A

DISSERTATION

ON THE

PROPHECIES,

THAT HAVE BEEN FULFILLED, ARE NOW FULFILLING,

OR

WILL HEREAFTER BE FULFILLED,

RELATIVE TO THE

GREAT PERIOD OF 1260 YEARS;

THE PAPAL AND MOHAMMEDAN APOSTASIES;

THE TYRANNICAL REIGN OF ANTICHRIST,

OR THE INFIDEL POWER;

AND

THE RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

By the Rev. GEORGE STANLEY FABER, B.D.

RECTOR OF LONG-NEWTON IN THE COUNTY OF DURHAM.

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTHECA

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

"Shut up the Words, and seal the Book, even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. xii. 4.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON,

NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1818.

Printed by R. & R. Gilbert,
St. John's Square, London.

CONTENTS.

VOL. III.

DISSERT. I.

Respecting the rise and fall of the seventh and eighth apocalyptic forms of Roman government and the effusion of the fourth and fifth vials. p. 3.

SECT. I.

Preliminary Observations. p. 3.

THE Roman Empire, as all agree, is symbolized by the apocalyptic seven-headed and ten-horned wild beast: and its first six heads or forms of government are easily ascertained to be Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Consular Tribunes, and Roman Emperors. p. 3.

I. But it is not equally easy to ascertain the seventh head, which was future at the time when the apostle wrote. p. 4.

II. Most protestant expositors, however they may have been perplexed in the arrangement of the seventh head, have supposed the eighth and last form of Roman government which succeeds it to be the Papacy. But this opinion is plainly untenable, both on account of

the difficulties with which it is hampered, and because it wholly violates the never-to-be-relinquished principle of *homogeneity*. p. 5.

III. Neither can the seventh head, running into and identifying itself with the eighth political form, be the Carlovingian Emperorship viewed as a *distinct* head from the Augustan Emperorship, as I once supposed. p. 7.

1. An objection, from naked matter of fact, urged against such an opinion. p. 8.
2. If this objection cannot be obviated, the opinion must be relinquished. p. 10.
3. But the objection cannot be obviated. p. 10.
4. Therefore the opinion must be relinquished. p. 12.

SECT. II.

Respecting the rise and fall of the seventh apocalyptic form of Roman government. p. 12.

IT is a naked matter of fact, that the Roman head or political form, of which the Austrian Archdukes, as *Emperors of the Romans*, were latterly the representatives, *ceased to exist* or (as St. John speaks) *fell*, when the dignity of *Roman Emperor* was abdicated on the 7th of August 1806: because, as no other prince assumed the abdicated dignity, it is therefore now no longer in being. p. 12.

I. It may be demonstrated, that the Carlovingian Emperorship, which expired in the August of 1806, was certainly *a head* of the Roman wild beast. p. 14.

1. This may be proved from its characteristic marks. p. 14.
2. It may also be proved from the very necessity of the thing. p. 16.

II. This point being demonstrated, we have next to inquire, with

with *which* of the seven Roman heads the Carlovingian Emperorship must be identified. p. 17.

1. It cannot be the seventh head: because the characteristic of the seventh head is *short continuance*. p. 19.
2. Neither can it be the eighth form of Roman government: because *the mode of its extinction*, which we have recently witnessed, does not correspond with *the predicted mode of extinction*, which the eighth form is prophetically described as experiencing. p. 19.
3. Therefore, since it plainly cannot be identified with any one of the five earlier heads which had all fallen even in the time of St. John, it must be identified with the sixth head. Hence it will follow, that the Carlovingian Emperorship, like the Constantinian, is a continuation of the Augustan Emperorship of the Romans: so that *the Roman Emperorship*, whether Augustan or Constantinian or Carlovingian, is, in the eye of prophecy, one and the same sixth head or Roman form of government. p. 20.
4. This was the opinion of Bp. Newton: and the event has shewn him to be in the right. p. 20.

III. A statement of the predicted characteristic marks of the seventh head. p. 21.

1. In its quality of a *Roman* head, it must, during some part of its existence, rule over the city of Rome. p. 21.
2. It must be a power of short duration. p. 21.
3. It must bear a title *distinct* from those of its six predecessors; because, otherwise, it cannot be distinguished from them. p. 22.
4. It must have sprung up, either in, or shortly before, the year 1806; in order that it may regularly succeed the fallen sixth head. p. 22.

IV. By an exact correspondence with all these characteristics, the seventh head is proved to be *the Francic Emperorship* founded by Napoleon Buonaparte. p. 23.

V. Through the recent violent excision of the seventh head or the Francic Emperorship, the Roman wild beast, which has *no more* than seven heads, has now become *headless*.

headless. But, in the economy of nature, a *headless* beast must sink into a state of death. Accordingly, St. John, whose hieroglyphic is constructed on the economy of nature, has foretold the *present* condition of the Roman Empire under the imagery, of the wild beast being slain by a sword which mortally wounds one of his heads, and of his consequent non-existence as a single living political body. p. 25.

VI. Respecting the purport of the phrase *death*, as used by St. John when speaking of the Roman beast. p. 29.

VII. An inquiry, as to *which* of the Roman heads was mortally wounded by a sword. p. 31.

1. The head, to be so wounded, may be proved to be the seventh. p. 33.
2. The death, produced by this wound, has been shewn by the event to be not *moral* but *political*. p. 37.

VIII. An exposition, drawn from historical facts, of the prophecy, which foretells; that the seventh Roman head should be violently slain by the sword, and that in consequence the now headless beast should lie for a season in a state of death or political non-existence as an Empire. p. 38.

1. The seventh short-lived head or the Francic Emperorship was violently slain by the sword in the June of 1815. p. 39.
2. In consequence of the excision of the seventh and *last* head, all the six former heads having previously *fallen*, the beast became *headless*, and therefore sank into a state of political death or non-existence. In this state, we now, in the present year 1817, may behold him. For, since the fall of the sixth head in 1806 and the violent excision of the seventh head in 1815, no one of the European powers can be deemed the secular head of the Roman Empire. Hence, as an Empire, it is politically dead and exists no longer. p. 41.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Respecting the effusion of the fourth and fifth vials. p. 46.

CONSISTENCY requires, that we should adapt the rise and tyranny and excision of the seventh head to the general current of apocalyptic prophecy. p. 46.

I. In the series of the seven trumpets, the last of them, which introduces the third great woe, comprehends the series of the seven vials. Hence, if the seventh trumpet has began to sound, the series of the seven vials must have commenced. p. 47.
   1. The effusion of the first vial. p. 48.
   2. The effusion of the second vial. p. 48.
   3. The effusion of the third vial. p. 48.
   4. These three vials comprehend and synchronize with the allegorical harvest of God's wrath. p. 49.

II. The fourth and fifth vials, which regularly succeed them, synchronize with and graphically delineate the entire reign of the short-lived seventh Roman head. p. 49.
   1. The fourth vial describes the rise and military tyranny of the Francic Emperorship. p. 50.
      (1.) A detail of the facts, which illustrate the accomplishment of the prophecy. p. 51.
      (2.) The chronological arrangement of the rise of the seventh head. p. 53.
   2. The fifth vial describes the decline and fall of the Francic Emperorship. p. 54.
      (1.) A statement of the general ideas, which are conveyed abstractedly and *a priori* by the terms of the prophecy itself. p. 55.
      (2.) A detail of the facts, which illustrate the accomplishment of the prophecy. The fifth vial began to flow in the year 1808, when the decline of the Francic Emperorship commenced: and its stream was at its height

height in the summer of 1815, when the Francic Emperorship was mortally wounded by the sword. p. 59.

III. A recapitulation of particulars, and an enumeration of the seven heads of the Roman beast which are now *all* extinct; so that at present the hieroglyphical monster, being *headless*, is in his predicted state of death or political non-existence. p. 67.

SECT. IV.

Respecting the rise and fall of the eighth form of Roman government. p. 70.

WHEN we have reached a certain point in a chronological prophecy; we are led, from the very necessity of the thing, to form a *general* idea of what is next to follow. Nor does this at all involve any presumptuous attempt to intrude into the office of *a prophet*, rather than to rest satisfied with the character of *a mere interpreter*. For, when it is foretold that such and such events *are* to happen; we must inevitably anticipate *their naked occurrence*, though we presume not to specify *all the minute particulars of it*. p. 70.

I. Now we have seen, that the entire duration of the Roman wild beast is divided into three successive periods: his *existence*, or the first term of his life; his *intermediate non-existence*, or the period during which he lies dead; and his *reëxistence*, or the second term of his life. Of these three periods, *the first* is past: and *the second* is now in actual lapse. Hence, without claiming to prophesy, we must needs anticipate the future commencement of *the third*. p. 72.

II. From such premises we are obliged to conclude (and our conclusion is, in fact, nothing more than the direct assertion

assertion of the prophet himself); that, as the wild beast was slain by the violent excision of his seventh head, he must revive by the healing of the *same* mortal wound which caused his death. p. 76.

III. The naked fact of *the wild beast's revival* being thus expressly foretold by St. John, we have next to inquire under WHICH of his seven heads he will revive. p. 77.

1. On this point we can know nothing, beyond what prophecy has taught us. p. 77.

2. Yet, by a careful discussion of particulars, we may without much difficulty arrive at the conclusion after which we seek. p. 78.

3. This conclusion is, that, as the SEVENTH head is the head which was mortally wounded by the sword; that same SEVENTH head is the head, which is destined to be healed. p. 81.

4. But the sword-slain seventh head is the Francic Emperorship. Therefore the Francic Emperorship is destined to be revived. And this seventh head, when revived, will be that eighth form of Roman government; which, whensoever it shall appear, is to be one of the preceding seven heads. p. 81.

IV. To this conclusion we are equally brought by the excellent principle of homogeneity. p. 81.

1. The *healing* of the deadly wound must be homogeneous to its *infliction*. But the *infliction* of the deadly wound is the violent excision of the Francic Emperorship by the sword of war. Therefore the *healing* of the deadly wound must be the revival of the Francic Emperorship. p. 82.

2. Such a conclusion is wholly independent of any individual or individuals: so that it is quite uncertain, both *at what time*, and *under what agent*, the Francic Emperorship will be revived. p. 82.

V. The present conclusion however is so important, that we cannot be too jealous in our admission of it. Hence

it

it will be useful to sum up the steps, by which we are regularly conducted to it. p. 84.

1. The *principle* of the argument is: to take as a basis certain positions, directly established by inspiration itself; and then to reason forward, by aid of the chronological prophecy, to the conclusion whither they conduct us. p. 84.
   (1.) The first position is, that *the apocalyptic seven-headed wild beast is an hieroglyphic of the Roman Empire.* p. 84.
   (2.) The second position is, that *the sixth head of the Roman wild beast is the Emperorship of the Romans.* p. 85.
2. Now these two positions will lead to the following train of conclusions. p. 86.
   (1.) The sixth head, which had begun to exist in the time of St. John, and whose representative for the time being always bore the official title of *Emperor of the Romans*, fell, like its five predecessors, in the year 1806. p. 86.
   (2.) But, since the economy of nature requires that the seventh head should arise, either shortly before, or in the very article of, the fall of the sixth head; this seventh head, most definitely characterized, as being at once short-lived and destined to fall by the sword of foreign violence, must have been in existence before the expiration of the year 1806. Now to the seventh head, thus characterized both circumstantially and chronologically, the Francic Emperorship alone perfectly corresponds. Therefore the Francic Emperorship must be the seventh head. p. 86.
   (3.) The excision of the seventh head produces the headless or defunct state of the Roman Empire. This state we now behold with our own eyes: for, at present, the Roman Empire has plainly NO head. p. 88.
   (4.) After this defunct state of the Roman Empire, the prophet arranges a period of its reëxistence: which in

in the hieroglyphic is described by the revival of the slain wild beast, in consequence of the healing of his mortally wounded seventh head. But the mortally wounded seventh head is the Francic Emperorship. Therefore the Francic Emperorship will be revived: and, when revived, it will constitute that eighth form of Roman government, which is to be the same as one of the preceding seven. p. 91.

VI. Both *the person by whom*, and *the time when*, the Francic Emperorship will be revived, is uncertain: but the latter is closely connected with the effusion of the sixth vial. p. 92.

1. The effusion of the sixth vial is acknowledged by our best commentators to describe the subversion of the Ottoman Empire. p. 92.
2. But, during the effusion of this yet future vial, we find the now defunct and headless wild beast restored to life and in full action. Therefore his deadly wound must be healed, either shortly before, or shortly after, or at the precise time of, the commencement of the sixth vial's effusion. p. 93.
3. Hence it is plain, that the downfall of the Ottoman Empire stands in close *chronological* connection with the revival of the now headless wild beast; which revival will be effected by the healing of his seventh head or the Francic Emperorship. p. 94.
4. Amidst all the convulsions of Europe, which have followed the French Revolution, the crazy Ottoman Empire has still continued to exist unchanged down to the present hour. p. 94.
5. Yet we are told, on the authority of an experienced military officer, that Russia and Austria conjointly might overturn it in a single campaign, and that nothing preserves it save the powerful mediation of England. p. 96.

VII. The future ascent of the revived wild beast from the abyss is homogeneous to his past ascent from the sea: for *the abyss* and *the sea* are synonymous terms. p. 99.

VIII. We

Digitized by Google

VIII. We are now finally brought to the conclusion, that the revived Francic Emperorship will be that dominant Roman head or power, which will perform the deeds attributed by Daniel to his wilful king during the time of the end, and which will perish at Armageddon while presiding over a great confederacy of vassal Latin kings. p. 115.

DISSERT. II.

Respecting the death of the apocalyptic witnesses. p. 122.

A DISCUSSION of the question, whether the death of the apocalyptic witnesses be *still future*, or whether it be *already past*. p. 122.

I. Arguments in favour of the opinion, that it is *future*. p. 123.

1. Argument, from *the want of a sufficiently definite and important event having already taken place*, stated and discussed. p. 123.
2. Argument, from *the chronological arrangement of the death of the witnesses*, stated and answered. p. 125.
3. Argument, from *the circumstance that the death of the witnesses is effected by the beast from the abyss.* This argument can only be answered generally, by stating the arguments on the other side of the question. p. 126.

II. Arguments in favour of the opinion, that it is *past*. p. 128.

1. Argument, from *the chronological arrangement of the seven vials*, stated and discussed. p. 128.
2. Argument, from *the hypothetical circumstance that the third great woe commenced with the French Revolution*, stated and enforced. p. 131.

(1.) Proof

Digitized by Google

(1.) Proof of that circumstance by an application of the principle of homogeneity. p. 132.
(2.) Proof of it deduced from its well defined chronological notation. p. 135.
(3.) Argument built upon the preceding proof. p. 137.
III. Still the argument, which is founded on the circumstance that *the death of the witnesses is effected by the beast from the abyss*, remains without any direct answer. p. 139.
1. It cannot be confuted, except by denying the premises on which it is built. p. 139.
2. Yet it is possible that the death of the witnesses may be still future, even though the third woe has commenced. p. 140.
(1.) Proposed introduction of a parenthesis into the text. p. 140.
(2.) The consequences of such an introduction. p. 143.
(3.) A purgation of the Church foretold by Isaiah. p. 145.

DISSERT. III.

Respecting Christ's prophecy delivered from the mount of Olives, as immediately connected with the period of the 1260 *days.* p. 150.

THE occasion on which our Lord delivered his prophecy. p. 150.
I. The prophecy, as given by three of the evangelists, harmonized in one continued series. p. 152.
II. As the whole prediction is an answer to the question put by the disciples, we must begin with considering the purport of that question. p. 159.
1. The context requires, that we should refer the *whole* question to our Lord's previous assertion *relative to the utter*

Digitized by Google

utter dilapidation of the temple. A discussion of the point, *how it happened, that such an assertion should lead them to inquire respecting the second advent of Christ and the end of the world.* p. 161.

2. A discussion of the phrases, which they employed. p. 165.

III. An examination of the prophecy itself. p. 175.

1. The signs, which announced the approaching destruction of Jerusalem. p. 176.
   (1.) False Christs. p. 176.
   (2.) Wars and rumours of wars. p. 177.
   (3.) Nation rising up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. p. 177.
   (4.) Earthquakes. p. 177.
   (5.) Famines and pestilences. p. 178.
   (6.) Fearful sights and great signs from heaven. p. 178.
   (7.) A previous persecution of the Christians. p. 179.
   (8.) Import of the phrase, *The end is not yet.* p. 179.
2. The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple. p. 183.
   (1.) The abomination of desolation. p. 183.
   (2.) False Christs and false prophets springing up synchronically. p. 183.
3. The period of the tribulation of the Jews. p. 184.
4. Events which occur synchronically with the close of that tribulation. p. 185.
   (1.) Error of Bp. Newton and others in the interpretation of those events. p. 186.
   (2.) The real period to which the events ought to be ascribed. p. 188.
5. They are the signs of the approaching second advent of Christ. p. 195.
6. The literal end of the world must be distinguished from the day of the second advent. p. 199.

IV. The difficulties presented by the text, *This generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled.* p. 202.

1. The solution proposed by Mr. Mede. p. 204.
   (1.) First objection to it. p. 204.
   (2.) Second objection. p. 205.
   (3.) Third

Digitized by Google

(3.) Third objection. p. 205.
2. The solution proposed by Bp. Horsley. p. 206.
(1.) First objection to it. p. 207.
(2.) Second objection. p. 212.
3. The solution proposed by an anonymous writer. p. 214.
(1.) First objection to it. p. 215.
(2.) Second objection. p. 217.
(3.) Third objection. p. 218.
4. The solution which is finally adopted. p. 219.
(1.) Respecting the proper translation of the word γινηται. p. 219.
(2.) Objection, from the use of the word *all*, answered. p. 220.
(3.) Scripture is best interpreted by Scripture. p. 222.
(4.) Respecting the word, which Christ must have actually used in the Hebrew language, and which is expressed by the Greek γινηται. p. 225.
(5.) Conclusion. p. 225.

DISSERT. IV.

A vindication of the protestant mode of calculating the 1260 *days in opposition to that adopted by the Romanists.* p. 227.

PROTESTANT expositors contend, that the prophetic 1260 days are 1260 natural years: popish expositors, on the contrary, maintain, that they are no more than 1260 natural days. p. 227.

I. The first objection against the protestant mode of computation, brought by Mr. Rutter on the part of the Romanists, is the opinion of Jerome and certain others of the fathers. p. 235.

1. From the very necessity of the case, the fathers are incompetent interpreters of the prophecies of Daniel and

Digitized by Google

and St. John: they lived *before* the accomplishment of those predictions, which they undertook to explain. p. 235.

2. Yet, when their opinions are fairly stated and weighed, they will actually be found to confirm, not the papal, but the protestant, principle of exposition. p. 236.

(1.) All are agreed, that the Roman Empire is symbolized by the fourth beast of Daniel and by the seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse. This beast puts forth ten horns; which, as all acknowledge, symbolize ten kingdoms or sovereignties into which the Roman Empire was to be divided. And these ten horns or kingdoms the popish expositor Bp. Walmesley pronounces very rightly to be the ten Gothic kingdoms, which sprang up within the limits of the Roman Empire during the course of the fifth and sixth centuries. p. 236.

(2.) Behind and among the ten horns, so judiciously interpreted by Bp. Walmesley, Daniel beheld an eleventh little horn arise *diverse* from the ten larger horns; before which three of those horns were eradicated. Now the fathers rightly pronounce, as every man must do that reads the prophecy with even no more than a common degree of attention, that the little horn was to spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten primary horns. But the ten primary horns, as Bp. Walmesley contends with much propriety, are the ten primary Gothic kingdoms. Therefore, according to the exposition of the bishop himself when viewed conjointly with the exposition of the fathers, the little horn must have sprung up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten primary Gothic kingdoms. p. 237.

(3.) The question then is, how the 1260 days, which constitute the period allotted to the little horn's tyranny, are to be reckoned. On this point, the fathers had no ground for speaking positively *before* the event; though, from the express words of the prophecy, they both

Digitized by Google

both *might* and *did* pronounce that the little horn was to spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten horns p. 239.

(4.) Whatever then may be the power intended by the little horn, the fathers and Bp. Walmesley, *when viewed conjointly*, require us to seek its rise in the course of that period during which the Roman Empire was parcelled out into ten kingdoms. For the fathers declare, that the little horn was to spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten horns: and Bp. Walmesley declares, that the ten horns are those ten Gothic kingdoms, into which the Roman Empire was divided during the fifth and sixth centuries. Hence, if we admit BOTH their opinions, which we protestants are quite ready to do, the little horn must have sprung up during the fifth or sixth centuries SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten primary Gothic kingdoms. p. 241.

(5.) Such then being the premises alike stated by each party, the event itself will plainly determine the right mode of computing the 1260 days. If a power, corresponding with the character of the little horn, sprang up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten Gothic kingdoms; and exercised a remarkable tyranny over the saints of God, during the precise term of 1260 natural days: *then* the prophetic 1260 days are no doubt 1260 natural days. But, if a power, corresponding with the character of the little horn, then actually indeed sprang up; while yet the tyranny, which it soon began to exercise over the saints, lasted much longer than 1260 natural days: *then* the prophetic 1260 days must inevitably be 1260 solar years, because the days in question can only be either *natural days* or *natural years*; otherwise Daniel stands convicted of being a false prophet. p. 242.

(6.) From this conclusion it is impossible for a Romanist to escape: unless he either denies the rise of the

Digitized by Google

little horn to be SYNCHRONICAL with the rise of the ten horns, in which case he contradicts both the exposition of the fathers and the manifest sense of the prophecy itself; or rejects Bp. Walmesley's interpretation of the ten horns, in which case he runs directly counter to history. For, if (as the fathers declare) the little horn rises SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten horns, and if (as Bp. Walmesley has proved) the ten horns are the ten primary Gothic kingdoms: it will inevitably follow, that the rise of the little horn and the rise of the ten Gothic kingdoms are SYNCHRONICAL. p. 242.

