble, neither to the Reader, nor to my self.

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## Addition for Page 35.

Having at last, got a sight of *Barthius's* Book, I am bound to tell the Reader, that I am convinc'd, the *Schematist* never read the Passage concerning *Macrobius*. For *Barthius* roundly affirms, he was a *Christian*, as a thing known to every Body. And yet he confesses, That *there is scarce in his Writings the least footstep of his Christianity*; so great is the Judgement of *Barthius*. No doubt, but the *Schematist* borrow'd this Authority of *Fabricius*, tho' a little too hastily, according to his wonted Method. For this Learned Man speaks thus, *Bibl. Lat. Lib. III. c. 12. (N.) Non minus incerta res de Religione Macrobi. Christianis eum annumerat Barthius, p. 2258. Adversar. Contrà homo Ethnicus dicitur Spanhemio Dub. Evangel. T. I. p. 533. Cui assentiri malim. Ambigui hærent Grotius ad Matth. ii. 16. & Huetius, p. 789. Demonst.*

However, here are the Words of *Barthius*, *Advers. Lib. 48. C. 8. Col. 2258. in fol. Ubi agens de Chalcidio, cui censet in rebus*

rebus Philosophicis, etiamsi Christiano, findendum ; addit : *Quod si facere noluerimus, sanè cum eo Macrobius etiam, et Boethius, et alios nonnullos tales abjiciamus, qui cum Christiani fuisse omnibus noti sint, tali tamen temperatione Philosophica Scripta promulgarunt, ut Ægrè in illis vel aliquot Vestigium Christianismi appareat.*

I leave to the Reader to determine who is the most Judicious of these two Writers, either *Barthius*, who can reason so, or the *Schematist*, who dares produce such an Evidence for proving that *Macrobius might be a Christian* ; even supposing that the *Schematist* had read *Barthius*.

*F I N I S.*



IN the Title Page, of the *Slaughter*, &c. read *Dubiis*.  
 Page 4. line 10. read *Eclogue*. p. 8. l. 18. r. *Nicolas*, his  
 chief Guide. p. 20. l. 10. r. and that we. p. 38. l. 19. r. *SACRORVM*. p. 39. l. 9. and if he acted. p. 48. l. 7. r. *Ascræus*, from a Town. l. 13. r. *Romana*.