3. How then, it will naturally be asked, do Bp. Walmesley and Mr. Rutter contrive to arrange the rise of the little horn, consistently with *their own* principles, and yet so as to avoid the protestant application of it? They inform us, that this little horn, whose rise is made even by their own principles SYNCHRONICAL with the rise of the ten Gothic kingdoms during the fifth and sixth centuries, has NOT YET appeared; but that it will HEREAFTER appear as the seventh head of the Roman beast, when, in the character of Antichrist, it will reign exactly 1260 natural days. p. 243.

(1.) The gross inconsistency of this arrangement, both with chronology, and with analogical homogeneity. p. 244.

(2.) The impossibility that the *acknowledged* SYNCHRONICAL prophesying of the two witnesses can be *future:* because, from the very premises admitted both by Romanists and by Protestants, the 1260 days, during which the little horn reigns and during which the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, however they are to be computed, must have commenced soon after the fifth and sixth centuries; during which, as we have seen, the little horn itself must have sprung up in its quality of a kingdom. p. 246.

4. St.

Digitized by Google

4. St. John's construction of his bestial hieroglyphic, with respect to its succession of heads, is built upon the physical economy of animals; which forbids the *living* existence of any animal in a *headless* state. p. 248.

(1.) But Bp. Walmesley's interpretation of the seven Roman heads produces the extraordinary zoölogical result, that an animal may live and thrive and discharge all his natural functions without the least apparent inconvenience, even when he has no head at all. p. 248.

(2.) Yet the bishop's own familiar use of the term *head*, when speaking of the pretended head of the Church, might have taught him, that *a head*, in the language of prophecy, denotes not *an individual governor* but *a form of government administered by any given number of successive individuals*. p. 252.

5. Remarks on the wonderful accuracy, with which the symbol of the Roman wild beast has been constructed. p. 254.

II. The second objection, brought by Mr. Rutter against the protestant mode of computation, is: that we must have some *more direct* proof that the 1260 days mean 1260 years, than *the mere possibility* of such a computation deduced from two texts in Numbers and Ezekiel. p. 256.

1. A direct proof, from the Apocalypse itself, that St. John employs *days* to denote *years*. p. 257.

2. A second proof, from the necessity of the case, as exemplified in the short period of three days and a half during which the witnesses lie dead. p. 259.

3. A third proof, deduced from the practice of Bp. Walmesley himself in his computation of the twice mentioned apocalyptic five months, and therefore plainly unobjectionable in the eyes of an orthodox Romanist. p. 260.

III. The third objection against the protestant mode of computation is built upon, what Mr. Rutter deems, an abso-

Digitized by Google

lute proof that the 1260 days CAN NOT denote the same number of literal years. These days, he asserts, relate primarily to the tyranny of *a single individual*, Antiochus Epiphanes. But, when they primarily relate to *a single individual*, they MUST BE literal days. Therefore, when they ultimately relate to a future expected Antichrist, they MUST in that case be literal days also. p. 267.

1. Mr. Rutter's conclusion does not follow from his premises, even if those premises be admitted. p. 267.
   (1.) The brief continuance of the alleged type does not prove the brief continuance of the alleged antitype. p. 267.
   (2.) Mr. Rutter violates the principle of analogical homogeneity, in pronouncing the little horn to be *a single individual*, while yet he acknowledges the ten horns of the Roman beast and the four horns of the Macedonian beast to be ten *kingdoms* and four *kingdoms*. p. 267.
2. But his premises cannot be admitted. Where did Mr. Rutter ever find the 1260 days applied by the prophet to the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes? p. 270.
3. His principle moreover is erroneous: for *chronological* prophecies are, from their very nature, INCAPABLE of a *twofold* application. p. 272.

IV. The last objection against the protestant mode of computation is built upon Christ's promise of perpetuity to the Catholic Church. p. 272.

1 Errors in Mr. Rutter's statement of this objection. p. 274.
   (1.) He calls my system *a new one*, as if I were the first who ever thought of applying the prophecies of Daniel and St. John to the Papacy. p. 274.
   (2.) He represents me, as denominating the Papacy *an antichristian kingdom*, and as pronouncing the Pope *no better than Antichrist:* whereas the application of such a character to the bishop and Church of Rome stands in direct opposition to my declared sentiments respecting

Digitized by Google

respecting the great Antichrist foretold by St. John and Daniel. p. 275.

2. The best mode of ascertaining the force of Mr. Rutter's present objection is to throw it into the form of a regular syllogism. p. 276.

(1.) It rests wholly upon the gratuitous assumption, that the Church of Rome is EXCLUSIVELY the Catholic Church of Christ. p. 276.

(2.) Mr. Rutter's attempt to perplex the question by the case of the Romish missionaries. p. 284.

(3.) He does not perceive that his objection recoils upon *his own* system of interpreting the tyranny of the little horn. p. 290.

DISSERT. V.

Respecting various points at issue between the Romanists and the Protestants, which bear upon the interpretation of prophecy, p. 294.

THERE are several points at issue between the Romanists and the Protestants, besides the proper mode of computing the 1260 days. p. 294.

I. Romish objection against protestant commentators drawn from their mutual discrepancy. p. 294.

1. They differ not with regard to the great outlines of prophetic interpretation. p. 295.

2. The objection, such as it is, manifestly recoils against popish commentators. p. 298.

3. Its obvious utility to the Jews against Christians in general. p. 299.

4. Were the *real* fact stated to the Popish laity, no argument could have been framed upon it. p. 302.

Digitized by Google

II. A discussion of the character of the apocalyptic harlot, as set forth by Popish writers. p. 302.

1. Argument from history. Rome pagan was never burned with fire by the northern warriors. p. 305.

2. Argument from the Bible. The apocalyptic Babylon, when once subverted, is never to rise again. p. 307.

III. A discussion of Mr. Rutter's opinion, that an expositor, who has once acknowledged himself mistaken on any single point, is never afterwards worthy of the least credit on other points. p. 309.

1. A perfect expositor cannot reasonably be expected. p. 310.

2. As little can such an expositor be expected from the declaration of Daniel respecting the mode in which his prophecies will be interpreted. p. 312.

3. Mr. Rutter's inversion of the expository telescope. p. 314.

IV. A discussion of Mr. Rutter's opinion, that the orthodoxy of the Romish Church is proved by the success of her missionaries among the pagans. p. 316.

V. A discussion of Mr. Rutter's asseveration, that, if the only true Church of Christ be not the Catholic Church, it is impossible to discover any Church which answers to Daniel's description of standing for ever. p. 320.

1. In this asseveration, he falls into the old paralogism of gratuitously identifying the Romish Church and the Catholic Church. p. 321.

2. The absurdity of his attack on the Church of England, wherein he contends that she can claim no higher antiquity than the reign of Henry VIII. p. 324.

VI. A discussion of Mr. Rutter's allegorical spiritualization of the two Hebrew kingdoms: wherein he makes Judah a type of the Romish Church, and Israel a type of all heretics and schismatics whether Greeks or Protestants. p. 331.

1. The consequences, which flow from Mr. Rutter's system as to Judah. p. 332.

2. The

Digitized by Google

2. The consequences, which flow from his system as to Israel. p. 336.
3. Mr. Rutter's own mode of managing his system. p. 343.
4. A statement of the genuine sense, in which we are to understand those Scriptures that represent Israel and Jerusalem as a joint type of the Catholic Church of Christ. p. 345.
(1.) The condition of ancient Israel. p. 345.
(2.) The condition of the Christian Church, as foretold by prophecy, and as attested by history. p. 346.
VII. A discussion of the golden rule of St. Vincent of Lerius, as advocated and recommended by Mr. Rutter. p. 355.
1. The real import of the protestant doctrine, that the revealed word of God is the SOLE rule of faith. p. 356.
2. The principle, on which Protestants employ a body of men to expound the Bible to the people, notwithstanding their maintenance of this doctrine. p. 359.
3. The principle, on which the Church of England requires subscription to her Articles and Homilies, notwithstanding her members maintain the doctrine in question. p. 366.
4. The case of those, who refuse subscription. p. 373.

DISSERT. VI.

Respecting the scriptural use of the word Mystery. p. 376.

SECT. I.

On the general use of the word Mystery in Holy Scripture. p. 376.

THE idea, conveyed to the early gentile converts by the scriptural use of the word *Mystery*, must have been that of the ancient pagan Mysteries. p. 376.

I. An

Digitized by Google

I. An account of the pagan Mysteries. p. 379.
1. The doctrine taught in them relative to the great father. p. 380.
2. The speculations of the old theologists were scenically exhibited in the shews of the Mysteries. p. 382.
3. The door of initiation. p. 382.
4. The doctrine taught in the Mysteries relative to the great mother. p. 383.
5. The endless succession of similar worlds and divine genealogies. p. 383.
6. The mimic labours of the aspirants. p. 384.
7. Peculiar phraseology of the Mysteries. p. 385.
8. The penances undergone during initiation. p. 386.
9. The hierophant. p. 386.
10. The origination of the Mysteries. p. 387.
II. Allusive use of the word *Mystery* in Scripture. p. 389.
1. Whence it was, that Christ came to use the term or to allude to the thing. p. 391.
(1.) Passages, in which he uses the term. p. 394.
(2.) Passages, in which he alludes to the thing. p. 396.
2. The use of the term, or the allusion to the thing, in the writings of St. Paul. p. 404.
(1.) Passages, in which he uses the term. p. 404.
(2.) Passages, in which he alludes to the thing. p. 412.
(3.) His own account of the ground of such phraseology. p. 414.
III. Opinion of the fathers, respecting the scriptural use of the word *Mystery* and the phraseology connected with it. p. 416.
1. Julius Firmicus. p. 416.
2. Origen. p. 417.
3. Lactantius. p. 418.
4. Tertullian. p. 418.
5. Clemens Alexandrinus. p. 419.

SECT.

Digitized by Google

SECT. II.

On the use of the word Mystery, with a special reference to the text which speaks of the Mystery of godliness, *as directly establishing the true doctrine of our Lord's nature.* p. 426.

A SPECIAL discussion of the text, which speaks of *the Mystery of godliness.* p. 426.

I. The Epistle, which contains it, is addressed to Timothy the bishop of the Ephesians. p. 427.

1. Respecting the superstition which prevailed at Ephesus. p. 427.

2. The evidence, that there is a designed allusion to the pagan Mysteries in the first Epistle to Timothy. p. 430.

(1.) Mystic tales and endless genealogies. p. 430.

(2.) The discourse of the initiating hierophant. p. 431.

(3.) Profane speculations of the early paganizing heretics. p. 432.

(4.) Their blasphemy. p. 434.

(5.) The faithful discourse of a Christian hierophant. p. 437.

(6.) Those which are without. p. 438.

(7.) Allusions to the paganizing heresy, which then infested the Church. p. 439.

II. The *Mystery of godliness* and its context. p. 441.

1. The house of God. p. 442.

2. The pillar and the firm foundation. p. 443.

(1.) The pillar. p. 443.

(2.) The firm foundation. p. 445.

3. The Mystery of godliness. p. 446.

III. The particular point of doctrine, which St. Paul wished to illustrate in this text by his studied allusion to the pagan Mysteries. p. 446.

1. The

Digitized by Google

1. The dispute relative to the genuineness of the word *God*, as it occurs in this text: for in different manuscripts three several readings are found to occur; $\overline{\Theta C}$, OC, and O. p. 447.
(1.) A discussion of the last reading, O. p. 448.
(2.) A discussion of the two first readings, $\overline{\Theta C}$ and OC. p. 449.
2. Respecting the proposed Socinian version of the passage. p. 450.
(1.) A specimen of the inconclusive reasoning produced by that version, even as it must strike a mere English reader. p. 453.
(2.) But the incongruity is much heightened, if we consider that the Epistle would be read by newly converted Gentiles. p. 458.
3. The reasoning of the apostle will be conclusive, only on the supposition that he held the doctrine of *Christ's divinity*. p. 463.
4. That doctrine is alike established, whether we adopt the reading ΘC or OC. p. 466.

SECT. III.

On the use of the word Mystery, with a special reference to the text which speaks of the Mystery of iniquity, *and as illustrating the poetical machinery of the Apocalypse.* p. 473.

THE predicted apostasy of the Church to demonolatry, and the principle of pagan toleration or intolerance. p. 473.
I. Respecting *the Mystery of iniquity* in St. Paul's prophecy of the man of sin. p. 481.
II. As this *Mystery of iniquity* is developed in the Apocalypse, the book is studiously written with a perpetual reference to the Mysteries of the Gentiles: and it may be

Digitized by Google

be viewed as a kind of sacred drama, the machinery of which is borrowed from the old Mysteries. p. 484.

1. The prologue. p. 485.
2. The opening of the door. p. 486.
3. The sealing on the forehead. p. 486.
4. The silence: the perfecting of the Mystery: the honey. p. 487.
5. The terrific pageantry of what may be called the doleful part of the sacred Mysteries. p. 488.
   (1.) The beast from the sea or from the abyss. p. 488.
   (2.) The seven-headed serpent. p. 489.
   (3.) The beast from the earth or the false prophet. p. 490.
6. The potency of names. p. 490.
7. The interpreting hierophant, and the Mystery of the oceanic great mother. p. 490.
8. The infernal lake of initiation. p. 492.
9. The joyful part of the sacred Mysteries. p. 493.
   (1.) The grand mundane renovation: the open gates: the river of Elysium: the waters of immortality. p. 493.
   (2.) The final discourse of the hierophant. p. 494.
   (3.) The dismission of the epopts. p. 495.

Digitized by Google

ERRATA. VOL. III.

Page	Line	
6.	4	from bottom. For *ittle* read *little*.
82.	2	from bottom. For *morè* read *most*.
96.	9, 10.	For *anarchial* read *anarchical*.
106.	12	Note. For *Caltaro* read *Cattaro*.
109.	5	Note. For *Caltaro* read *Cattaro*.
127.	2	Note. For τυπτσι read τυπτσει.
173.	5.	For *domition* read *dominion*.
218.	13.	For *like* read *alike*.
225.	10.	For *internuncias* read *internuncius*.
247.	1.	For *paroxidical* read *parudoxical*.
250.	1	Note. Erase . after *militaris*.
274.	2	from bottom. For *speciallay* read *specially*
285.	2	from bottom. For *Rutter* read *Butler*.
286.	5	from bottom. For τεφας read τειρας.
318.	4	Note. For *guarus* read *gnarus*.
319.	2.	For *interpretation* read *vituperation*.
334.	15.	For *declares* read *declare*.
383.	4	from bottom. For *hold* read *held*
423.	12	Note. For παρουσιαν read παρουσιαι.
424.	9	Note. For ταυτα read ταυτα.
424.	22	Note. For *quidem* read *quidam*.
452.	5	Note. For ξωντος read ζωντος.

Digitized by Google

SUPPLEMENTARY DISSERTATIONS.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

DISSERTATION I.

Respecting the rise and fall of the seventh and eighth apocalyptic forms of Roman government and the effusion of the fourth and fifth vials.

SECTION I.

Preliminary Observations.

IN the Apocalypse, as all commentators agree, the Roman Empire, from first to last and under each of its various forms of government, is symbolized by the hieroglyphic of a wild beast having seven heads and ten horns. These seven heads are declared by the interpreting angel to represent seven kings or seven modes of political administration: and he asserts, that, at the time when St. John beheld the vision, five were fallen, the sixth was then in actual existence, and the seventh was future *. Now the form of Roman government, which existed when

* Rev. xvii. 10, 11.

 St. John

Digitized by Google

St. John beheld the vision, was the Imperial. Hence it will plainly follow, that the Imperial form is the sixth head of the symbolical wild beast: and hence it will likewise follow, that its five predecessors, namely Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, and Consular Tribunes, as they are enumerated by the Roman historians themselves, are those five heads which had previously fallen *.

I. Six heads then of the wild beast are identified with perfect facility; but it is not equally easy to ascertain the last: for, since it was future, when the apostle wrote, there may be a danger of mistaking for it a power with which in reality it has no connection; nor of course can it be certainly known, until it has actually arisen.

The difficulty is increased by a very remarkable peculiarity, which St. John ascribes to it. When the seventh head shall arise, it must continue but a short time: and, after it has disappeared, an eighth form of government is to spring up, which yet is to be the same as one of the preceding seven forms; so that the wild beast shall in reality have no more than seven heads, though, so far as chronological succession is concerned, the Roman Empire shall be under the domination of eight forms of government.

While the last of these reigns paramount, the hieroglyphical wild beast, we are told, "goeth into "perdition:" and his utter destruction, as we are

* Liv. Hist. Rom. lib. vi. c. 1. Tacit. Annal. lib. i. in init.

after-

Digitized by Google

afterwards taught, is effected in the great battle of Armageddon; when he sinks to rise no more, fighting at the head of a powerful confederacy of vassal sovereigns *.

II. Justly indignant at the tyranny exercised by the Roman pontiff, and perceiving that his seat was no other than the imperial city itself, protestant commentators long agreed in pronouncing, that the Papacy was that last head of the wild beast which was future at the time when the prophecy was delivered. They differed indeed as to the arrangement of the short-lived seventh form, but they were unanimous in determining the eighth to be the Papacy.

This interpretation however is radically faulty even in its very principle, to say nothing of the necessary incongruities which it produces in the arrangement of the seventh form. The wild beast represents a *secular* empire: and its six first heads all represent *secular* forms of government. Analogy therefore requires, that the last head should also represent a *secular* form of government; otherwise the homogeneity of the symbol is plainly violated †. But, what-

* Rev. xvii. 10, 11. Compare xvi. 13—16. and xix. 11—21.

† The necessity of our strict adherence to homogeneity, in the interpretation of the seventh and eighth forms of Roman government, strongly appears from the language of Daniel respecting the eleventh horn of his fourth beast; which, like the seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse, undoubtedly represents the Roman Empire.

St. John

Digitized by Google

whatever sway the Papacy might bear in *spirituals*, it most assuredly was never the *secular* head of the Roman Empire; in the same manner as Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, Consular Tribunes, and Emperors, were successively its *secular* heads.

St. John gives us no reason to suppose, that the predicted seventh and eighth forms of Roman government would differ from their predecessors, save as one *secular* polity may differ from another *secular* polity; that is to say, save as *one* of their predecessors differed from *another* of their predecessors. Hence we have no right to conclude, that the seventh and eighth forms will differ from their six predecessors, more than those six predecessors mutually differed from each other: in other words, we are required to suppose, that all the eight agree in being *secular* forms, though they may or rather *must* (for otherwise there could not be eight *distinct* forms) disagree in their *political constitution*.

But the mode, in which Daniel speaks of the eleventh horn is the very opposite to that which is adopted by St. John. As if aware, that any reasonable commentator would conclude the eleventh little horn to be the same *in kind* with the ten larger horns, however inferior it might be *in magnitude*: he carefully informs us, that it "shall be DIVERSE from the first;" and he plainly points out the ground of its diversity, by saying, that "it had eyes like the eyes of a man," or (as Sir Isaac Newton excellently remarks) that it was an episcopus or an overlooker or a seer or a bishop. Dan. vii. 24, 8.

Yet, notwithstanding this marked difference in the language of the two prophets, and notwithstanding the place of the little horn in Daniel is so manifestly occupied by the false prophet or the harlot in St. John; the error of identifying the little horn of Daniel's beast and the last head of St. John's beast has been almost universal among protestant expositors.

There-

Digitized by Google

Therefore the Papacy cannot be intended by the last form of Roman government *.

III. Thus convinced that in this particular protestant interpretation has been radically erroneous, I was led to seek in history for the rise of a Roman form of government, which should answer to the successive seventh and eighth kings viewed as jointly constituting the single seventh head: and this I supposed myself to find in the short-lived Carlovingian Patriciate soon merging in the Carlovingian Emperorship.

Bp. Newton, who adopted the usual protestant opinion that the last form of Roman government was the Papacy, and who yet could not refrain from seeing (what history so clearly evinces) that the Carlovingian Emperorship was *one* of the seven heads, maintains, that that Emperorship is but the Augustan Emperorship revived: so that the Augustan Emperorship in Italy, the Constantinian Emperorship in Greece, and the Carlovingian Emperorship in the Western Empire, constitute jointly that single sixth or Imperial head of the wild beast, which in the days of St. John had recently begun to exist †.

To this I objected the political dissimilarity between the Carlovingian Emperorship and the Augustan Emperorship: whence I argued, that, while they were the same in name, each individual prince

* See this point fully established above chap. x. sect. 3.

† Newton's Dissert. on the Proph. Dissert. xxv. vol. iii. p. 211.

of

Digitized by Google

of the two lines being styled alike *Emperor of the Romans*, they were different in constitution; so that, notwithstanding the identity of title, they might be viewed as two *distinct* heads.

Having thus arranged the prophetic last form of Roman government, and having observed that it was of an ambulatory nature because it had passed from the kingdom of France to the kingdom of Germany; I argued, that, when the title of *Roman Emperor* was formally abdicated by the chief of the house of Austria, the last form of government did but return to France where it had previously existed under the administration of the Carlovingian princes. Hence I supposed it to follow, that, ever since the seventh day of August in the year 1806 when the Austrian archduke renounced the title of *Emperor of the Romans;* the military chief of the French Empire, then nearly identified with the old Western Empire, had been the representative of the last head of the Roman wild beast *.

1. I was long without perceiving any objection to this arrangement: but, in the autumn of the year 1815, an intelligent friend started a difficulty, which had been overlooked both by myself and by those numerous persons who have honoured my work with objurgatory criticism. The difficulty was this.

To constitute a prince, during the middle and modern ages, a proper representative of what I denominated *the feudal Carlovingian head;* he must

* See above chap. x. sect. 3.

plainly

Digitized by Google

plainly be: either the *real* head of the Western Empire, in point of *solid power;* or the *nominal* and *prophetic* head, by virtue of his being recognized as the legitimate successor of the Carlovingian Emperors, and of his thence bearing (with whatever diminished authority) the official title of *Roman Emperor.*

If *the first* of these opinions be maintained: then Napoleon Buonapartè could not have BECOME the representative of the last head, *in consequence* of the mere cession of an empty title on the part of the Austrian archduke; because he was ALREADY the representative of that last head, by virtue of his being by far the most powerful prince of the Western Empire *previous* to the cession of the title on the part of Austria. But then, on the same ground, Louis XIV. must *equally* have been the representative of the last Roman head *long before* Napoleon was born; because he was undoubtedly a much more powerful prince than the titular Emperor of the Romans.

On the other hand, if *the second* of these opinions be maintained; that is to say, if it be maintained, that the true representative of the last head is the sovereign who bears and is recognized by the title of *Roman Emperor:* then Napoleon Buonapartè can just as little have BECOME the representative of the last head, *in consequence* of the cession of the title on the part of the Austrian archduke; because it was necessary, not only that the Austrian archduke should *cede* it, but that Napoleon should *assume* it.

Now

Digitized by Google

Now Napoleon never DID assume it. Therefore, although the Austrian archduke CEASED to be the representative of the last head; because he FORMALLY ABDICATED the official title of *Roman Emperor:* Napoleon did not BECOME the representative of that head; because he NEVER ASSUMED the official title in question.

2. I need scarcely say, that *the second* of these opinions was that, which I maintained: for I was compelled to maintain it by the general harmony and concinnity of prophecy.

If the Roman Augustulus and the last Byzantine Constantine were respectively representatives of the sixth head, which no doubt they were, even when their sovereignty was confined to the walls of Rome and Constantinople, and when their style of *Roman Emperor* was a mere title so far as any authority over the Roman Empire was concerned: then, by a parity of reasoning, if the Carlovingian Emperorship were the last head; the direct successor of Charlemagne, who was denominated and recognized as the legitimate *Emperor of the Romans*, must plainly have been the representative of the last head, however inferior his solid power within the limits of the Roman Empire might be to that of Charlemagne.

Hence, if I cannot make my cause good when argued on the ground of this *second* opinion, I must needs relinquish it as untenable.

3. Ample time has now been taken by me to consider the objection, which has been so forcibly urged by

Digitized by Google

by my very intelligent friend: nor do I speak upon the subject rashly and unadvisedly. Sacred truth has ever been my first object: and ill should I deserve the character of an honest man, if I could fight against conviction, or if I could irreverently distort the holy oracles of God merely to produce a compact and well-rounded system. From the first I have never failed to acknowledge myself mistaken, whenever I was really satisfied that I *had* been in error: and I am now equally ready, after long and mature deliberation, to confess, that I am unable to invalidate the objection, which I am willing to hope has lost none of its force by my own mode of stating it.

The whole matter, in short, resolves itself into the following syllogism.

That prince, who is denominated and recognized as *Emperor of the Romans*, represents that Roman head which Charlemagne represented; just as Augustulus, who was denominated and recognized as *Emperor of the Romans*, represented in his day that Roman head which Augustus represented—But, when the Austrian archduke CEDED the title of *Roman Emperor*, by virtue of which he was the representative of that Roman head which Charlemagne represented; Napoleon Buonapartè did not ASSUME the ceded title, neither was it adjudged to him by the common voice of the empire—Therefore Napoleon Buonapartè did not, in consequence of the Austrian abdication, BECOME the representative of that Roman head which Charlemagne represented.

4. This

Digitized by Google

4. This syllogism I am unable to refute: I must therefore relinquish the opinion, which I once maintained, that Napoleon Buonapartè BECAME the representative of the Carlovingian Imperial head *in consequence* of the formal abdication of the house of Austria.

SECTION II.

Respecting the rise and fall of the seventh apocalyptic form of Roman government.

WE may often observe, that the clearing away of error, wholesomely mortifying as it may be to the pride of human intellect, has a direct tendency to the development of truth.

Such, I am inclined to believe, will be the result of that logical process, to which I have subjected my former speculation without any attempt to spare it. While the objection before us absolutely demonstrates, that, by the abdication of Austria, Napoleon Buonapartè did NOT become the representative of that Roman head which the Austrian archduke had previously represented: it, at the same time, incidentally though no less absolutely demonstrates, that the Roman head, of which the Austrian princes were the last representatives, *has ceased to exist*, or (in the phraseology of St. John) *is fallen*. For it plainly cannot demonstrate the *one* point, without demonstrating the *other* point *also*.

Austria

Digitized by Google

Austria ABDICATED the title of *Roman Emperor*, by virtue of which it was a head of the Roman wild beast: Napoleon did not ASSUME that abdicated title: therefore Napoleon did not BECOME that head of the Roman wild beast, of which Austria was previously the representative.

Such is the proof of *one* point: but this proof manifestly involves also the proof of the *other*.

For, if Austria CEASED to be a head of the Roman wild beast by abdicating the official title of *Roman Emperor*, and if neither Napoleon nor any other Roman prince ASSUMED the abdicated title: then it is evident, that that head of the Roman wild beast, which Austria represented in regular succession from Charlemagne, CEASED ALTOGETHER TO EXIST or (as St. John speaks) IS FALLEN.

With this result corresponds the testimony of history, which occupies itself only in delivering naked facts.

" In July 1806," says Mr. Butler, " most of the " princes in the western and southern divisions of " Germany separated themselves from the Germanic " body, and formed themselves into a league under " the protection of the Emperor of the French, with " the title of *the confederated states of the Rhine.* " On the 7th of the following August, the Emperor " of Germany" resigned his official title of *Emperor of the Romans;* " abdicated, by a solemn edict, the " Imperial government of the Germanic Empire; " and absolved the Electors, Princes and States, and " all that belonged to the Empire, from the duties

" by

Digitized by Google

" by which they were united to him as its legal chief. " Such has been THE EXTINCTION of the Germanic " Empire, after having subsisted during a thousand " years *."

Having thus ascertained the point, that that head of the Roman wild beast, which Austria last represented in regular succession from Charlemagne, *ceased* or *fell* when the title of *Roman Emperor* was formally resigned; we have next to inquire into the prophetic character of the recently fallen head: that is to say, we have to inquire, with WHICH of the seven heads it ought to be identified; for, if it *were* a head of the Roman Empire, then it must plainly be identified with SOME ONE of the seven heads of that Empire.

I. Now, that it truly *was* A HEAD, is, I think, indisputable, both from its characteristic marks, and likewise from the very necessity of the thing.

1. With respect to its characteristic marks as recorded by history, the greatest part of the Western Empire was actually subject to it in the person of Charlemagne: and the petty kings of Britain and Spain, the only Roman provinces not directly under the controul of that mighty sovereign, implored the honour and support of his alliance, and styled him *their common parent* THE SOLE AND SUPREME EMPEROR OF THE WEST †. The very pagans mourned

* Butler's Revolutions of Germany. p. 208.

† See a statement of the extent of the Carlovingian empire in Gibbon's Hist. of the Dec. vol. ix. p. 180—187.

for.

Digitized by Google

for him, as THE FATHER OF THE WORLD*: the Roman Empire was in him deemed to be translated from the East to the West, where (according to Cardinal Baronius) it has ever since remained †: and, by this revival of the Western Empire, "the Latin Chris-"tians" (according to Mr. Gibbon) "were united "under A SUPREME HEAD‡."

His successors possessed not his power indeed, any more than the latter successors of Augustus in Rome or in Constantinople possessed the power of that prince: but, in the eye of prophecy, they were not the less on that account representatives of the Roman head which Charlemagne represented. Accordingly, from his time down to the very extinction of his sovereignty in the year 1806, the Emperor of the Romans, wherever he might hold his court, has always claimed and has always been allowed precedence over every one of the ten regal horns: and, as such, he has invariably been esteemed THE SECULAR HEAD of the great European commonwealth.

"Amongst those who are supreme," says Sir George Mackenzie, "kings have the preference from "commonwealths: and, amongst kings, the Empe-"ror is allowed the first place by the famous cere-"monial of Rome, AS SUCCEEDING THE ROMAN

* "Ipsos paganos eum planxisse quasi patrem orbis." Baron. Annal. Eccles. in A. D. 814.

† "Ejusmodi translatio imperii ab Oriente in Occidentem, "ubi posthac semper stetit et hactenus perseverat." Annal. Eccles. in A. D. 800.

‡ Hist. of Dec. vol. ix. p. 171.

"EMPE-

Digitized by Google

" EMPERORS. Therefore the German and Italian " lawyers, who are subject to the Empire, have with " much flattery asserted, that the Emperor is THE " VICAR OF GOD IN TEMPORALS and that jurisdic- " tions are derived from him as from the fountain, " calling him THE LORD AND HEAD OF THE WHOLE " WORLD *."

With this claim, the phraseology of the famous Golden Bull, enacted under the Emperor Charles IV. in the year 1356, will be found perfectly to agree. In that instrument, each of the Electors is required to swear, that, to the best of his discernment, he will choose " A TEMPORAL CHIEF for the " Christian people," who may be worthy of that high station: and it is afterwards ordered, that none of them shall quit the city of Frankfort, " until, by a " plurality of voices, they shall have elected and " given to the world or to the Christian people A " TEMPORAL CHIEF, namely a king of the Romans, " future Emperor †."

2. Thus manifestly, by its characteristic marks, is the recently extinct Carlovingian Emperorship determined to be A HEAD of the Roman wild beast: nor is the same position less established from the very necessity of the thing.

Since the Constantinopolitan Emperorship was

* Mackenzie's Observ. on Precedency. chap. i. in Guillim's Display of Heraldry. See also Mod. Univ. Hist. vol. xlii. p. 80—105.

† The whole of the Golden Bull may be seen in Mod. Univ. Hist. vol. xxx.

doubtless

Digitized by Google

doubtless *a branch* of the sixth Roman head; and since the Papacy was never the *temporal* or *secular* head of the Roman Empire, on which account homogeneity (as I have already shewn at large) absolutely forbids us to identify it with any one of the seven Roman *temporal* heads: it will evidently follow from these premises, that, unless the Carlovingian Emperorship be A ROMAN HEAD, the hieroglyphical wild beast will have been *headless* from the extinction of the Constantinopolitan Emperorship in the year 1453 down even to the present time. But, in that case, the Roman wild beast will have lain dead during more than three centuries: for symbolical decorum, which is founded upon physical realities, forbids us to ascribe vitality to the hieroglyphical hydra when not *a single one* of his seven heads is in existence.

Hence the very necessity of the thing requires us to find a *temporal* head for the wild beast during the period, which has elapsed since the year 1453: and for *this head* we shall vainly seek, unless we conclude it to be *the Carlovingian Emperorship.*

II. I have now therefore, both from its characteristic marks as recorded in history and from the very necessity of the case itself, established the important prophetic position, that the Carlovingian Emperorship was A HEAD of the Roman wild beast. Consequently, I must forthwith proceed to inquire, with WHICH of the seven heads this head must be identified. For, since it has been ascertained, that the Carlovingian Emperorship was A HEAD of the

Digitized by Google

Roman wild beast; and since the Roman wild beast is declared to have NO MORE than seven heads, though an eighth ultimate form of government is to spring up which will be the same as one of the preceding seven: it is abundantly clear, that the Carlovingian Emperorship must be identified with ONE or OTHER of the seven Roman heads. The present question therefore is, with WHICH of them it ought to be identified.

There was a time, when I supposed that it ought to be identified with the LAST Roman head: and, agreeably to this supposition, I contended, that, when the Austrian archduke *ceased* to be its representative, the vacant dignity was *transferred* to the French Emperor. But such an opinion has been proved to be erroneous: for, instead of any *transfer* taking place, the head in reality *ceased altogether to exist* or (in the language of the apostle) *is fallen*. This is the naked fact: and it is a fact, which, if I mistake not, will serve as a clue to guide us through the mazes of the present very intricate prophecy. The fact in question then distinctly proves, that the Carlovingian Emperorship must be identified with the SIXTH Roman head: or, in other words, that the Augustan, the Constantinian, and the Carlovingian, Emperorships *jointly* constitute the SIXTH Roman head; the individual representative prince for the time being always bearing the same official title of *Emperor of the Romans*, just as the respective official titles of the five first heads were *Kings*, *Consuls*, *Dictators*, *Decemvirs*, and *Consular Tribunes*.

Of

Digitized by Google

Of this position the proof will most satisfactorily appear, if it be thrown into the syllogistic form.

1. The Carlovingian Emperorship cannot be the *seventh* head.

For the prophetic character of the seventh head is, that, "when he cometh, he must continue a short "space *."

But the Carlovingian Emperorship subsisted ten centuries, which are *not* a short space.

Therefore the Carlovingian Emperorship cannot be the *seventh* head.

2. Neither can the Carlovingian Emperorship be that *eighth* form of Roman government; which is to succeed the short-lived seventh head, and which is to be the same as (or a repetition of) some one of the seven preceding heads: so that the wild beast, in regard to his *political constitution*, shall have been subject to no more than seven forms of government; though, in regard to *chronological succession*, he shall have been subject to eight such forms, the eighth form being but a repetition of one of the preceding seven.

For the prophetic character of that eighth form is, that it should perish or "go into perdition" at the head of a mighty confederacy of vassal kings; and that its final destruction should be violently accomplished in a great battle, which St. John describes as being fought at Armageddon, and which Daniel (in

* Rev. xvii. 10.

Digitized by Google

an evidently parallel passage) represents as being fought in Palestine between the two seas *.

But the fall of the Carlovingian Emperorship in the year 1806 was marked by no such predicted characteristics.

Therefore the Carlovingian Emperorship cannot be the *eighth* form of Roman government.

3. If then the Carlovingian Emperorship can be, neither the *seventh* Roman head, nor the *eighth* form of Roman government: since it assuredly cannot be identified with any one of the *five earlier* heads, which had already fallen in the time of St. John; it can only be identified with the SIXTH head.

But the SIXTH head is declared to have been in existence when the prophecy was delivered †: consequently the SIXTH head must be the IMPERIAL.

Hence it will ultimately follow (the point to be proved), that the Carlovingian Emperorship was a portion of the SIXTH or IMPERIAL head: in other words, that the Augustan, the Constantinian, and the Carlovingian, Emperorships, jointly constituted a single SIXTH or IMPERIAL head; the individual prince, who for the time being represented it, always bearing one and the same official title, namely that of *Emperor of the Romans.*

4. This, as I have already observed, was the opinion of Bp. Newton: and, though I once rejected it,

* Rev. xvii. 11. xvi. 13—16. xix. 11—21. Dan. xi. 45. These coincidences have already been amply established in a former part of the present work.

† Rev. xvii. 10.

arguing

Digitized by Google

arguing from the difference of their political organization that the Carlovingian Emperorship was a *distinct* head from the Augustan and Constantinian Emperorship; time, the best interpreter of prophecy, has now demonstrated by the event, that the bishop was right, and that I was wrong.

On the whole it appears, that we of the present generation have lived to witness one of the grand prophetic epochs, by which the political life of the Roman wild beast is so peculiarly marked. From the commencement of the reign of Augustus down to the memorable year 1806, a period which comprizes a longer term than even eighteen centuries, the world has never been without an *Emperor of the Romans:* but in that year, for the first time, this ancient title completely disappeared from off the face of the earth; and we may now say, in the language of prophecy, SIX Roman heads *are fallen.*

III. Judging from the analogy of those Roman heads which have already risen and disappeared, we may perhaps seem bound to conclude, that *the possession and actual sovereignty of the metropolitan city* is essential to the character of a Roman head during some part or other of its existence.

1. If this opinion be well founded, then, in our search for that seventh *temporal* head which in the days of St. John was as yet future, we must look for a dominant power *which has possessed the actual sovereignty of Rome.*

2. The power, thus characterized, must likewise be a power of *short duration:* for the apostle says of the

Digitized by Google

the seventh head or Roman form of government, "the other is not yet come; and, when he cometh, "he must continue a SHORT space*."

3. Again: the power, of which we are in quest, must bear *a different official title* from any one of those which were borne by its six predecessors; through the medium of which it may as easily be distinguished from them all, as each of them severally may be distinguished from one another.

4. Such are the leading predicted characteristics of the seventh Roman head: and to them we must add its *proper chronological notation.*

Now, with respect to this point, we may safely assert, that the seventh head must rise up, either *shortly before* the fall of the sixth, or *in the very moment* of its fall: because, otherwise, our interpretation will exhibit the hieroglyphical solecism of a wild beast continuing to *live*, though in a *headless* state; a thing impossible in nature, and therefore equally impossible in a symbol which is professedly constructed upon the economy of nature.

The sixth head however is already fallen: for, in the year 1806, it ceased to exist by the formal abdication and abolition of the official title of *Emperor of the Romans.*

Therefore, in point of chronological arrangement, the short-lived seventh head must have sprung up, either shortly before the year 1806, or at that precise moment when the official title of *Roman Emperor* was formally abdicated and abolished.

* Rev. xvii. 10.

IV. With

Digitized by Google

IV. With these various marks before us, characteristic and chronological, we can now have little difficulty in ascertaining that form of Roman government, which St. John predicted as the seventh head of the wild beast: in every particular, *the Francic Emperorship* established by Napoleon Buonapartè will be found most accurately to correspond with it.

In May 1804, this adventurer assumed the official title of *Emperor of the French:* in March 1805, he became king of Italy and Rome; the ancient capital of the Roman Empire being degraded to the rank of what he denominated *the second good city of the French Empire*, while the title of *King of Rome* was reserved as the official title of the heir to the throne: and, on the memorable seventh of August 1806, as I have already observed, the sixth Roman head fell by the abdication and abolition of the official title of *Emperor of the Romans.*

Here then we behold the rise of a new head, distinct from all the preceding six heads, enjoying the sovereignty of the metropolitan city though degrading it from its old metropolitan rank, springing up at the very time when prophecy teaches us to expect its rise, and assuming the new and hitherto unknown official title of *Emperor of the French.*

Had this interpretation been advanced and established when the sixth head fell, we might have anticipated from it that the sovereignty of Napoleon would be short-lived; because the prediction teaches us, that, "when the seventh king cometh, he must "continue a SHORT space:" but, for the most part, it

Digitized by Google

it is the wise purpose of God, that prophecy should not be *fully* understood until after the accomplishment of the event. Thus, if I may instance my own previous exposition, I clearly enough saw, that the Carlovingian Emperorship was a Roman HEAD, and likewise that the Napoleonic Emperorship was a Roman HEAD. So far I was right: but, in the due arrangement of those heads, the event has proved me to have erred. I supposed the Carlovingian Emperorship to be a *new* head, instead of its being only *a continuation* of the sixth head: and, as this made it the *last* form of Roman government while yet the Napoleonic Emperorship was manifestly a Roman head *also*, I was compelled by the necessity of the case to pronounce the Napoleonic Emperorship *a continuation* of the Carlovingian. But the event of the fall of the Napoleonic head, combined with the already stated objection which decidedly proved that the Carlovingian Emperorship *fell* and was *not transferred* to France in the year 1806, has determined my former arrangement to be radically erroneous. Yet it matters little what is the fate of any human interpretation, provided only we give the glory to God: "yea, let God be true, though every "man be a liar."

The recent downfall of the Napoleonic sovereignty, when viewed in conjunction with the *previous* fall or extinction of the sixth Roman head, throws an amazing light upon the prophetic volume; and, by the accuracy of an accomplished event, determines the right interpretation. With absolute facts

Digitized by Google

facts before our eyes, let us hear then the sum of the whole matter.

The *seventh* Roman head, destined by the voice of prophecy to "continue a SHORT space," rose in the year 1804 out of the chaos of the French revolution; obtained the sovereignty of Rome; and assumed, as its official style, the *new* title of *Emperor of the French*, though extending its sway directly or indirectly over the whole continental Latin Empire. In the year 1806, fell the *sixth* Roman head, which for more than eighteen centuries had borne the official title of *Emperor of the Romans:* consequently, as the wild beast (by this arrangement) ceases not for a moment to be *without* a head, we are encountered by no such hieroglyphical solecism as the existence of a *living* though *headless* animal. But, when the *seventh* head cometh, it must continue but a SHORT space: and exactly such has been the event; for, as it rose in the year 1804, so it fell in the year 1815, having continued only the SHORT space of eleven years and a few additional days.

Thus accurately has the prophecy been accomplished: and thus does the event itself sustain the part of the most satisfactory interpreter.

V. Here however it will obviously be asked, What is the *present* condition of the Roman wild beast? The sixth head has fallen; and the seventh head, agreeably to the prediction, has RAPIDLY experienced the fate of its predecessor. Such being the case, as the title of *Roman Emperor* has not been revived, and as the title of *Francic Emperor* has ceased

Digitized by Google

ceased to exist; the hieroglyphical wild beast is now *headless:* consequently, on the principles which have recently been laid down, symbolical decorum, founded as it is on the economy of nature, requires us to pronounce him *dead.* But St. John ascribes his final overthrow to the battle of Armageddon; at the close of which he is to be cast *alive,* or *in his full vigour of strength and vitality,* "into a lake burn-"ing with brimstone*." How then can this happen *at some future period,* if he be *already* dead? Or, if it *have* happened, shall we not be compelled, *in plain defiance of all circumstantial correspondence,* to identify the predicted battle of Armageddon with the bloody fight of Waterloo; an identification, altogether *impossible* and *intolerable?*

For the difficulty, which here presents itself, Scripture has provided in a manner; which, from its peculiarity, affords to my own mind an irresistible demonstration that the Apocalypse is indeed a portion of God's inspired word.

When St. John describes the wild beast at his first appearance to him, complete (as an unbroken symbol must needs be complete) in all his figurative members, though in point of actual chronology some of those members may be *successive* to others: when he thus describes him at his first appearance, he carefully mentions, that he "saw one of his heads "as it were wounded to death;" and he afterwards specifically informs us, that the *mode,* in which it was

* Rev. xix. 20.

Digitized by Google

so wounded to death, was by the violent stroke of "a sword *."

This same infliction he afterwards notices in a somewhat different form, predicting it in a sort of enigmatical phraseology: for the hierophantic angel says of the wild beast, that he "was and is not," or that in the course of his allotted duration he should *vitally exist* and *cease vitally to exist* †.

Now, on the principle of symbolical decorum which (as I have already observed) is founded upon the economy of nature, if the head receive a deadly wound, the whole animal must die in consequence: and we must not forget the important distinction, that, although the hieroglyphical wild beast necessarily appears in the vision *complete* with all his seven heads; yet, so far as historical matter of fact is concerned, those heads or forms of government in the literal antitypical Empire were not all *synchronical*, but on the contrary were *successive*. Hence it is manifest, on this sufficiently obvious principle, that the excision or deadly wound of any single head must prove mortal to the whole beast; unless, either previous to or at the precise time of that excision, he puts forth (like the fabled hydra) *another head*.

But the predicted excision or deadly wound of the head was evidently to be fatal to the *whole* wild beast: because, in consequence of it, the *entire* beast was to *cease from vital existence*; or, in the language of the prophecy, *he was first to be* and

* Rev. xiii. 3, 12, 14. † Rev. xvii. 8, 11.

then

Digitized by Google

then he was not to be, "the beast was and is not."* Such being the case, when *some one* of his heads (as the prophecy sets forth the matter) *receives a* DEADLY *wound;* it is plain, that no other head *immediately* arises, or (in the phraseology of St. John) "cometh*," to supply its place: for, if any other head *did* immediately arise, then the hydra-beast *himself* would NOT die, though one of his many *heads* might "fall." But the wild beast himself *does* die by this deadly wound of his head: because the prophet declares, that he should be characterised by passing from existence into non-existence or from life into death. Therefore, when *some one* of his heads receives a deadly wound by the sword, no other head *immediately* arises: and the consequence is, agreeably to the economy of nature, that the now headless trunk of the symbolical wild beast lies stretched out a lifeless corpse.

Yet, notwithstanding he is thus slain, the prophecy goes on to inform us, that he should experience a wonderful resurrection to life. "I saw one of his "heads as it were wounded to death," says the apostle: "and his deadly wound was healed †;" even the deadly wound of "the beast, which had "the wound by a sword, and did live ‡:" for the beast both "was, and is not, and yet is §."

If then his death was produced by the deadly wound of *one* head or form of government, in con-

* Rev. xvii. 10.
† Rev. xiii. 14.
‡ Rev. xiii. 3.
§ Rev. xvii. 8.

sequence

Digitized by Google

sequence of its place not being immediately supplied by *another* head: analogy requires us to suppose, whatever precise idea we may annex to *the figurative death of the beast*, that his restoration to life will be effeeted, either by the rise of a *new* head or form of government, or by the revival of a *defunct* head or form of government; that *new* or *revived* head beginning to exercise its vital functions, not *immediately* after the reception of the deadly wound by a former head, but when *some indefinite period* shall have expired during which the dead beast lies headless. This is that view of the matter, which analogy plainly enough requires us to take, however we may interpret the language which speaks of *the wild beast's death through a violent wound by a sword inflicted upon some one of his seven heads.*

As for the *particular* head which was to receive the deadly wound, whether it was the first or the second or the third or the fourth or the fifth or the sixth or the seventh, the prophet is totally silent: to posterity he leaves the task of making the application from the event, though yet the matter *may* be ascertained even by a careful comparison of the hieroglyphic with the verbal prediction.

VI. In attempting to make this application, we must obviously begin with considering the purport of the phrase *death* itself, as used by St. John and as here spoken of the Roman wild beast.

On such a topic, nothing can be more judicious and satisfactory than the definition of prophetic *death*, as given by the excellent Mr. Mede.

" A per-

Digitized by Google

" A person is said *to die;* who, in whatever con-
" dition he may be placed, whether political, or
" ecclesiastical, or any other, *ceases to be what he*
" *was:* hence the agent, who inflicts *this death*
" upon him, is described as *killing* him*."

But, however satisfactory the definition may be in itself, a certain ambiguity will always attend it in the application; an ambiguity unavoidable, because inherent in its very nature. The *death*, spoken of in any particular prophecy, may, so far as the mere term itself is concerned, be either *a moral death* or *a political death:* nor can its true import in each individual case be always certainly determined before the event.

Thus *the death of the apocalyptic witnesses* may in the abstract denote, either *their apostasy and constrained silence*, which is their moral death; or *their utter excision by the arm of persecution*, which is their political death: for in either case, according to the definition, they cease to be what they previously were. And thus, in the present instance, *the death of the Roman wild beast, by a mortal wound inflicted upon his existing head*, may in the abstract similarly denote, either *his conversion to sound religion*, which is his moral death; or *his being left a headless trunk through the violent exci-*

* " *Mori* ea notione dicitur; qui in quocunque statu consti-
" tutus, sive politico, sive ecclesiastico, seu quovis alio, *desi-*
" *nit esse quod fuit:* unde et *occidit*, qui *tali morte* quemquam
" afficit." Comment. Apoc. in myst. duor. test.

sion

Digitized by Google

sion of his existing head by the sword of literal war, which is his political death: for in each case, according to the definition, he plainly ceases to be what he previously was.

Now this ambiguity is unavoidable; because, as I have just observed, it is inherent in the very nature of the definition.

VII. When I formerly discussed the question of *the wild beast's predicted death*, I was led to understand it in a *moral* sense: and, on this principle, I expounded it to mean *the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity*, by which change the wild beast ceased to be a wild beast or (in prophetic language) experienced a moral death; while analogically I supposed his revival to denote *his relapsing into his old idolatry and demonolatry* concealed from immediate detection by the disguise of a new appellation, in consequence of which return to his ancient ferine habits he again became a wild beast or (in prophetic language) experienced a moral resurrection *.

In this exposition there was nothing *abstractedly* erroneous; and it seemed to correspond very accurately with the recorded fortunes of the Roman wild beast: for he undoubtedly lost his bestial nature, and therefore ceased to be a wild beast or experienced a moral death, when he became a convert to Christianity; while, on the other hand, he resumed his ancient bestial nature, and therefore appeared again

* See above chap. x. sect. 3. § II. 3.

as

Digitized by Google

as a wild beast or experienced a moral resurrection, when he openly apostatised from sincere Christianity to the idolatrous worship of images and canonized dead men. Hence there was nothing *abstractedly* erroneous in the exposition: and the only true question was, whether it accorded as well with the context of the passage or passages which foretell the death of the wild beast, as it did with a particular portion of his recorded history.

This point I did not sufficiently consider: but, supposing that St. John had declined expressly to determine the *specific* head which was to be mortally wounded by the sword, I conceived myself at liberty to pitch upon the *sixth* head as the head in question. And to such a selection, which appeared so exactly to quadrate with the moral history of the sixth head, I was the rather led; because I could not but perceive, from the very terms of the prophecy, that the mortally wounded head must necessarily be either the *sixth* or the *seventh*. For in the days of St. John, when the prediction was delivered, *five* heads had fallen; and the circumstance, shadowed out by the mortal wounding of some one of the heads, was still *future*. Hence it plainly followed, that, as the mortally wounded head could not possibly be any one of the five *already fallen* heads, it must be either the *sixth* or the *seventh* head.

In thus determining the mortally wounded head to be EITHER the *sixth* or the *seventh*, I judged perfectly right: but then, as I have just intimated, from

Digitized by Google

from a supposition that the prophet had left the matter wholly undecided as to WHICH of those two heads was the head in question, I inquired no further, but deemed myself fully warranted in ascribing the deadly wound to the *sixth*. Here however I was mistaken, as (I believe) all my predecessors had been before me. St. John indeed does not, in any *express asseveration*, pronounce WHICH of the heads should be wounded to death: but yet, with a truly divine art and with an astonishing degree of verbal accuracy, while he purposely conceals this mystery from the hasty observer, he reveals it to the patient labour of comparative investigation.

1. We have seen, that the events, which, in scenical representation, appear symbolically as *the death and revival of the wild beast*, are described in verbal though somewhat enigmatical phraseology, as *the cessation and renewal of his existence* *.

Now, though it is not expressly declared, WHICH head should be wounded to death, when the apostle exhibits the hieroglyphic in mere pictured or scenical representation †: yet, when the interpreting angel afterwards gives a copious exposition of the picture-history, he informs us with sufficient plainness, that the Empire, symbolized by the wild beast, should *cease to exist* in consequence of the downfall of the SEVENTH king or the SEVENTH form of government,

* "The beast, that was, and IS NOT, and yet IS;" or, as some copies read, "yet SHALL BE." Rev. xvii. 8.

† Rev. xiii. 1—14.

Digitized by Google

and that it should *exist again* in consequence of the rise of an EIGHTH king or an EIGHTH form of government which *eighth* however should only be a reappearance or a revival of *some one* of the former *seven*.

" The beast, that thou sawest, WAS, and IS NOT, " and SHALL ASCEND out of the abyss, and shall " go into perdition: and they, that dwell on the " earth, shall wonder, whose names are not written " in the book of life from the foundation of the " world; when they behold the beast, that WAS, " and IS NOT, and yet IS. And here is the mind, " which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven " mountains, on which the woman sitteth: they are " also seven kings. Five are fallen, and one (now) " is, and the other is not yet come; and, when he " cometh, HE MUST CONTINUE A SHORT SPACE. " And the beast, that WAS and IS NOT, even he IS " the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into " perdition *."

Let us attentively observe the minute characteristic marks of the *eighth* form of Roman government.

It is to be the wild beast, that WAS, and IS NOT, and yet (after his temporary cessation of existence) again IS under an eighth form of government which shall be a repetition of one of the preceding seven.

This description, however enigmatical it may be in other respects, plainly intimates, that *the new*

* Rev. xvii. 8—11.

term

Digitized by Google

term of the wild beast's existence should commence with the rise of the eighth form of government: for then it was AGAIN TO BE, after once HAVING BEEN, and after having next CEASED TO BE. But, if the wild beast's *new term* of existence *commences* with the rise of the eighth form of government: then the term of his non-existence must immediately have *preceded* the rise of that eighth form. The wild beast however certainly continued to exist until the extinction of the seventh form of government; just as, in the economy of nature, the fabulous hydra was supposed to enjoy uninterrupted life so long as one head succeeded immediately to the lopping of another. Consequently, the term of his *first existence*, which the prophet denotes by the phrase *the beast that* WAS, must have lasted from *the rise of the first head* to *the extinction of the seventh head*, or (as the angel explains the hieroglyphic) from *the rise of the first form of Roman government* to *the extinction of the seventh form.* But we have already seen, from the express words of the prophecy, that the term of his *second existence*, which St. John denotes by the phrase *the beast that* IS or (as some copies read) *the beast that* SHALL BE or *the beast that* SHALL ASCEND, commences with *the rise of the eighth form of government.* Hence it will clearly and inevitably follow, that the term of his *non-existence*, which the apostle denotes by the phrase *the beast that* IS NOT, must be that indefinite period of time, which elapses between *the extinction of the seventh form* and *the rise of the eighth form;* because the

Digitized by Google

term of his *non-existence* is placed between the term of his *first existence* and the term of his *second existence:* and hence of course it will likewise follow, that he ceased to exist *by reason* of the extinction of the seventh form.

Now the events, which in the angel's interpretation are *verbally* expressed by the phrase *the beast that* WAS, *and* IS NOT, *and yet* IS; are, in the corresponding hieroglyphic, *scenically* represented by the picture of *a wild beast first* LIVING, *then* LYING DEAD *in consequence of a mortal wound inflicted upon his reigning head by the stroke of a sword, and lastly* COMING AGAIN TO LIFE *through the healing of that wound:* and we are taught by the same angelic expositor, that the seven heads of the wild beast, while they first *geographically* shadow out the seven well-known hills which sustain imperial Rome, secondly and *historically* symbolize seven successive kings or seven successive forms of government. Such being the case, the *seventh* of these successive forms must of course answer to the *seventh* of the successive heads: whence it will plainly follow, that whatever is predicated of *the seventh form* is also predicated of *the seventh head,* and conversely that whatever is predicated of *the seventh head* is also predicated of *the seventh form.* But it is predicated of *the seventh form,* that it must continue a SHORT space, and that by its extinction the wild beast will drop into his intermediate state of *non-existence:* which intermediate state of *non-existence* is the same as the hieroglyphical wild beast's inter-

mediate

Digitized by Google

mediate state of *death*, that occurs between his *original term of life* and his *renewed term of life*. Therefore it is also predicated of *the seventh head*, that it must continue a SHORT SPACE, and that through its violent extinction by the deadly wound of a sword the hieroglyphical wild beast will drop into his intermediate state of *death* or (as the matter is verbally expressed) of *non-existence*.

Thus, in a train of regular demonstration carried on step by step from the direct assertion of the interpreting angel, we are finally brought to the important conclusion, that the head, which was to receive a deadly wound by the violent stroke of a sword, is not the *sixth* head as I once erroneously imagined, but that it is the SEVENTH head. Hence it will follow, that whether the *death* intended be *a moral death* or *a political death*; this predicted *death* of the wild beast cannot relate to the conversion of the Empire to Christianity: because *that* event took place, not under the *seventh* head, but under the *sixth*.

2. As I once interpreted *the death* of the wild beast to denote *a moral death*, and supposed the slaughtered head to be the *sixth* head: so Bp. Newton, on the contrary, interprets this same *death* to denote *a political death*, still however supposing, like myself, that it was the *sixth* head which received the deadly wound by the sword; for he conceives, that the sixth or imperial head was wounded to death by the Gothic sword when the western line of Cesars was extinguished in the person of Augustulus, and that the same wounded head was healed when the extin-

Digitized by Google

extinguished line was revived in the person of Charlemagne *.

In his opinion, that *the death* of the wild beast denotes *a political death*, the bishop, as we shall presently see and as the intelligent reader will already suspect, was undoubtedly in the right; while I was no less undoubtedly in the wrong, when I supposed it to denote *a moral death*. But, though his interpretation of *the phrase*, as it occurs in the *present* prophecy, is certainly just; his application of *the prophecy itself* is assuredly erroneous. For, to omit the glaring defect in his application, which plainly requires and is indeed absolutely built upon the acknowledgment that the sixth head was *wounded to death* or *subverted* in the person of Augustulus, while yet (agreeably to the well known constitution of the old Roman Empire) that same sixth head was still *flourishing in full vitality* at Constantinople; to omit, I say, this glaring defect in his application, we now find it, like my own, to have been *radically vicious;* for we now find, that the slain head was not the *sixth* as both the bishop and myself have erroneously imagined, but that it was the SEVENTH.

VIII. The identity of the slain head having now been established, our course is abundantly plain; both in expounding that part of the prophecy, which foretells that *the seventh head or form of Roman government should be violently killed by the sword after it had continued only a short space;* and in ac-

* Dissert. xxv. vol. iii. p. 210, 211.

counting,

Digitized by Google

counting, altogether harmonically with another most extraordinary part of the prophecy, for the present *headless* and therefore (agreeably to the economy of nature) *defunct* condition of the hieroglyphical wild beast or of the literal Empire.

1. In the abstract, as we have seen, it is uncertain, whether *prophetic death* denotes *moral death* or *political death:* the mere phrase itself is *capable* of denoting *either.* Hence, in the application, it can only be determined positively *by the event:* but, let *the event* be ascertained, and the right interpretation of the phrase in that *particular* case will follow of course; because history itself will then be our guide.

Now it has been demonstrated, that the *seventh* head is the head which is to be mortally wounded by the sword, and that in consequence of its receiving this mortal wound the beast himself is for a season to lie dead or to sink into his intermediate state of deathlike non-existence. It has moreover been shewn, that the short-lived Napoleonic monarchy is the short-lived *seventh* head or form of Roman government; existing, while it continued to exist, under the official title of *the Emperorship of the French.* For the Papacy, under no aspect, can be identified with this *seventh* head; because the Papacy was never a *secular* head of the wild beast. Therefore, as the *sixth* head, which bore the official title of *Emperorship of the Romans* from first to last, fell in the year 1806: the wild beast will have become *prematurely* headless, even at the extinction

Digitized by Google

tion of the *sixth* head, instead of at the extinction of the *seventh* head (as the prophecy very definitely teaches us to expect); unless we suppose *the Emperorship of the French* to be the predicted SHORT-LIVED *seventh* head.

Since then the Napoleonic monarchy is the short-lived *seventh* head, and since the short-lived *seventh* head is that which is to be mortally wounded by the sword: we must plainly seek the event, denoted by this mortal wound, in the brief history of the Napoleonic monarchy.

The question therefore is, whether the predicted *death* of the wild beast, which is the consequence of the mortal wound inflicted by a sword on the *seventh* head, is to be interpreted *morally* or *politically:* for, as we have seen, the now ascertained application of the *seventh* head must *historically* determine the question before us.

I need scarcely say, that such an application determines it most fully and most effectually. The *seventh* or *Francic form of Roman government* never, during the short time of its continuance, experienced any change from a corrupt to a pure system of theology, which might correspond with the prophetic idea of *a moral death:* therefore *a moral death* cannot have been intended by the imagery of its receiving a mortal wound from a sword. But, if *a moral death* cannot have been intended by this imagery, *the death* intended by it can only have been *political death.* Accordingly, that identical sort of *death* was experienced by the *seventh* or

Francico-

Digitized by Google

Francico-Imperial head; after it had continued, in the strictest agreement with the prophecy, only a SHORT space. The *seventh* Roman head, as we learn by comparing together the pictured hieroglyphic and its inspired exposition by the interpreting angel, was to be wounded to death: and the mode, in which it was to be so wounded to death, is by the violent stroke of a sword *. Now *the death* in question has been proved to be *a political death:* therefore *a political death produced by the violent stroke of a sword* can only mean *a political subversion effected by successful hostile violence.* It appears then, that the short-lived *seventh* head, or the short-lived *seventh* form of Roman government which it represents, was to be cut off or politically subverted by the sword of a foreign enemy. But the short-lived *seventh* form of Roman government has been identified with the short-lived *Emperorship of the French;* which became the sole existing head of the Roman Empire, when the ancient *sixth* head fell or ceased to exist in the year 1806. Therefore it is predicted, that the short-lived *Emperorship of the French* should be cut off or politically subverted by the sword of a foreign enemy.

To point out the exact accomplishment of this wonderful prophecy may well be deemed superfluous. Suffice it to say, that the deadly wound was inflicted in the field of Waterloo by the sword of England.

2. The consequence of this great event is *the*

* Rev. xiii. 3, 14. xvii. 7—11.

death

Digitized by Google

death or *non-existence* of the hieroglyphical wild beast or of the literal Roman Empire.

When the *six* former heads fell, the wild beast still continued to *live:* but, upon the violent excision of the *seventh* head, he forthwith sinks into a state of *death.* The difference is very remarkable: yet history, by its simple record of naked facts, will both establish the reality, and explain the ground, of this striking difference.

As I have already observed, the poetical prototype of the many-headed and repeatedly pullulating wild beast is the fabulous hydra: and, in the arrangement of the pictured hieroglyphic, the real economy of nature is, with admirably minute propriety, most carefully observed throughout the whole description. An animal then, like the hydra, may be supposed to *live,* so long as any one of its numerous heads is in existence: and the excision of a *single* head will not occasion its death, provided *another* head either has *already* sprung up or springs up *synchronically* with the excision of its predecessor so as *immediately* to occupy its vacant place. But, if *every* head be lopped away, and if *no* new head spring up to succeed the last: then, since it is contrary to the whole economy of nature that any animal can *live* in a *headless* condition, the animal in question must plainly be viewed as sinking into a state of *death.*

Such is *the principle,* on which the pictured hieroglyphic of the Roman Empire has been constructed. So long as *any one* of the wild beast's seven heads is in

Digitized by Google

in existence: the wild beast is, with strict congruity, said to *live:* but, when, upon the lopping of his short-lived *seventh* head, *no* new head springs up to occupy its place; then, with equal and requisite congruity, he is said to *die.*

We have now viewed the hieroglyphic itself: we shall next find, that the facts recorded by history minutely correspond with its pictured variations.

The *first* head of the Roman wild beast was immediately succeeded by the *second;* for, when *the Regal head* fell, *the Consular* instantaneously arose: the *second,* the *third,* the *fourth,* and the *fifth,* heads repeatedly appeared or disappeared according to the exigencies of the polymorphic republic; nor did they ultimately fall, so far as *effective power* was concerned, until the rise of the *sixth* or *Imperial head,* which (as St. John carefully tells us) was in actual existence at the time when the Apocalypse was composed: and this *sixth* head, under its official title of *Emperorship of the Romans,* never ceased for a moment to exist from the days of Augustus Cesar down to the year 1806 when it was finally abolished; for, though it fell in the West by the deposition of Augustulus, it still existed in the East through the rule of the Constantinopolitan Cesars; and, though again it fell in the East by the Turcomannic overthrow of the last Constantine, it had previously been revived in the West by Charlemagne where it continued uninterruptedly after the final subversion of the Eastern Empire until at length it ultimately fell in the year 1806. But, though the

sixth

Digitized by Google

sixth head had now completely fallen both in the East and in the West, still the wild beast was not *headless:* consequently, in the figured language of prophecy, he was still *alive.* For, in the year 1804, two years *previous* to the fall of the *sixth* head in the year 1806, the short-lived *seventh* head had sprung up, and soon occupied the place of its deposed predecessor. Thus, from Romulus down even to beyond the year 1806, the hieroglyphical wild beast had never been *headless;* and consequently, under one head or another, had never ceased to *live.*

But a very different scene presents itself, when the hostile sword of England lopped the short-lived *seventh* head. For the first time, during the lapse of more than twenty five centuries, the Roman wild beast became *headless:* the allegorical hydra ceased to *pullulate.* When the *seventh* head was lopped by the sword, no *new* head sprang up in its room. Hence the decorum of physiology required, that the pictured wild beast should be described as sinking into *a state of death;* which the interpreting angel explains to denote *a political state of non-existence as a collective empire.*

Such, accordingly, has been the condition of the Roman Empire since the fated day of Waterloo. The *five* first heads had already fallen in the time of the apostle: the *sixth* head fell in the year 1806: the short-lived *seventh* head was lopped by the sword on the ever memorable 18th of June in the year 1815. By what Roman head has its place been supplied? Clearly by none. Neither through virtue of

Digitized by Google

of *a recognized official appellation*, nor through *a predominance of solid power extending over the whole Empire*, can it be said, that any single state within the limits of the Roman world exercises the function of *a head*. The great European Commonwealth, during the period of the wild beast's allegorical *death* or political *non-existence*, is even *avowedly* moderated and governed by a *college* or *corporation* of the stronger monarchies: and it is not unworthy of note, trifling as the matter may seem in itself, that, with the resignation of *the Roman Emperorship* to which undisputed precedence was allowed by all the ten regal horns, the sovereign of Austria has resigned all claim to priority of rank. As if strongly and (as it were) *officially* to mark, that the Empire is now *headless* and that the decapitated wild beast now lies *dead*, the old question of precedence among the different states disappears for the first time at this present juncture. The members of the regulating college, none of them acknowledging the priority of the others, have indicated their claim to a perfect equality of rank by directing their ambassadors to sign all public common instruments in the mere unpretending alphabetical order of the monarchies which they represent.

Thus it appears, if there be any justice in the preceding conclusions, that we have now entered upon that *second* grand chronological period, which the apocalyptic prophet describes hieroglyphically as *the period during which the wild beast should lie dead in consequence of his having become altogether headless*, and

Digitized by Google

and which the interpreting angel sets forth verbally as *the period during which the Empire of the seven-hilled city should be in a state of non-existence through the sudden downfall of the short-lived seventh king or seventh form of government.* The *first* period of *the beast's life* or of *the Empire's existence* is PAST: in the language of the angelic hierophant, *the wild beast* WAS. Hence, in regular descent through the great prophetic calendar as successively expounded and verified by faithful history, if the *first* period be PAST, we must inevitably have entered upon the *second* period of *the beast's death* or *the Empire's non-existence:* in the language of the same angelic hierophant, *the wild beast* IS NOT.

Whether this arrangement of the times be well or ill founded, let naked facts, open to the view of all, decisively pronounce.

SECTION III.

Respecting the effusion of the fourth and fifth vials.

IT will now be expedient, that we should adapt to the general current of apocalyptic prophecy these grand events which it has been our lot to witness: and such an adaptation will be accomplished, if we diligently attend to the predicted effusion of the fourth and fifth vials.

But, in order that my principles may be the more distinctly understood, it will first be proper for me briefly

Digitized by Google

briefly to point out the steps, by which I arrive at the conclusion that the fourth and fifth vials must be viewed as synchronizing with the reign of the short-lived *seventh* Roman head or form of government. For the Apocalypse is one great chronological prophecy: so that no interpretation of any insulated portion of it can for a moment be admitted, unless it will fall naturally into its proper place in the hitherto established regular course of events.

I. The apocalyptic series of the seven trumpets is divided into a quaternion and a triad.

The four first trumpets, which constitute the quaternion, as our best commentators (with some slight shades of difference) are unanimously agreed, and as there cannot (I think) be a reasonable ground for doubt, represent the subversion of the Western Roman Empire and the harassing of the Eastern Roman Empire by the Gothic warriors of the north.

But the three last trumpets, which constitute the triad, are emphatically designated as producing *three eminent and remarkable woes:* and, of these, the two first are, with much reason, now generally allowed to relate to *the Saracens* and *the Turks.* If we suppose then the two successive tyrannical dominations of *the Saracens* and *the Turks* to be the two first eminent woes, with which the lower Roman Empire, or the Roman Empire during what are usually called *the middle ages*, was to be afflicted: it is difficult to conceive, what, in regular chronological succession, we are to expect for the third woe; if *the reign of Infidelity*, as unfolded in the French revolution

Digitized by Google

revolution with all its amazing consequences, be not intended. Accordingly, I have largely set forth my reasons for believing, that *the third woe* is *the reign of Infidelity as specially developed in the French revolution* *. But, if the third woe thus commenced with the French revolution, then the seventh trumpet must have begun to sound; because the seventh trumpet ushers in the third woe. And, if the seventh trumpet has begun to sound, then the series of the seven vials must have commenced; because it may be proved to demonstration, that all the seven vials are introduced by and comprehended under the seventh trumpet †.

1. Agreeably to this arrangement, and merely following the course of events, I suppose the first vial to relate to the noisome sore of atheistic Infidelity: which, though it had long been *secretly working* previous to its eruption upon the body politic, first *openly broke out* on the 26th of August in the year 1792.

2. The second vial I apply, in a similar manner, to the horrible and long-protracted massacres; which commenced early in the September of the year 1792, and which were incessantly perpetrated during what was emphatically called *the reign of terror*.

3. On the same principle of regular chronological succession, I place the effusion of the third vial on the 19th of November in the year 1792: when, in

* See above Chap. x. sect. 1. § V.

† See above Chap. i. § IV. 2.

conse-

Digitized by Google

consequence of the memorable edict passed on that day, the regularly established governments of the Latin world experienced dreadful devastation from the arms of republican France during a series of bloody and unsuccessful campaigns; the issue of which was a tremendous aggrandisement of the Infidel Power.

4. These three vials describe, I apprehend, that terrible period of God's wrath which is figuratively denominated *the harvest*. When the harvest has been gathered in; then, agreeably to the analogy of nature, there is to be a sort of pause, during which absolute anarchy will be at an end and things will in some measure revert to a state of regular and politied order. The pause in question constitutes the period, which intervenes between the figurative harvest and the figurative vintage. Of these, the harvest has been gathered in: but the no less awful events of the vintage are still future *.

II. The three first vials then eminently describe the scenes of the French revolution, and conduct us to the end of the anarchical republic; corresponding chronologically with the period of the allegorical harvest: hence the fourth and fifth vials, which regularly succeed them, must of course describe the events which came next in order to the dissolution of the republican government.

On this principle, I view them as synchronizing with, and as graphically delineating, the reign of the

* See above Chap. x. sect. 5. § II. chap. xi. sect. 1.

Digitized by Google

short-lived seventh head of the Roman wild beast; which, since that seventh head has now been identified with *the Emperorship of the French*, immediately succeeded the breaking up of the anarchical republic.

1. The picture-history, presented to us on the effusion of the fourth vial, is *the Sun exhibited as receiving power to scorch men with fire:* and the consequence of his intense fervour is, that *the men thus scorched blaspheme the name of God and repent not to give him glory.*

Out of the incarnardined chaotic ocean of discord and atheism the Sun of the Roman world appears to emerge: but, far unlike the Christian Sun of righteousness, he rises not with healing on his wings. His first semblance, while his lurid disk is yet in contact with the agitated sea, is, if I may use the words of our great poet,

> As when the Sun new risen
> Looks through the horizontal misty air
> Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
> In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
> On half the nations, and with fear of change
> Perplexes monarchs.

But soon, mounting on high, he becomes the manifest lord of the ascendant: and, while thus looking down, as if he thought foul scorn, on a subject world; he receives the baleful baptism of the fourth vial. Forthwith his heat is alarmingly increased: and, instead of dispensing the grateful warmth of a secure

Digitized by Google

secure and pacific government, he scorches with the intolerable blaze of a ferocious military despotism all those men who are subjected to the sphere of his influence. No signs however of repentance are observed to follow. The blasphemy, both of Popish demonolatry and of atheistic infidelity, still prevails: and the men of the Roman world either lay to their souls the flattering unction of an unscriptural superstition, or stand up in open defiance against the Lord and against his Christ.

(1.) Nothing can be at once more physically accurate and more beautifully picturesque than this part of the apocalyptic imagery.

Since the Roman World or Ecumenè is the subject of the prophecy; the different parts of that World are shadowed out, agreeably to the well established principles of symbolical imagery, by the corresponding different parts of the natural World. Thus the earth or land of the first vial must denote the gross general territory of the Roman Empire: thus the blood-polluted stormy sea of the second vial will represent a certain large portion of that Empire; violently agitated, like the natural sea, by a revolutionary storm, which horribly transmutes its waves into the consistency of half coagulated gore: and thus the rivers and fountains of the third vial will similarly typify the various states of the Empire; which, though not internally convulsed by the fever of a revolution, are yet changed into blood by wars of a peculiarly disgusting and atrocious nature.

While the allegorical World of Rome appears,

 depicted

Digitized by Google

depicted in this wretched condition, through the series of the three first vials; the figurative Sun of that same world is seen, in the fourth prophetic picture-history, rising portentously out of the bosom of the gory revolutionary ocean, and endowed with a terrific power of scorching and blasting its subject universe.

As such a description of a lowering morning, which proved big with the fate of Rome and of Europe, is constructed with the nicest attention to the physical mundane economy: so does it no less accurately point out both *the origin*, and *the political rank*, and *the specific character*, of the sovereignty which is thus typified by the blazing lord of day.

With respect to *its origin*, it was to spring out of the bosom of the allegorical revolutionary ocean; as the Sun, in the natural world, appears to rise out of the bosom of the sea: with respect to its *political rank*, it was to bear the same relation to the Roman Ecumenè that the Sun bears to the physical universe: and, with respect to its *specific character*, it was to scorch the Empire with the fury of an intolerable military despotism, as the literal Sun parches the arid central desert of the African continent.

Each of these particulars irresistibly directs our attention to the military *Emperorship of the French*, as founded by Napoleon Buonapartè: and the course of regular chronological succession, as we descend from the Saracenic and the Turcomannic woes to the third woe of atheistic Infidelity, and as we

Digitized by Google

we pass through the harvest-horrors of revolutionary France (which were the first fruits of that last great woe) to the rising of the allegorical Sun, still leads us to behold the commencement of *the Francic Emperorship* in the dawning of the Sun of the fourth vial.

(2.) If then we admit this identification to be sufficiently established both by the circumstantial and by the chronological evidence which has been adduced, we shall obviously determine from such premises, that the modern Sun of the Roman World began to rise dim and misty and obscure from the bloody bed of the revolutionary ocean on the 4th of August 1802, when the adventurer Buonapartè became the lord of the Western Empire by receiving the investiture of the First-Consulship, not as a temporary office, but during the term of his natural life.

By this political arrangement he became a sovereign prince, but a prince as yet of a dubious and equivocal description. Monarchs indeed were perplexed with fear of change: yet the newly risen Sun of the Roman World looked for a season, shorn of his beams, through the misty horizontal air.

But from this doubtful and hazy condition the young luminary, as he rapidly mounted towards the zenith, soon and completely emerged. In the May of the year 1804, the ambiguous First-Consul was proclaimed *Emperor of the French:* and the now fully developed Roman Sun, sprinkled with the dire contents of the fourth vial, blazed with a scorching and

Digitized by Google

and ominous lustre upon the parched and prostrate surface of the allegorical World.

2. Thus it appears, that the fourth vial describes the rise and origin and character of *the Francic Emperorship* or *the short-lived seventh form of Roman government:* in a similar manner, the fifth vial will be found to exhibit the decline and subversion of that seventh fated form.

We may observe, that, in tracing its *rise* and *origin* and *character*, the prophet borrows his imagery from the grand economy of the whole natural world: but, in exhibiting its *decline* and *subversion*, he returns to that former imagery, which he had already borrowed from the physical economy of a single monstrous wild beast.

This curious variation is replete with divine art and contrivance.

By reverting to his former imagery, he teaches us unequivocally, that he is now treating of *the Empire symbolized by the wild beast*, viewed as existing under some one of its seven heads or forms of government; and consequently that the blazing Sun of the preceding vial must be identified with the specific *some one* of its seven heads. For, if we inquire into the natural economy of the two successive hieroglyphics, which he has employed to picture the short reign of the Francic Emperorship, we shall find, that *the Sun* bears exactly the same relation to *the World*, which *a head* bears to *the body* of an animal. Hence the allegorical Sun, for the time being, of the Roman World, must inevitably be the very same

Digitized by Google

same, as the allegorical head, for the time being, of the Roman wild beast. Consequently, as the fourth vial describes the allegorical Sun in the zenith of its power, and as the immediately succeeding fifth vial describes the wild beast under some one of his allegorical heads in a completely depressed condition; we may be morally certain, from the evidently connected collocation of those two vials, that the triumphant Sun of the fourth vial is the very same form of Roman government as the discomfited bestial head of the fifth vial. But the triumphant Sun of the fourth vial is the Francic Emperorship; which we have seen reason to identify with the sword-lopped seventh head or with the short-lived seventh form of Roman government. Therefore the discomfited bestial head of the fifth vial is the same sword-lopped seventh head and the same short-lived seventh form of Roman polity.

Such being the case, the prophecy of the fifth vial must clearly relate, as I have already intimated, to *the decline* and *violent subversion* of that short-lived seventh form.

The terms, in which it is couched, are the following.

"The fifth angel poured out his vial on the "THRONE of the wild beast: and his KINGDOM "was full of darkness; and they gnawed their "tongues for pain, and blaspheined the God of "heaven because of their pains and their sores, and "repented not of their deeds."

(1.) Of this predicted calamity, it is easy enough, even

Digitized by Google

even before the occurrence of the event, to see the *general* nature: though historical facts alone can enable us, both to explain it *in detail*, and to determine positively *upon its precise amount or extent*. We might in short, at any time subsequent to the year 1806; had it only been then understood, that the *sixth* head had recently fallen, and that the Francic Emperorship was the *seventh* head: we might, I say, have determined, at any time subsequent to the year 1806, that the prophecy of the fifth vial, when translated from symbolical into verbal language, spoke to the following effect.

The THRONE *of the Francic Emperorship, which is no other than the seventh head of the Roman wild beast, will be violently attacked: and the attack, to whatever length it is destined to be carried, will prove successful. For we are told, that the bestial* KINGDOM *will be filled with darkness, and that the military adherents of the throne will be inflamed with diabolical rage on account of the eminent calamity sustained by that throne. Still however no signs of repentance and amendment will appear.*

Such would evidently have seemed to be the *general* purport of the prophecy even before its accomplishment, provided only it had been then ascertained that the Francic Emperorship was the existing head of the wild beast. Accordingly, I myself laid it down, from the mere decyphering of the symbolical language, that such WAS its *general* purport: for I was perfectly right in my supposition, that the Francic Emperorship was the *existing* head of the

Digitized by Google

the wild beast, though I arrived at that supposition by a faulty arrangement of the eight forms of Roman government; for, deeming the Carlovingian Emperorship to be the *last* form, and erroneously imagining that that Emperorship had been *translated* to France, I thence viewed the Francic Emperorship as the head of the Roman wild beast which would be in existence at the time of the prophecy's accomplishment. So that, by the rectified arrangement which I have now adopted, no part of my grand results, as to the calamity destined to befall the wild beast under the fifth vial, and as to the yet future exploits attributed to the *last* form of Roman government, is at all affected or deranged. In short, I did not err in my *conclusion itself*, but in *the mode* after which I arrived at that conclusion. This circumstance need scarcely be pointed out to the attentive reader.

But, though it were easy even *a priori* to lay down the *general* purport of the prophecy respecting the fifth vial, it was impossible, without the elucidation afforded by the event itself, to determine, either upon *the specific circumstances*, or upon *the precise extent*, of the predicted calamity. For *a successful attack upon a* THRONE, if nothing more positively distinctive be said, may import, either *such an attack as should thoroughly cripple it*, or *such an attack as should strip it of a large part of its territory*, or *such an attack as should entirely subvert it*. The naked symbolical action, described in the words, *The fifth angel poured out his vial on the* THRONE

THRONE *of the wild beast*, is capable in the abstract of conveying any one of these three meanings: and, of course, we can only be positive as to its *true* meaning, when the event foretold has actually occurred.

At present however, unless I be greatly mistaken, we are living *subsequent* to the event foretold: and this event now determines the *true* meaning of the prophecy to be the last of its three *possible* meanings; namely, that *the predicted attack upon the* THRONE *of the wild beast* denotes *such an attack as should entirely subvert it.*

Yet it is worthy of observation, that, although the event alone can *fully* interpret prophecy; still, had it been ascertained some few years ago that the Francic Emperorship was that short-lived head of the wild beast which was destined to be violently SLAIN BY THE SWORD, we might have almost ventured to anticipate the nature and issue of the predicted attack upon his THRONE. For, if the Francic Emperorship, because identified with the *seventh* form of Roman government, was at once to be SHORT LIVED and to be SLAIN BY THE SWORD: we might from these premises have very reasonably argued, that THE ATTACK UPON THE THRONE and THE PREMATURE DEATH INFLICTED BY THE SWORD related, as we now find that they *do* relate, to one and the same event; namely THE COMPLETE EXCISION OF THE FRANCIC EMPERORSHIP. It commonly however seems good to divine wisdom to check the restless curiosity of man, by not suffering a pro-

Digitized by Google

a prophecy to be *perfectly* understood, till after the event of its accomplishment. Hence, as the key to the prophecy of the fifth vial is *the identification of the Francic Emperorship with the short-lived and sword-exscinded* SEVENTH *head of the wild beast;* this identification was never discovered by any commentator until *after* the prophecy in question had been fulfilled. Yet, to all appearance, so easy were it to find the true key, that now, when it *is* found, we almost wonder why it should never have been found before.

(2.) The prophecy of the fifth vial, as I have just observed, relates, not only to *the final subversion* of the seventh short-lived head, but likewise to its *antecedent and preparatory decline.* Instead therefore of deeming the vial poured out *on* the eventful day of Waterloo, we must look for the commencement of its effusion some time *before* that grand leading occurrence. For, as the vial is poured out upon the throne of the wild beast, the *commencement* of its effusion will obviously synchronize with the commencement of the successful attack upon the throne.

Agreeably to this natural principle, I suppose the fifth vial to have *begun* to flow in the year 1808: when the Spanish nation arose as one man, and (in singular harmony with the terms of the prediction) struck directly at the THRONE of the wild beast by declaring its seventh head or the Franco-Imperial government of Napoleon to be a tyrannical usurpation. From this *characteristic* I suspected at the time,

Digitized by Google

time, that the fifth vial had begun to flow: and, on that ground, I anticipated a series of disasters to France, though of course I knew not to what precise extent they might amount. My sentiments on the matter stand recorded in a respectable monthly publication: and I scrupled not to avow my belief, a belief founded on the circumstance that the French government was the *existing* head of the wild beast, that the Spanish struggle would be successful *.

As yet however the stream flowed with comparative penuriousness: baffled in Spain, the seventh head was nevertheless eminently successful in Germany: the vial had merely commenced. But its baleful effects soon began to be felt by France upon a larger scale. The autumn of 1812 was marked by Buonapartè's frantic attack upon Russia. Of his vast armament, not a tithe returned to tell the tale of destruction. The campaign of 1813 was distinguished by his complete defeat before Leipsic, his loss of the whole of Germany, and his disgraceful flight across the Rhine. The vial was now flowing with portentous rapidity: but, even yet, its stream,

* See Christian Observer for Dec. 1808. p. 757. My paper there inserted bears date Oct. 1. 1808. I was right in supposing the Imperial French government of that period to be A head of the beast; but I was wrong, as to the PARTICULAR head with which I then identified it. Had I supposed it to be the short-lived *seventh* head, I should have anticipated its *complete subversion*: but, imagining it to be a continuation of the *eighth* or *last* form of Roman polity, I certainly from such premises did not expect more than its *signal humiliation*.

though

though copious, was not at the height. In the spring of 1814, the allies occupied Paris: and, as the *characteristic* mark of the fifth vial is, that *it should be poured out upon the* THRONE *of the wild beast*; so, in exact accordance with prophecy, the sovereigns declared that they would treat neither with Buonapartè nor with any member of his family, and commanded the vanquished French senate to call another prince to the throne. Their mandate was obeyed: Buonapartè was compelled to abdicate: and the ancient dynasty was restored.

But, notwithstanding these disasters, the seventh head continued to exist: hitherto it had not been absolutely slain. Napoleon, driven as he was from France and Italy, was yet neither stripped of all his dominions, nor was he compelled to resign his imperial dignity. As the *sixth* head in its earlier western branch was not less the *sixth* head in the eye of prophecy, when confined during the short reign of Augustulus to the limits of Rome; and, as the same *sixth* head in its middle eastern branch was not less the *sixth* head in the eye of prophecy, when confined during the reign of the last Constantine to the walls of Byzantium: so neither did the *seventh* head cease to be the *seventh* head, when its actual dominions were contracted within the narrow space of a small island. The allies not only suffered the tyger to escape from the toils: but, even in the hour of adversity, they recognized his imperial title; though they confined his sovereignty to the isle of Elba. Hence Napoleon, in his insular principality, did not less represent

Digitized by Google

represent the seventh head of the wild beast; that the same Napoleon, when seated upon the throne of France, Italy, and the western Germany. The time was not yet arrived for the slaughter of that head by the sword: the allies therefore unconsciously went on fulfilling a prophecy, when they recognized the imperial title of Napoleon, and when they permitted him to hold in full sovereignty a part of his former dominions however small. Had they *not* done this, the seventh head would have prematurely ceased to exist: *by* doing it, they preserved in it for a season the spark of political vitality.

The destined time of excision however was not far distant. Early in the year 1815, the Emperor Napoleon, with a handful of followers, landed on the southern coast of France; and, rapid as his own eagle, flew to the capital, whence he instantaneously expelled the tottering dynasty of the Bourbons. But, notwithstanding this astonishing success, the baleful contents of the fifth vial were not yet exhausted: the noxious steam still flowed upon the throne of the wild beast; and the momentary elevation of Napoleon served only to make his final overthrow the more conspicuous. Europe was forthwith in arms: and *the principle* of her warfare ceased not to be *the identical principle*, which was first openly avowed by Spain in the year 1808, and which had been so graphically predelineated by the voice of inspiration. *The characteristic badge* of the fifth vial, from the beginning to the end of its effusion, is *an attack upon the* THRONE *of the wild beast* then under the rule of his

Digitized by Google

his seventh head. Now *the undisguised principle*, on which the allies embarked in their final war against Napoleon, was no other than *the characteristic badge of the fifth vial.* They unreservedly declared, that their *principle* in 1815 was the very same as their *principle* in 1814: in other words, they unreservedly declared, that *they fought exclusively against the* THRONE *of Napoleon.* Success attended their effort; because prophecy had declared respecting the seventh form of Roman government, that, *when it cometh, it must continue a* SHORT *space:* but it was the high will of heaven, that the avenging sword of excision should be wielded by the hand of England. On the 18th of June in the year 1815, the seventh head received its predicted deadly wound by the sword. In the height of its strength it was suddenly mown down by the predetermined servant of the Almighty God: and, however high may be the rewards which an admiring prince and a grateful country have conferred upon the avenger of long outraged humanity, I cannot but deem his most elevated and most venerable title to be that of *the chosen minister of Jehovah, who should perform all his pleasure, and whose right hand the Lord hath holden to subdue nations before him**. The remainder of the eventful tale is soon told. At Waterloo, the seventh head received its deadly wound by the sword: and its predicted SHORT space of continuance ran out, when it immediately afterwards ex-

* Isaiah xliv. 28. xlv. 1.

pired,

Digitized by Google

pired, in consequence of the formal abolition of its official title and its deprivation even of the shadow of effective sovereignty. The person, to whose single reign, its brief term of existence was limited, returned no more, decked with the trappings and adorned with the name of royalty, to his late insular dominion. Studiously degraded to the mere *subject* rank of a general officer, we behold him, a new Prometheus, bound by the adamantine chains of Strength-and-Violence to a tempest-beaten Antarctic Caucasus.

But, though the seventh head of the wild beast was lopped without the pullulation of a successor, and though his body (in strict accordance with the economy of nature) sank forthwith into a state of death: yet that body no more, than the decapitated body of a *literal* wild beast, vanished from off the face of the earth, or ceased to maintain a bare material existence. Stretched over many a rood, the huge carcase still lay visibly prostrate on the earth: the wild beast was dead, but he was not buried. With the picture-history of the symbol, the verbal language of the prophecy minutely corresponds. The THRONE indeed of the wild beast was to be overturned: but his KINGDOM, though now deprived of all its seven political heads, was not to be annihilated. On the contrary, we read, that his KINGDOM, even *after* the fifth vial had done its work of destruction upon his THRONE, *was full of* DARKNESS: it continued therefore to *exist*, though wrapped in the profound shades of gloomy night. Such being the case, *the* DARK-

NESS

Digitized by Google

NESS *of his yet-existing* KINGDOM in the verbal prophecy plainly corresponds with *the* DEAD STATE *of his yet-existing carcase* in the hieroglyphical picture-history. I need scarcely remark, that this metaphorical phraseology is familiar to perhaps every nation in the world. In the ordinary language of Scripture, and in the technical language of the old pagan Mysteries on which is industriously founded *the machinery* of the apocalyptic drama, DEATH is ever described as a condition of palpable DARKNESS *. Since then the effusion of the fifth vial was to produce THE DEATHLIKE DARKNESS of the still existing BESTIAL KINGDOM: we may be sure, that its contents will not be completely exhausted, until that DARKNESS OF DEATH shall have passed away, or (in other words) until the wild beast shall be restored to LIFE by the predicted rise of the *eighth* form of Roman government which is to be one of the preceding *seven* raised anew to the functions of vitality; though very probably, in accordance with the analogy of the other vials, the sixth may have begun to flow *before* the complete exhaustion of the fifth †. This being the case, it is manifest, that the term of the fifth vial comprehends within its limits the whole period of the wild beast's DEAD STATE or (in the language of the interpreting angel) the whole period during which the wild beast IS NOT.

Such is the political condition of the bestial kingdom throughout the appointed period of DARKNESS

* See below Dissert. vi. sect. 3.

† Rev. xvii. 8, 11. See above Chap. xi. in init.

Digitized by Google

OF DEATH OR HEADLESS NON-EXISTENCE. But the wonderfully minute prophet not only describes the political condition of the Roman Empire subsequent to the excision of the seventh head, precisely as we may now behold it with our own eyes: he perfectly represents also, with a single stroke of his pen, the irritated feelings of those, who had battened and gorged themselves under the vulture banner of the Francico-Imperial king. According to every account which we have received relative to the state of the public mind in France, whether from the friends of from the enemies of the Bourbons, the extreme rage of the soldiery, which in fact may almost be deemed the entire adult male population of the country, at finding their favourite chief violently expelled by the sword to make room for a proverbially non-equestrian prince, cannot be more accurately depicted than in the emphatic language of prophecy: THEY GNAWED THEIR TONGUES FOR PAIN *.

* A very conceited and ill-principled modern work, entitled *France*, after making every due deduction for the temper of a fanatical partizan, will at least serve to shew, in no equivocal light, the present very general feelings which pervade the country under discussion. The burden of a favourite anti-Bourbon song, which, according to the author, "was given with infinite "humour and *received with rapturous plaudits*," may alone speak volumes. While the general subject is *the imposed yoke of the old dynasty* and *the unwise confession of the king that he owed his crown to the English*, the exhilarating burden at the end of each stanza is *Ça ne tiendra pas:* and, agreeably to the old proverb of *Ex pede Herculem*, the same refreshing motto is prefixed as the appropriate title of the song itself.

NOR

Digitized by Google

Nor has the last part of the prediction been less minutely accomplished: "they blasphemed the God "of heaven because of their pains and their sores, "and repented not of their deeds." The infatuated Capets, pertinaciously adhering to the unscriptural superstitions of Popery in which the name of God is blasphemed by the idolatrous worship of images and dead men, are labouring with lubbard force to roll up this stone of Sisyphus to its ancient situation: while their reluctant subjects, overawed indeed by the presence of foreign armies, but plunged (as I am credibly informed) in the very grossest practical abominations, despise the theological mummeries and baby processions of their restored princes, not as enlightened scriptural protestants, but as determined infidels or atheists, but as avowed members of the great predicted Antichrist of the last ages.

III. It has now been shewn, by a careful comparison of prophecy with history, that we have lived to witness the extinction of the short-lived seventh head by the sword of foreign violence, and that the predicted period of the wild beast's political non-existence (described by the interpreting angel in the phrase *the wild beast* IS NOT) has now actually commenced.

It has further also been shewn, that the fourth and fifth vials exhibit the origin, the rise, the military character, the vast power, the decline, and the final excision, of that seventh Roman head; which is depicted, as continuing only a SHORT space, and as being ultimately SLAIN BY THE SWORD.

Digitized by Google

Lastly it has been shewn, that the fifth vial not only foretells the violent overthrow of the seventh head; but that, extending *beyond* that overthrow, it comprehends the whole of that intermediate prophetic period, which stretches between the *original* life of the wild beast and his *second* term of vital existence subsequent to his announced resurrection from the dead. *The wild beast* WAS, *and* IS NOT, *and yet* IS *or* SHALL BE. Of these three consecutive periods, the term, expressed by the phrase *the wild beast* WAS, is past and gone: the term, expressed by the phrase *the wild beast* IS NOT, is at present in actual lapse; having commenced at the time, when the seventh head was lopped by the sword of England: but the term, expressed by the phrase *the wild beast* IS *or* SHALL BE, is as yet future; though it will immediately succeed the present term of the wild beast's political death or non-entity.

Thus it appears, that we are now living, under the influence of the fifth vial, and in the intermediate prophetic period during which the wild beast IS NOT *. It further appears too from the far evolved roll of history, thall ALL the seven heads of the Roman wild beast have successively risen and fallen: so that we need only look upon what is actually passing before our eyes, to be fully satisfied that he is now for the *first* time HEADLESS and therefore DEAD. Five had fallen, when the apostle wrote: the sixth was then in existence: the seventh was not

* I write in the year 1817.

yet

Digitized by Google

yet come. But *we* have seen the extinction of the sixth: *we* have witnessed both the rise and the fall of the seventh. At present therefore, we may, with perfect facility, give an exact enumeration of ALL the seven heads: and such an enumeration will usefully prepare the way for some notice of the third *yet future* period, or the period described by the phrase *the wild beast* IS *or* SHALL BE.

The seven heads then of the wild beast, or the seven successive forms of Roman government (for all commentators, whether ancient or modern, whether Protestant or Popish, are agreed, that the wild beast is a symbol of the Roman Empire from its commencement to its termination): these seven heads, or seven political forms, may now be enumerated in the following order.

1. THE KINGSHIP. 2. THE CONSULATE. 3. THE DICTATORSHIP. 4. THE DECEMVIRATE. 5. THE CONSULAR TRIBUNATE *. 6. THE ROMAN EMPERORSHIP †. 7. THE FRANCIC EMPERORSHIP ‡.

These several heads are all distinct from each other: but they agree in what must plainly be a necessary and essential characteristic of a ROMAN head. Each, at one period or other of its rule, obtained and enjoyed the sovereignty of the metropolitan city ROME.

* These five were fallen, when St. John wrote.

† This sixth was in actual existence at the time, when the prophecy was delivered.

‡ This seventh was future or not yet come in the days of the apostle.

SECTION

Digitized by Google

SECTION IV.

Respecting the rise and fall of the eighth form of Roman government.

THOUGH the *interpretation* of prophecy has no concern with futurity: yet, if we confine ourselves to the strict letter of what has been revealed, we may undoubtedly pronounce, *in general terms*, what will be hereafter.

Nor does this at all militate against the sound and judicious remark of Sir Isaac Newton, that it is "the folly of interpreters to foretell times and things "by the Apocalypse, as if God designed to make "them prophets *." Such a remark can only, in the very nature of things, relate to *a minute expository pre-application:* it obviously can have no concern with our confidently declaring, *in the words of Scripture*, that this or that event will assuredly occur.

In fact, if we *thus* extend the observation beyond what its illustrious author ever meant it to be extended, we do but betray our own gross ignorance, both of the evident purpose of his remark, and of the radically inherent nature of prophecy itself. This assertion will be best both established and understood by the adduction of examples.

* Observ. on the Apoc. p. 251.

Long

Digitized by Google

Long before the advent of the Messiah, his future manifestation had been announced by the prophets: and various minute characteristic particulars had been laid down, by which he might be infallibly verified whensoever he should appear. Now, had a Jew, previous to the coming of our Saviour, attempted to give a full account of all his actions, such for instance as we find them recorded in any one of the four evangelists: he would doubtless have justly incurred the censure of Sir Isaac Newton's observation; because he would have been dealing with prophecy, as if God had designed to make *him* a prophet. But, if he had simply declared, through faith in the divine word, that *the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem of Judea;* he plainly would not have made himself at all liable to the censure of our illustrious expositor, notwithstanding he so confidently announced an event as yet future: for, in fact, he would merely have taken up the explicit declaration of the sacred oracle. Accordingly, when Herod demanded of the Sanhedrim WHERE the Christ should be born, they answered without hesitation, notwithstanding the birth of the Redeemer was in *their* apprehension *still future*, IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA; and, in giving this answer, they were not vainly playing the part of prophets, which *alone* is the presumption so justly reprehended by Sir Isaac Newton; but they were soberly and rationally setting forth an article of faith universally received by their Church, BECAUSE it rested on the authority of revelation. "FOR *thus it is written by* THE PRO-

"PHET,"

Digitized by Google

"PHET," as we find them immediately and regularly giving their voucher for their assertion; "And thou, "Bethlehem in the land of Judah, art not the least "among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall "come the Governor, that shall rule my people "Israel *."

In a similar manner, when we of the present day simply declare, through faith in the divine word; that, in the great day of the Messiah's second advent, there shall be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust, the former to unceasing happiness, the latter to perpetual misery: we certainly do not become liable to the censure of Sir Isaac Newton; notwithstanding we speak with as much positiveness on the subject, as if we ourselves had received the doctrine from direct personal inspiration. FOR *thus it is foretold by the* CHIEF OF PROPHETS, may we say as the Sanhedrim did of old; "The wicked shall go "away into everlasting punishment, but the righte- "ous into life eternal †."

It is on this very same principle, if I mistake not, that we may, without any fear of warrantable reprehension, look forward humbly and reverently into the mysterious volume of the Apocalypse; and hence, by mere attention to the naked words of the oracle, deduce, even before the event, the future condition and ultimate fate of the now defunct wild beast.

I. We have seen, that the entire duration of the

* Matt. ii. 3—6. † Matt. xxv. 46.

wild

Digitized by Google

wild beast's Empire is divided by the interpreting angel into three successive periods; that of *original existence*, that of *non-existence*, and that of *re-existence*: "the beast WAS, and IS NOT, and yet IS." We have likewise seen, by the obvious process of comparing the interpretation with the hieroglyphic itself, that *the first existence of the Empire* answers to *the first term of the beast's life*; that *the intermediate non-existence of the Empire* answers to *the period during which the beast lies dead*; and that *the re-existence of the Empire* answers to *the second term of the beast's life* when his deadly wound should be healed and when he should exercise anew the functions of vitality. We have lastly seen, by a careful discussion of particulars and by a minute comparison of prophecy with history, that the *first* of those three successive periods, into which the interpreting angel divides the entire duration of the wild beast's empire, is *past*; and that we are at present living in the *second* of them, namely the period of *the Empire's non-existence* or of *the wild beast's death*.

Now from these premises it will plainly follow, since the *first* of the three periods is *past* and since the *second* is now *in actual lapse*, that we must look forward to the *future commencement* of the *third*.

Nor do I render myself liable to the reprehension of Sir Isaac Newton by drawing such a conclusion, as if I were attempting to play the prophet rather than the expositor of prophecy. For, in fact, by drawing this conclusion, what do I say more than St. John

Digitized by Google

John himself has said? He foretells, that, through the extinction of the seventh form of Roman government or through the lopping of the seventh bestial head by the sword, the decapitated wild beast should for a season lie dead; or that the Empire, having no ostensible supreme head, should sink for a season into a state of political non-existence.

This he foretells; and we ourselves have witnessed the amazing accuracy with which the prediction has been accomplished: for we have successively beheld the fall of that sixth head which was flourishing at the time when he wrote, the rise and sword-inflicted death of the then future short-lived seventh head, and the consequent headless or defunct political condition of the Roman Empire.

But then we must not forget, that the prophet equally foretells a state of the hieroglyphical wild beast, which he describes as immediately following his present state. If the beast was to die through the violent excision of his seventh head by the sword, or if the Empire was to fall into a condition of political non-existence through the overthrow of its seventh short-lived form of supreme government: that *same* beast is no less to be restored to life through the healing of his deadly wound, that *same* Empire is no less to rise again to a new condition of political re-existence. The *yet future* resurrection of the wild beast, or the *yet future* renovation of the Empire, rests upon the identical inspired authority; on which also rested the *now accomplished* slaughter of the wild beast by the excision of his seventh head,

and

Digitized by Google

and the *now effected* political non-existence of the Empire by its recent reduction to a headless state through the overthrow of its short-lived seventh supreme form of government. If we deem the prophet accurate in what has been *already* fulfilled; we may look forward, with assured confidence, to what he announces as *about* to be fulfilled. Hence, as we have *already beheld* the death of the wild beast or the political non-existence of the Empire, we must *plainly expect* the equally predicted revival of the wild beast or the equally predicted re-existence of the Empire.

" I saw," says the prophet respecting the hieroglyphical wild beast, " I saw one of his heads as it " were wounded to death; and HIS DEADLY WOUND " WAS HEALED:" for " the beast had a wound," even a *deadly* wound, " by a sword; and yet DID " LIVE."

Such was the picture-history presented to St. John: and analogous to it was the verbal interpretation of the angel.

" The beast, that thou sawest, was, and is not, " and SHALL ASCEND OUT OF THE ABYSS: the " beast was, and is not, and yet IS or SHALL BE: " the seven heads are seven kings; five are fallen, " and one is, and the other is not yet come; and, " when he cometh, he must continue a short space; " and the beast, that was and is not, even HE IS " THE EIGHTH AND IS OF THE SEVEN."

Nothing can be plainer or less equivocal than these repeated declarations, when read by the strong light which

Digitized by Google

which history has now thrown upon the two first predicted periods, the WAS, and the IS NOT. Formerly indeed they were an enigma, which it surpassed the wit of man to solve. But the riddle is now read, so far as to the commencement of the second predicted period: and this solution of it, by the exact accomplishment of the prophecy, will of necessity teach us *the general principle*, though not *the precise mode as to minute particulars*, according to which the future and therefore yet unexplained portion of it is to be understood. Of this we may be sure, that the revival of the wild beast will be *homogeneous in its political nature* to his violent death by the sword.

II. And now, from such premises, we seem inevitably led to the following conclusion.

As the wild beast was slain by the violent excision of his seventh head; he must revive by the healing of that same mortal wound, which caused his death: and, as the corresponding Empire sank into a state of political non-existence by the fall of the seventh short-lived form of government; it must rise into its yet future state of political re-existence by the springing up of an eighth form of government, which however is declared to be no *new* form, but only some one of the *prior* seven then *revived* or *re-established.*

In fact, what I have here styled *a conclusion from premises*, is really no other than *the direct assertion of the prophet himself.*

He teaches us, with all the plainness of which language

Digitized by Google

language is capable, that the deadly wound of the beast will be healed, and that he will assuredly revive under some one of his now extinct seven heads: that the Empire will pass from its present state of headless non-existence to a future state of re-existence under an eighth king or form of supreme dominant government, which shall be some one of the preceding now-abolished seven forms. WHEN this allegorical resurrection of the wild beast will take place, or (in other words) HOW LONG his present state of death will continue; we are not indeed told. The *chronological* part of the matter is left wholly undetermined. Either *few* years or *many* years may elapse before the predicted revival. But, sooner or later, THAT REVIVAL WILL OCCUR: otherwise, the *yet unaccomplished* prophecy, respecting what St. John terms *the great fight of Armageddon* or *the battle of that great day of God Almighty*, can never be fulfilled; because the *now defunct* beast is the *living* ringleader of the rebellion, which is not quashed save by the Personal Word of God himself*.

III. The naked fact of THE WILD BEAST'S FUTURE REVIVAL being thus established on the sure foundation of the divine oracles; we may next be allowed to inquire, though still with the same close adherence to the written word, *under* WHICH *of his seven now extinct heads he may justly be expected to revive.*

1. On this point, which has not yet been illus-

* Rev. xix. 11—21.

trated

trated by the event, we can *know* nothing, if the prophet have *taught* us nothing: but, whatever he *has* taught us, *that* most undoubtedly we may know just as well *before* the event as *after* it. Let us see then, whether he does not throw some light on this deeply interesting and most important matter.

2. The interpreting angel simply assures us, that the wild beast shall revive or ascend with new life out of the abyss under an eighth head or form of government which shall be a repetition of some one of the preceding seven: so that, although the Empire shall *chronologically* subsist under *eight* successive forms of dominant government, it shall *really* subsist only under *seven;* because the *chronological* eighth shall be the same as one of its *really distinct* predecessors. But he gives us no information as to the *particular* form of government, with which the eighth is to be identified: hence, so far as the angel's interpretation is concerned, the eighth may be a revival or re-establishment of *any one* of the preceding seven.

I am inclined however to suspect, that this deficiency is very artfully supplied in the picture-history of the corresponding hieroglyphic.

In that picture-history, the wild beast appears with one of his seven heads wounded to death by the stroke of a sword. The consequence of the wound is the death of the beast himself. Yet, notwithstanding his temporary death by the sword, the wild beast revives: or, as the apostle says he beheld him, the wild beast "did live."

Now,

Digitized by Google

Now, in the pageant which was presented to the eyes of St. John, the wild beast appeared to revive, *in consequence of his deadly wound being healed.* But it is manifest, that no such sight could have been beheld by the apostle; unless the IDENTICAL wound was healed, which had produced the death of the wild beast. The wound however, which was thus healed, was the wound (as we have seen) which was inflicted on the short-lived SEVENTH head. Therefore the wounded short-lived SEVENTH head must have appeared to St. John to be the *particular* head which was healed. But the wounded short-lived SEVENTH head has been shewn to be the short-lived FRANCIC EMPERORSHIP, which was wounded to death by the sword of England. Therefore the FRANCIC EMPERORSHIP is that mortally wounded SEVENTH head, whose deadly wound is destined to be healed *.

To the very same conclusion we are incidentally brought by the last prophecy of Daniel, at least

* Bp. Newton justly argues this point in the same manner with myself; though, as I also once did, he mistakes as to the particular head which was to receive the deadly wound. "Not "only one of his heads," says the bishop, "was as it were "wounded to death, but his deadly wound was healed. If it "was the *sixth* head, which was wounded; that could not be "healed by the rising of the *seventh* head, as interpreters com- "monly conceive: the SAME head, which was wounded, must "be healed." Dissert. xxv. on Rev. xiii. 1—10. vol. iii. p. 211. The argument *itself* is, to all appearance, perfectly valid, whatever may be the head which was slain by the sword.

according

Digitized by Google

according to the mode in which I have judged it right to interpret that prophecy.

The wilful or infidel king, whom Daniel describes as rising up subsequent to the *second* or *papal* persecution of *the men of understanding* and therefore subsequent to the Reformation, and whose lineaments faithfully reflect the deeds of atheistical France under its various revolutionary governors since the year 1789: this infidel king, in the latter part of his career, at *the time of the end*, conducts the *same* great enterprize to Armageddon or Megiddo between the two seas of Palestine, and is unexpectedly brought to the *same* destruction at the *same* time, as the revived apocalyptic wild beast under that eighth form of supreme government which is one of the preceding seven. Hence, provided my interpretation of Daniel's prophecy respecting the infidel king be well established, the result is sufficiently obvious. The then-existing governor of infidel France, and the then-existing administrator of the eighth political form under which the revived wild beast ascends from the abyss, head the *same* expedition at the *same* time to the *same* place, where they alike perish in the *same* manner. But these various cognate matters cannot all be predicated of *two different powers*. Therefore the then-existing government of infidel France, and the then-existing eighth form of Roman government under which the wild beast revives, must clearly be one and the same. In other words, the eighth form of Roman government will be the same as the seventh: which seventh form was the FRANCIC EMPEROR-

Digitized by Google

EMPERORSHIP, now recently slain by the sword after it had continued a short space.

3. Thus are we apparently led, by the speaking machinery of the pictured hieroglyphic, to a very important conclusion: the conclusion, that *the* SEVENTH *head, which was mortally wounded by the sword, is the identical head which is destined to be healed.*

Nor (let me repeat it) am I here presuming to play the prophet: so far from it, I simply state, either the very words of the prophecy, or the inspired description of what St. John beheld in the picture-history. If any one can understand those words and that description differently, let him point out the grounds on which he may deem me to have misapprehended them.

4. The SEVENTH head then, being the head which was mortally wounded by the sword, is the head which is destined to be healed. But, when this deadly wound is healed, then the slain wild beast revives. Consequently, if we turn from the hieroglyphic to the angel's interpretation of it, the eighth form of Roman government, under which the wild beast ascends from the abyss instinct with renovated life, or under which the Empire commences its third predicted term of re-existence: that eighth form of Roman government, which is declared to be one of the preceding seven, must be the same as the short-lived SEVENTH form; the same therefore as the FRANCIC EMPERORSHIP.

IV. To this deduction the excellent principle of

Digitized by Google

homogeneity must be applied, in explaining what idea we ought to annex to the pictured *healing of the deadly wound:* and then the abstract argument (for, *previous* to the event, it can only be an *abstract* argument) will perhaps be thought complete.

1. Now the principle of *homogeneity* requires two things.

First it requires, that *the healing* of the deadly wound should be the same *in nature* as *the inflicting* of it: that is to say, if the one be *moral*, the other must be *moral;* if the one be *political*, the other must be *political.* But we have seen, that *the infliction* of the deadly wound was a *political* event. Hence it will follow, that *the healing* of it must be a *political* event also.

Next it requires, that they should be the same likewise *in kind:* that is to say, whatsoever political event be intended by the one, a *corresponding* political event must be intended by the other. But we have seen, that *the infliction of the deadly wound by a sword* denotes *the excision of the short-lived seventh head or Francic Emperorship by the sword of England.* Hence it will follow, that *the healing of it* can only denote the *corresponding* political event of THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRANCIC EMPERORSHIP.

2. Here I would have it most carefully noted; a point, which throughout my whole Treatise on the 1260 days I have been scrupulously anxious to insist upon: here I would have it more carefully noted and most diligently remembered, that, with some

Digitized by Google

some very few special exceptions, the prophetic muse stoops not in her lofty flight to notice the fates and fortunes of *mere individuals*. Perhaps indeed I may go yet further: perhaps I may say, that the prophetic muse, when she adopts the *symbolical* or *hieroglyphical* style, NEVER descends to the special and exclusive history of *a single man*. Her sublime theme is the destiny of *Empires* and *Kingdoms* and *Dynasties*, viewed as affecting or as connected with the Church of Christ. The history of *individuals* is no further set forth than as constituting a part of a grand whole. Hence, in detailing the varied fortunes of any particular Dynasty or Form of government, no indication is given, where one individual representative of such Dynasty or such Form vanishes from off the stage and where another succeeds him. The *collective* actions of all those successive individuals who constitute a single Dynasty or Form are viewed as the actions of *a single abstract being*, embodied as it were and rendered substantial by being sensibly exhibited under the symbol of a wild beast or a head or a horn.

To this general principle of hieroglyphical picture-history I know but a single exception: and even that exception is more apparent than real.

The short-lived seventh head of the Roman wild beast was represented from first to last by *a single individual;* whence the actions of *the individual* and the actions of *the head* are necessarily coincident throughout: but still, in absolute symbolical strictness, I should not say, that the seventh head sym-

 bolized

Digitized by Google

bolized *the Francic Emperor Napoleon*, but *the Francic Emperorship* of which he happened to be the sole administrator; just as I should not say, that the sixth head symbolized *the Roman Emperor Augustus* more than any other Roman Emperor, but *the Roman Emperorship* of which he happened to be only one out of many administrators.

On these solid grounds, I deem the future destiny of the individual, who now wears out his hours on a sea-girt rock in the midst of the Atlantic, quite beneath the particular regard of the prophetic muse. Whenever the Francic Emperorship is revived, it is less than of the least consequence, whether it be revived by Napoleon or by the son of Napoleon or by any other unprincipled military adventurer. *The naked fact* of its revival is, I fear, but too plainly foretold by the voice of inspiration: but *the time when*, and *the person by whom*, are alike uncertain.

V. In admitting however this conclusion, we cannot be too cautious: I shall therefore briefly sum up the steps, by which I am led to adopt it.

1. The principle, on which the argument is conducted, is this. I take for its basis certain positions, which are directly established on the authority of inspiration itself: and then I reason forward, with the prophecy in my hand, to the conclusions whither they conduct me.

(1.) It is allowed by all commentators, whether Popish or Protestant, that the seven-headed wild beast of the Apocalypse symbolizes the Roman Empire:

Digitized by Google

Empire: nor of this position can there be any doubt, if we attend only to the interpretation of the angel.

The woman, which rides the wild beast, is declared to be that great city, which in the time of St. John reigned over the kings of the earth *. But the city, thus described, can only be Rome. Therefore the subject beast must be the Roman Empire.

So again: the seven heads of the wild beast are declared primarily to denote the seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth †. But the seven mountains are a characteristic of Rome familiar to every one. Therefore the great city, represented by the woman who sits upon them, must plainly be Rome.

Thus firmly is established my first position, that *the seven-headed wild beast of the Apocalypse is the Roman Empire.*

(2.) Nor is my second position less firm.

The seven heads are declared by the angel to represent secondarily, but chiefly (so far as the historical exposition is concerned), seven kings or successive forms of government. Now we are specially told, that five out of the seven *had fallen*, and that the sixth *was in actual existence*, at the time when the prophecy was delivered ‡. Hence we have only to consult the page of history, that we may know, both what was the supreme form of Roman government when St. John wrote, and what five forms had preceded it. But, in this matter, history performs her

* Rev. xvii. 18. † Rev. xvii. 9. ‡ Rev. xvii. 10.

part

Digitized by Google

part with perfect fidelity: for she teaches us, both that the apostle flourished under the government of *the Roman Emperors*, and that exactly five other forms of government had preceded the Imperial.

Thus is my second position firmly established, that *the sixth head of the apocalyptic wild beast was the Roman Emperorship.*

2. Let it then only be allowed, that these two positions rest upon the firm basis of inspired exposition, even the exposition of the interpreting angel; and we shall soon perceive to what conclusions they will lead us, while under their guidance we float down the stream of prophecy.

(1.) For, if the sixth head be the Roman Emperorship, the individual administrator of which for the time being (in whatever part of the Empire may be his local habitation) bears the official title of *Emperor of the Romans:* then this sixth head, which had begun to exist in the time of St. John, did not cease to exist until the year 1806; when, like its five predecessors, it fell, by the formal abdication of an official title which no sovereign took up *after* this formal abdication.

(2.) But, as, in the economy of nature, an animal cannot live in a headless state; so neither can an Empire, which (agreeably to the common ideas of all nations) may be aptly symbolized by some beast which it is thought to resemble, continue to live in its distinctive condition of an Empire unless it have a presiding head or acknowledged paramount form of government.

Hence,

Digitized by Google

Hence, in the hieroglyphic of the Roman hydra, the seventh head must have sprung up, either before or synchronically with the fall of the sixth: that is to say, in the ordinary language of words, some *new* paramount form of government, *different* from the sixth form, must have arisen either before or synchronically with the regular abolition of the sixth form. For, unless this be granted, the Empire must have sunk into a state of allegorical death, because the sixth form will have fallen without being immediately succeeded by the seventh: and, although we are told that it *is* destined to sink into this precise state of allegorical death; yet the predetermined period of its death is placed by the prophet, not between *the fall of the sixth* and *the rise of the seventh form*, but between *the fall of the seventh* and the rise of *that eighth form which is to be one of the preceding seven.* Now the characteristic marks of the seventh head or form as collected partly from the hieroglyphic and partly from the angel's interpretation of it, are these: *futurity with respect to the time of the apostle; brevity of duration;* and *excision by the sword of foreign violence.* All these marks centre with a fatal accuracy in the Francic Emperorship; which additionally wears the badge of a Roman head, by having extended its sway over the greatest part of the Latin Empire, and by having obtained the sovereignty of Rome. But the Francic Emperorship, thus characterised as *a Roman head*, and thus bearing all the predicted marks of *the* SEVENTH *Roman head*, sprung up two years before the

Digitized by Google

the fall of the sixth head: and it sufficiently vindicated its claim to be admitted as a *new* and *distinct* head, by its bearing a *new* and *distinct* official title. Nor is this the whole: if we do *not* admit it as a new and distinct head, we shall make the hieroglyphical wild beast to have been *headless* ever since the fall of the sixth; for, if the Francic Emperorship be *not* the seventh, we shall vainly seek any other power which may be said to have sustained its predicted character since the year 1806.

Thus are we compelled, both by circumstantial marks, by chronological origin, and by symbolical necessity itself, to pronounce the Francic Emperorship that short-lived and sword-lopped seventh head of the Roman beast, which was *future* or *not yet come* in the days of St. John *.

(3.) The prophecy goes on to state, that, after the violent excision of the seventh head, the wild beast should die, or the Empire (*as* an Empire) sink into a state of non-existence: and the plain reason of this allegorical death is; that, since the wild beast had *no more* than seven heads, when *six* of those heads had fallen and when *the seventh* had been lopped by the sword, he would be *headless*, and therefore (agreeably to the economy of nature) he could not but be represented as *dead*.

Of such a symbolical prediction, now that we have learned from the interpreting angel the import of the symbol itself, we can have no difficulty in giving the

* Rev. xvii. 10.

literal

Digitized by Google

literal exposition. When the seventh form of Roman government, which we have identified with the Francic Emperorship, shall have been destroyed by the sword of foreign violence: no *new* paramount form shall spring up in its stead, because the forms are expressly limited to *seven;* but the headless Empire shall sink, *as* an Empire, into a state of political non-existence; no one sovereignty within its limits, either by official name or by actually predominating power, standing up as a head during this intermediate or interregnal period.

But such, at this very moment, is the precise condition of the Roman Empire: a condition, to which it was never heretofore subject even from its commencement under Romulus. Hence, we both have the evidence of *facts*, that we are now living in the intermediate period of the wild beast's death or of the Empire's political non-existence: and we likewise, from this identical evidence, may derive an additional argument to prove, that we have not been mistaken in identifying the Francic Emperorship with the short-lived seventh head. For the excision of the seventh head was to be followed by the headless or defunct condition of the hieroglyphical wild beast; that is to say, in verbal phraseology, by the headless or politically non-existent condition of the Empire. But this headless or politically non-existent condition of the Empire (a condition too strongly marked to be misunderstood, because hitherto unknown) has chronologically followed the excision of the Francic Emperorship by the sword. Therefore the

Digitized by Google

the Francic Emperorship must be the lopped seventh head *.

* I would specially request the cautious reader well to consider *the naked palmary* FACT, that *the Roman Empire has at present within its limits no paramount or precedental form of government which is acknowledged by the several Latin kingdoms as the chief of the whole Empire;* or, in other words (to exhibit the same idea through the medium of a pictured hieroglyphic), that *the Roman wild beast has at present no head.* The FACT itself is *indisputable*, whatever may be thought of my interpretation. Let the reader then weigh this remarkable FACT: and, when he has done so, let him try whether he can account for it in any other manner than that which has here been adopted.

According to the prophet, the Roman wild beast has seven successive heads: after the fall of the six first, and after the lopping away of the seventh by the sword, he of course becomes *headless;* and is therefore said to sink into a state of political death: but, in due time, he rises again from this state of death; and, under an eighth form of government which yet is declared to be the same as one of the preceding seven heads, he commences (his deadly wound having been healed) a new term of reëxistence.

Such is the prophecy: and now, in agreement with this prophecy, we have to account for AN EXTRAORDINARY FACT, not *a mere speculation* but AN ABSOLUTE FACT, which at the present moment we may behold with our own eyes. The FACT is this: *the Roman Empire, after subsisting under seven successive heads, has now* NO HEAD; *for the first time, after the lapse of full twenty five centuries, it is* HEADLESS. For this FACT we must account; or else we must at once give up the prophecy, as plainly apocryphal. The sole merit, which I claim for the interpretation here advanced, is this: *it at once explains, and is built upon,* AN UNDOUBTED MATTER OF FACT WHICH CAN NEITHER BE DISSEMBLED NOR CONTROVERTED; *the Roman Empire has now* NO HEAD.

(4.) From

Digitized by Google

(4.) From the point, to which we have now been brought in the course of an argument that rests wholly upon two positions firmly established by the interpreting angel, the very next step is to the awful conclusion which has already been drawn.

After the period of *the beast's death* or *the Empire's political non-existence*, St. John places a period of *the beast's revival* or *the Empire's political re-existence:* and, as the former period was introduced by the excision of the seventh head which left the wild beast in a headless state, so the latter period will be homogeneously introduced by the portentous rise of an eighth form of government, which however is to be the same as one of the preceding seven.

The *rise of this eighth form* in the verbal interpretation of the angel corresponds with the *healing of the sword-lopped head* in the pictured hieroglyphic: for, by *the healing*, the wild beast is restored to life; just as, *by the rise*, the Empire is restored to a state of political existence. But the sword-lopped head, thus destined to be healed, is the Francic Emperorship: and, according to the angel's interpretation, the *literal* mode, in which it will be healed, is by the rise of an eighth form of Roman government which however is to be the same as one of the preceding seven. The Francic Emperorship therefore will be healed by the rise of that eighth form, with which one of the preceding seven will identify itself. Now it plainly cannot be *thus* healed, unless that *particular* form out of the preceding seven, which is to be the same as the yet future eighth, shall be the

seventh

Digitized by Google

seventh form or the Francic Emperorship: because, if the yet future eighth were any *other* one out of the preceding seven (the Consulship for instance, or the Dictatorship), the *seventh* form or the Francic Emperorship plainly could not be healed by *its* rise.

Hence the grand conclusion from the whole is immediately brought out, THE PREDICTED YET FUTURE EIGHTH FORM OF ROMAN GOVERNMENT WILL BE THE REVIVED FRANCIC EMPERORSHIP.

VI. As for *the person who* will revive it, *that* is altogether uncertain: and, as for *the time when* it will be revived, *that* is likewise uncertain, but not in so high a degree as the other point. Here we have a sort of clue given us; and the evolution of that clue, whenever it shall take place, will serve as a leading and most important sign of the times.

1. The effusion of the sixth apocalyptic vial is unanimously acknowledged, by all our best commentators, to introduce the downfall of the Ottoman Empire: and the mode, in which they are brought to this supposition, is doubtless unobjectionable; if they have not wholly erred in identifying the rise and progress of that Empire with the second great woe. For grant only, what we can scarcely refuse to grant, when the general chronological order of the apocalyptic trumpets is considered; which bring us down in regular succession, through the calamities of the expiring Western Empire inflicted by the Goths and Huns, first to the woe of the Saracenic locusts, and then to that succeeding woe which introduces the supposed *Turkish* horsemen: grant only, I say, that the

Digitized by Google

the liberation of the four destroying angels *from the great river* EUPHRATES denotes the rise of the Ottoman Empire under its four original Sultanies; and it will necessarily follow, on the vital principle of *homogeneity*, that the exhaustion of the very same *great river* EUPHRATES through the parching influence of the sixth vial must denote the subversion of the Ottoman Empire *.

2. Now, either synchronically with the effusion of this vial, or shortly after its effusion, or (what certainly is not *impossible*, though apparently *improbable*) shortly before its effusion; the slain wild beast will be restored to life: for we find him, during the effusion of this identical sixth vial, again in full activity.

" I saw," says the inspired apostle, " three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of " the dragon, and out of the mouth of THE WILD " BEAST, and out of the mouth of the false " prophet †."

What we are precisely to understand by these frog-like spirits, must *at present* be wholly uncertain: the event alone can adequately explain their import. I do not cite the passage to interpret what cannot *now* be interpreted; but to prove, that during the effusion of the sixth vial *the slain wild beast will have been restored to life:* for, unless he *had* then been restored to life, he certainly could not again

* Compare Rev. ix. 13—19. with xvi. 12.
† Rev. xvi. 13.

have

Digitized by Google

have been in action; which yet he is described to be. But, if he will again be in the full enjoyment of life during the effusion of the sixth vial: then, since his restoration to life will be effected by the healing of the sword-lopped seventh head or by the revival of the Francic Emperorship; it is manifest, that, during the effusion of the sixth vial, the Francic Emperorship will again be in existence.

Yet, as I have already observed, we have no direct intimation, by virtue of which we may pronounce, whether it will be revived synchronically with the commencing effusion of the sixth vial, or shortly after its effusion has commenced, or shortly before its effusion will commence. We only know, that, *during* the effusion of the sixth vial, it will again *be* in existence.

3. Such being the case, it is obvious, that, in point of chronology, there is a very close connection between *the overthrow of the Ottoman power* and *the revival of the Francic Emperorship:* so that, when we behold *the overthrow of the former*, we may conclude that *the revival of the latter* is at hand; or conversely (for it is not absolutely certain which event will first occur), when we behold *the revival of the latter*, we may conclude that *the overthrow of the former* is not far distant.

4. With respect to the fate and fortunes of Turkey, nothing appears to me more remarkable or more indicative of a special divine interposition than the occurrences of the last twenty eight years.

While the ancient landmarks of civilized Europe have

Digitized by Google

have been strangely altered again and again, while larger states have been variously pared down or augmented, while smaller states have disappeared by division or arbitrary annexation, while the whole of one large kingdom has been swallowed up by a nefarious scheme of aggrandizing partition, while with marvellous alternation monarchies have been transmuted into republics and republics into monarchies; so that, throwing aside the familiar geography of our youth, we have been compelled successively to learn afresh system after system: while these more than Protèan changes have been taking place throughout even the stronger states of Christendom as well as throughout the weaker, the imbecile and ill-constructed and tottering frame of the Ottoman Empire still subsists with no material alteration as to its extent, just as it subsisted in the day of its strength and prosperity: notwithstanding, from its internal discord, from the determined hatred and disaffection of all its Christian subjects, and from the ill-disguised cupidity of its potent neighbours, we might well have anticipated its downfall. Yet has civilized Europe been metamorphosed from the one extremity to the other; while a barbarous despotism, which has long trampled on one of its fairest provinces, remains erect and unchanged though wild uproar has been raging around it for more than a quarter of a century.

Well may we say, that such an exemption from the fate of its neighbours is passing strange: yet even still *more* strange may we justly deem it, that the

Digitized by Google

the identical grand leading event, which has produced nearly all the mutations of Christian Europe, should at the same time have been the instrument through which Mohammedan Turkey has been preserved from mutation. Most wonderfully are second causes made unconsciously subservient to the purposes of the Most High. The destruction of the Ottoman Empire could not, according to prophecy, be accomplished; until *after* the third woe of anarchial Infidelity should have commenced; until *after* the scorching Sun of the seventh Roman political form should have arisen, and until *after* the throne of that same short-lived seventh form should have been subverted: for the destruction of the Ottoman Empire occurs under the *sixth* vial; the seventh Roman form of government successively rises and falls under the *fourth* and *fifth* vials; and *all the seven* vials jointly constitute the third woe, and therefore begin to be poured out *after* the commencing blast of that seventh trumpet by which the infidel woe itself is introduced. Hence the very circumstances, which were destined to *precede* the ruin of Turkey, worked also instrumentally to *prevent* its otherwise impending ruin.

5. We have been told, apparently from good authority, that the expulsion of the Turks from Europe and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire by the Austrian and Russian monarchs was actually *meditated*, and *might have been effected* had they come to a settled arrangement: but, through the breaking out of the French revolution in the year 1789,

Digitized by Google

1789, the project was rendered infeasible. The central volcano being once in action, event succeeded event with portentous rapidity: and, from that time to this, no fit opportunity has occurred of realizing the well-conceived scheme of aggrandisement.

Yet are we likewise told, on the word of a military man and on scientific military grounds which I pretend not to understand, that Austria and Russia might in a single campaign conquer the whole of European Turkey, and that nothing could prevent the accomplishment of this design save a strong political diversion on another quarter. England indeed holds at present what are said to be one of the keys of Greece: but, though the possession of that key by Austria or Russia might *facilitate* the subjugation of the neighbouring continent; yet it can scarcely be supposed, that *the mere occupancy of the Ionian islands* by England could *prevent* two great military land powers, which immediately border upon Turkey, from overrunning it at pleasure by a series of irruptions on the north-west and the north-east. If England cannot arrest the fate of the Ottomans by an exertion of her political influence in some *other* quarter, we may reasonably doubt, whether the bare circumstance of her holding the Ionian islands will enable her to save their empire from destruction.

The existence, in short, of Turkey seems at present to depend upon the joint will of Austria and Russia. If *they* should agree to annihilate her, it is hard to say, in the present headless condition of the

Digitized by Google

defunct Roman Empire, by what commanding interposition she can be saved. The arm of assistance, if at all stretched forth, must be stretched forth from *without*. From *within* we are taught to expect no effectual resistance to the sword of well-arranged and scientific invasion. The half-disciplined Turkish soldiery are ignorant of European tactics: and their fanatical Mohammedan prejudices render it impossible for any friendly Christian power to render them the same service that England has so lately rendered to Portugal. A Nazarene officer, like a shepherd among the old Egyptians, is an utter abomination in the eyes of an orthodox Mussulman.

All these particulars we learn, not from a closet military speculatist, but from an experienced general officer; who has *himself* surveyed the country with the eye of a soldier, who has *himself* been entrusted with a political mission in its western districts, and who *himself* directed the siege of St. Maura and the defence of Prevesa. Add to this, the officer in question is a Frenchman: whence he cannot be deemed very favourable either to Austria or to Russia *.

VII. The

* The remarks of General de Vaudoncourt furnish so striking and undesigned a comment on the predicted destinies of the Euphratèan horsemen, that I cannot refrain from here introducing them.

" Amidst the momentous revolutions, which have more or
" less rent the various states of Europe and broken down the
" political balance, one only has been able to preserve itself
" untouched and to remain a quiet spectator of the phases,
" which have humbled or raised the others, tending to exhaust
" them

Digitized by Google

VII. The Roman wild beast, at the time of his resurrection, is said to ascend out of *the abyss*, ill rendered

" them all. Such has been the fortune of the Ottoman Em-
" pire. This exposition alone would suffice for the praises of
" its government, if so happy an exception had or could have
" been the result of a wise and enlightened conduct in times
" of danger and difficulty. It is however no other than the
" consequence of the inertness of a colossal power, which
" has no other weight in the political balance than that of
" its physical mass, rendered foreign to the interests of its
" neighbours and to all combined and regular relations there-
" with, by national ignorance and a diversity of religion.
" Turkey has thus been able to keep aloof from the vortex and
" point of contact with the other contending nations. The
" only reasonable consequence to be drawn from this singular
" phenomenon is, that *the existence and result of the revolutions*
" *of Europe have served to prolong the duration of an enervated*
" *empire.*

" The ambition of Russia and Austria has been awakened
" by other aliments, which draw the attention of these govern-
" ments towards the west and south. Poland, Germany, and
" Italy, present too vast a field open to systematic conceptions
" and hostile encroachments, not to absorb for a long period
" of time the thoughts of the chiefs forming the continental
" league. The power, which in the west of Europe consti-
" tuted a counterpoise useful to the preservation of Turkey
" and still more so to stop the ambitious projects of Russia,
" has now become the object of a constraint extending from
" the east to the west of our continent: and this movement,
" contrary to that which might have been observed for more
" than twenty years past, removes still further from Turkey
" the idea of all continental danger.

" A few years previous to the French revolution, the situa-
" tion of the Ottoman Empire was quite different: and nothing

 " more

Digitized by Google

rendered by our translators *the bottomless pit* as if the Greek word *Abyssus* here denoted *hell.*

By

" more has frequently been wanting to its total destruction,
" than the union and concert of the two neighbouring powers.
" The decline of the French monarchy, the first symptoms of
" which had appeared in the disastrous war of 1756, had taken
" from the court of Versailles the greatest part of its influence
" in the affairs of the east of Europe. The partition of Poland
" was effected without any opposition being attempted on her
" side: nor did she require or obtain a compensation due to
" her for the maintenance of the general equilibrium. This
" barrier, which separated Austria from Russia and (as it
" were) divided the latter from the rest of the continent, being
" once overturned, these two empires found themselves in im-
" mediate contact. Obliged therefore to respect each other
" mutually, as if by one accord they directed their attention
" towards Turkey. Their first measures were not concerted:
" but they met in their political attempts, or sometimes guessed
" each other's views; in which case, policy obliged them to
" assume an apparent union, less to aid than to have a plausi-
" ble pretext of thwarting each other's ends. It was thus,
" that the united attack of two powerful and well-governed
" empires against a tottering and debilitated empire was seen
" to produce nothing but the capture of Oczakow and Bel-
" grade, soon afterwards followed by an extraordinary peace.
" Notwithstanding this rivality marked by an apparent har-
" mony, which at that time saved Turkey from the inevitable
" misfortune of falling a prey to the united efforts of her neigh-
" bours, she nevertheless had dangers to run, so much the
" greater, because the means by which they were excited were
" more hidden. Each of the two neighbouring sovereigns
" secretly laboured to dismount the springs of the interior
" government of the Ottoman Empire, to prepare its Christian
" subjects for a general insurrection, and to combine all the
" means of being able to execute alone by a sudden irruption

" what

Digitized by Google

By this term, thus disfigured and misapplied as it is in our common English version, we ought plainly to

" what the one neither could nor wished to do in concert with " his rival.

" We will take a rapid glance at the means, which each re- " spectively employed. *This examination is so much the more " useful; because the elements of which they then availed them- " selves still exist, while the tendency of feeling is the same and " by the same circumstances can again be called forth.*

" An inedited Memoir, presented to the French government " in May 1783, and attributed to M. Lafitte Clavè, furnishes " interesting details respecting the situation of Turkey at that " period, corresponding to that already pointed out as the " most dangerous to the Ottoman Empire. *The projects of the " Emperor and the Czarina*, says the Memoir, *are now no " longer one of those events which the most profound policy can " alone foresee. These two powers no longer dread the discovery " of their hopes: they do not cease to raise up new subjects of dis- " cussion: and their projects of usurpation are sustained by for- " midable preparations. The Turks themselves see the danger, by " which they are threatened: their terrors are as blind, as was " formerly their confidence in the day of success: and, under a " state of absolute depression, they know not the resources which " are still left them. The state of the capital would already have " been decided, if Russia possessed on the Black sea forces as " considerable as her interests required, and if she could boast of " subjects worthy of executing her views.*

" Peter the great, too much borne away by the wish of " raising his name in Europe, and too much influenced by the " praises lavished upon him, cast his eyes towards the east " when the time was gone by. Catherine II resumed the pro- " jects of Peter the great with activity: and the first step she " took towards the depression and future fall of the Ottoman " Empire was to stipulate the independence of the Crimea. " Released from all care on the side of the Crimea, and having

" secured

Digitized by Google

to understand not *hell* but *the sea.* The Seventy commonly use the word *Abyssus* to express the Hebrew

" secured the means of commanding in the Black sea, Russia " turned her attention to Moldavia and Wallachia. She " granted her protection to the Hospodars of these two pro- " vinces: and, in seeking to withdraw them from immediate " apprehension of the Porte, and in obtaining from them the " privilege of being exempt from deposition, she prepared the " seeds of the interior troubles, which were to furnish her with " the pretext of entering into these provinces and taking pos- " session of the principal places. The direct projects of Cathe- " rine II on Turkey were not confined to the European part. " She laboured in the construction of a navy at Kerson and " Astracan, and formed establishments on the Caspian Sea. " She favoured the ambitious views of Prince Heraclius, sove- " reign of Georgia, on Persia; and furnished him with the " means of arming and maintaining numerous bodies of troops. " Russia thus prepared for herself the means of attacking the " Ottoman Empire by its Asiatic possessions.

" The Emperor Joseph II was acting in west Turkey with an " activity equal to that of Catherine. He commenced by the " navigation of the Danube: when several large barges, under " Austrian colours, were seen at Kilia, and seemed shortly to " announce the appearance of the same flag in the Black sea, " since it would not have been possible to refuse him this pri- " vilege. Under the pretext of furnishing Hungary with cul- " tivators, he sought to induce Greeks to fix their residence " there. He not only favoured the emigration of whole fami- " lies, seeking to fly from the oppression of their masters: but " he also spread decoyers in the most distant provinces of his " dominions; who easily persuaded the unhappy, borne down " by a barbarous despotism, to fly from the yoke of tyranny " reducing them to despair. By these means Joseph kept up " a correspondence, and obtained partisans, in all parts of " Greece. A great number of Greeks flocked there from all " parts,

Digitized by Google

Hebrew *Thëum*, which signifies *the mighty abyss of oceanic waters:* and the classical writers employ the cognate

" parts, some of whom were admitted into the military ser-
" vice: and the Emperor employed them with success in pre-
" paring the materials for a general insurrection and to facili-
" tate an invasion, by obtaining for him a perfect knowledge of
" the means of defence possessed by the Turks. He kept up
" a large number of emissaries in Albania: a province, then as
" independent of Turkey as it is at present; and of which all
" the inhabitants, as well Mussulmans as Christians, have the
" most marked aversion for the Osmanlis. Greek officers in
" his service, accompanied by engineers, went over the coasts
" of Albania, the Morea, and the gulf of Lepanto. They
" made plans of the fortified places of Navarin, Modon, Patras,
" as well as of the castles situated in the straits. They, in like
" manner, examined the coast of Albania, the mouths of the
" Cattaro, and the gulf of Avlona. They sounded the gulf of
" Lepanto, and reconnoitred the isthmus of Corinth. In a
" word, nothing was omitted in order to obtain a perfect know-
" ledge of all positions and means of defence. The Austrian
" government at that time neglected nothing in order to obtain
" the influence of the Greeks; who in fact began to consider
" Joseph II as their future liberator and to feel towards him
" the same attachment which they had always entertained for
" Russia.

" Such is the sketch of the united dangers, which threatened
" the Ottoman Empire a few years previous to the French revo-
" lution. It is evident, that all the materials of its fall were
" prepared; that its enemies were sufficiently powerful to de-
" stroy it by main force; and that, to their ostensible means,
" they had moreover added secret springs, of which the inevit-
" able effect was to secure and accelerate the result of an
" open attack. The mutual jealousy of the two empires which
" then threatened Turkey, by preventing their union in one
" common effort, has sustained the latter power during the
" period

Digitized by Google

cognate words *Byssus* and *Bythus* to describe the multitudinous ocean. In this sense therefore I understand

" period of twenty years. Yet she owed her conservation to " no other than the divergency of their interests and to the " fear by which each was actuated of the too great aggrandise- " ment of the other. The delay however of the last term of " her political existence did not render her situation less preca- " rious nor less fraught with danger. Austria and Russia " might, in short, have understood each other on the subject " of a partition: or one of the two might have met with a fa- " vourable opportunity, enabling him to unite all his means " and to pursue his object with force and rapidity. In that " case, the union of the different elements of destruction, which " we have above explained, would have produced so rapid and " violent an effect, that a short time would have sufficed to " behold the edifice of the Ottoman power falling to pieces. " Thus might the dissolution of this empire have been consi- " dered as inevitable and extremely near, when the French re- " volution, bursting forth, called the attention of the great " European powers towards the west and allowed the Turks " time to respire.

" The fifteen first years of this revolution passed over, with- " out the Ottoman Empire appearing to enter into considera- " tion in the scale of the general affairs of Europe. The fall " of the Venetian republic had indeed united Dalmatia to " Austria and the Seven islands to France: but the latter " power was still too much agitated by its interior troubles, " and too much busied in Germany and Italy, to be enabled " to form this new acquisition into the basis of a reasonable " project with regard to Turkey. And, even though France " had then been in a state to direct her attention to the above " quarter, the political existence of the Ottoman Empire was " considered useful and even necessary to her interests: and " this new possession would only have served as a more effica- " cious mean of defending and securing it. The political situ- " ation

Digitized by Google

derstand the term as it here occurs: so that, when the angel teaches us to expect the rise of the revived wild

" ation of Europe occupied Austria too seriously in another " quarter, for her to be able to recur to the execution of the " plans of Joseph II: and, besides, the presence of French " troops in the Ionian islands placed obstacles in her way, much " more difficult to surmount than those which the republic of " Venice had been able to oppose to her. The successive " wars of 1800, 1805, and 1806, too seriously occupied Russia " and Austria, for either of them to think of Turkey. In short, " the peace of Presburg having united Dalmatia to the kingdom " of Italy, and that of Tilsit having attached the Ionian islands " to the domination of France, the Ottoman Empire found " itself between three powerful neighbours; one of whom ne- " vertheless presented himself as a friend and protector.

" The position of Turkey then became extremely precarious, " and perhaps more dangerous than it had ever before been. " After the peace of Tilsit, France, her new neighbour, ap- " peared to abandon her to the disposal of Russia: and Napo- " leon, whom the execution of his projects on Spain, and the " war which broke out against Austria, kept engaged in " another quarter, was under the necessity of offering to the " Emperor of Russia the means of gratifying his ambition, by " apparently giving up to him a conquest which had always " been the object of the wishes of his predecessors. I say " *apparently*, for it is not probable, that Napoleon could have " wished to leave Russia in peaceful possession of so important " a conquest, although she had been able to effect it. Not- " withstanding the war, which the Emperor Alexander had " sustained on the frontiers of Persia, had prevented him from " deriving all the advantages of his conquests in Georgia and " Imeritia in order to attack Turkey in Asia Minor and at the " same time on the Danube, he still possessed a sufficient force " to overturn the Ottoman throne. The partisans, which he " had in Moldavia and Wallachia, facilitated to him the ap-

" proaches

Digitized by Google

wild beast from *the abyss* under that eighth form of government which is a repetition of the short-lived seventh

" proaches of the Danube: and the revolt of the Servians " opened to him the heart of European Turkey, and served to " secure to him the passage of the above river. All, in a word, " appeared to presage the approaching entry of his armies into " Constantinople. But the multiplied faults of his generals " made the war linger without any decided advantage: and " Turkey thereby escaped from a destruction, which otherwise " appeared inevitable.

" After the peace of Tilsit, and more especially after that of " Altenburg, France found herself in immediate contact with " Turkey, from the confines of Croatia to the mouths of the " Caltaro, and from Chimera as far as the Morea. This con- " tact seemed adapted to change the nature of the preceding " relations of the two empires. It did not, in fact, appear " possible, that France could have preserved in her vicinity the " same interest for the preservation of the Ottoman Empire " which she had when situated at a more remote distance. " The successive aggrandisement of Napoleon's empire, and " the ever increasing pressure which he exercised from west to " east and which even his fatal war in Spain had never sus- " pended, all seemed to announce, that a new change in the " political system of Europe was about to produce the dismem- " berment of the Turkish Empire. Nevertheless, the conduct " of Napoleon towards the Porte was uniformly dubious: whe- " ther it was, that he had not yet fixed his determination on " that point, or that the time had not yet arrived for putting " his plans into execution.

" It results from what we have hitherto laid down, that the " immediate danger, under which Turkey was with regard to " Russia and Austria towards the end of the last century, " ceased at the period of the French revolution: *but, when the* " *political system of Europe shall at length have been consolidated* " *and tranquillity reëstablished in the west, this same danger may* " *again*

Digitized by Google

seventh form; he expresses, only in somewhat varied phraseology, the same idea, as when St. John tells us

" *again recur. However distant this period may be from us, it* " *is not the less to be foreseen: and, if the Ionian islands had* " *fallen into the hands of one of the two latter powers, this cir-* " *cumstance alone would have hastened its approach.* It has " always been the interest of France, and at present it is more " particularly so of England, that the commerce of the Levant " should not fall into other hands than those of subjects of the " Ottoman Empire; and the integrity of this Empire is one of " the inseparable conditions. In the actual state of things, the " aggrandisements of Russia and Austria render a protecting " power infinitely more necessary to the Ottoman Porte. " France enfeebled can no longer serve as a counterpoise in " her favour on the continent, where her government has lost " all its influence. There is no one then but England, who, " by the preponderance of her naval forces in the Mediterra- " nean, can preserve and guarantee Turkey from harm: and " the occupation of the Ionian islands gives her still stronger " means of attaining this object. In the first place, their geo- " graphical situation, embracing the southern parts of Greece, " and placing them in contact with all the provinces which " (properly speaking) may be called Greek, gives to the power, " under whose protection these islands may remain, an influ- " ence in these same provinces sufficient to stop the effects of " all the intrigues and plans which the other continental powers " might attempt there. Again: the permanent presence of " the British forces on a point so nearly approached to the " Ottoman Empire, by rendering the bonds which already " unite these two powers still stronger and more direct, gives " a much greater degree of weight to the mediation of the first, " and materially adds to the security of the second."

After giving a scientific military account of the Turcomannic means of defence in case of invasion, and after shewing their complete inadequacy, General de Vandoncourt proceeds as follows.

" We

us that he beheld the wild beast rise out of *the sea* into his first term of living existence.

The

" We took an early opportunity of delineating the projects " of Russia and Austria on European Turkey. We asserted, " that the French revolution of 1789 and afterwards of 1814, " by calling towards the west the whole attention of the great " European powers, had procured to Turkey a repose of twenty " five years; but that this factitious repose could only last, till " the moment her neighbours were in a state to resume and " follow up the execution of their original plans. Few words " will suffice in order to prove this assertion: and these proofs " will be drawn from no other source than the geographical " position of Russia and Austria.

" Neither of these two powers can be reckoned in the num- " ber of the maritimo-commercial nations of Europe. Never- " theless, no one is ignorant, that, for nearly a century past, " they have been busied in the formation of a navy. Who " therefore can entertain a doubt of their now seizing with avi- " dity every mean of attaining their object? It is further evi- " dent, that they cannot find what they seek, unless it is at the " expence of Turkey.

" Russia is not and cannot be satisfied with the expensive and " useless establishment, which she has undertaken at Odessa. " In order to be the absolute mistress of the navigation of the " Black sea, it would be necessary for her to have the port of " Varna. But, to possess Varna, it is requisite for her to have " Moldavia, Wallachia, and Bulgaria: and, for the possession " of the Black sea to afford adequate advantages, it is besides " necessary to hold the outlets, without which the former is " nothing more than an interior lake. Hence it is, that, since " the time of Catherine II, Russia has always kept her eyes on " Constantinople: and of this capital she would already have " been mistress, but for the rivality of Austria, whose govern- " ment has hitherto been unprepared to consent to such an " aggrandisement.

" Austria,

Digitized by Google

The sole difference between the two parallel passages is, that the former is *retrospective*, and the latter

" Austria, on her side, who, since the reign of Maria Theresa, had sought to form establishments on the Adriatic sea, was already far advanced in her projects, when the peace of Campo Formio placed her in possession of the ports of Zara and Caltaro. She afterwards lost, but has now by treaty regained, them; and thus becomes nearly mistress of the navigation of the Adriatic sea. Nevertheless, the possession of Dalmatia is not sufficient to satisfy her. This poor and arid province is no other than passive. It is nothing more than a narrow strip of sea-coast detached from Erzegovina, Bosnia, and Servia, with which it once formed a single whole under the name of *the empire of Servia*. As it is, Dalmatia has no other means of subsisting than by foreign succour. Nothing therefore is more natural than to desire to unite it afresh to the provinces, from which it has been detached, and which would furnish it with those resources of which it stands in need. This consequence leads to the idea of uniting to the Austrian Empire all the country situated between the river Timok, mount Scordus, the Moraca, and the sea, by drawing a line from the point where Wallachia touches on Hungary as far as Skutari.

" It is in conformity to these views, that those plans of campaign will always be directed, which Russia and Austria may undertake against Turkey in any war in which these powers may be engaged: since, whatever is the motive that may lead them to declare war against the Ottoman Empire, a secret object will always convert it into a war of invasion, of which the phases will display themselves as the disasters of the Ottoman army increase. Russia, since the last peace, having free access into Moldavia and Wallachia, will extend herself rapidly in these provinces as soon as hostilities have commenced: and it is from thence, that her armies, well commanded, may proceed towards the centre of the Ottoman Empire,

Digitized by Google

latter *prospective*. Since St. John saw the wild beast rise up out of *the sea* perfect in all his members,

" Empire, and by the capture of Varna consolidate the con-
" quest of Bulgaria.

" Austria, embracing Bosnia on three sides, does not possess
" less facilities for the invasion of this province and for cutting
" it off from the remainder of the Ottoman Empire. She may
" take the field with three armies; which, by directing their
" march on one central point, would depart from the two ex-
" tremities as well as the middle of an extended circumference.
" On the left, the Austrian army would enter into Servia, where
" it would find the same facilities as the Russians: and the in-
" surrection of this province would place it in possession of all
" the country bordering on the rivers Nissava and Morava, and
" consequently of the openings to Vidin, Sophia, Vrana, and
" Usklub. From Croatia a second army would penetrate di-
" rectly into Bosnia, and might be exclusively entrusted with
" the occupation of this province. From Dalmatia and Ragusa
" a third army might proceed without great difficulty to Bosna-
" Seraj; and from thence occupy the roads to Jacova, Pris-
" renda, and Pristina; and thereby cut off all communication
" between Bosnia, Macedonia, and Albania.

" Many political circumstances will at all times aid Russia
" and Austria in the projects of invasion, which these two
" powers may wish to undertake against the Ottoman Empire;
" and insure their success, whenever they shall be inclined to
" understand each other and act in concert. The first of all,
" beyond contradiction, is the hatred, which the Greeks enter-
" tain towards the Turks. This inveterate and ever-increasing
" odium is so much the more founded; because the avarice,
" tyranny, and rapacity, of the Osmanlis close up every avenue,
" which the natural industry of the Greeks might open to them-
" selves. The deep and general hatred of the Greeks towards
" the Turks will always lead them enthusiastically to embrace
" the cause of any power, which they may conceive able and
" willing

Digitized by Google

bers, bearing as well the five heads which had *fallen* in the day of the vision as the head which *then existed*

" willing to deliver them from the degrading yoke under which " they are bent. It is also beyond doubt, that religion greatly " contributes to this aversion: but it is rather the general ha- " tred of Christianism against Mohammedism, than the parti- " cular spirit of sect. It is moreover possible, that, in Molda- " via, Wallachia, and Bulgaria, the vicinity of the Russians still " adds to the motive of a conformity of worship, and may also " cause the inhabitants of these provinces to incline to Russia " rather than towards any other nation of a different sect al- " though Christian. But, in Bosnia, Erzegovina, upper Albania, " and even Servia, the frequent relations of the inhabitants with " people of the Latin rite, the existence of this religion among " them which is even prevailing, and the number of persons " professing it in upper Albania; these united causes, together " with the intrigues of Austria and even of France, have extin- " guished all particular spirit of sect.

" Against all the dangers which threaten them, the Turks " have scarcely any real means of defence. Deprived of all " kinds of information, energy, as well as moral courage, no " other than foreign aid is capable of saving them from the " perils which threaten them on the part of their neighbours. " Their constitution, as well civil as religious, and also the igno- " rance and fanaticism of the people subjected to Islamism, " preclude the possibility of any power, through the means of " mediation, affording them those direct succours which might " be given to a state differently constituted. It is impossible " to think of introducing an auxiliary army into Turkey, even " if such an army were the only resource capable of effecting " the safety of the Ottoman Empire. The Osmanlis will never " allow infidels to enter into their ranks or to fight by their side. " In vain, at different periods, has it been attempted to over- " come their prejudices in this particular: never has any satis- " factory result followed these various endeavours. They are " directly

Digitized by Google

existed and the head which was *then future;* he must *retrospectively* have beheld the same rise of the tem-

" directly opposed to the precepts of the Koran: and it is ne-
" cessary for the Turks to cease to be Mussulmans, before they
" can adopt the usages of Europe.

" It is only in the political balance of Europe, that are to be
" found the means of preserving the Ottoman Empire from the
" infallible ruin, with which it is menaced by the projects and
" interests of its neighbours. The occupation of the Ionian
" islands by England may still afford to this tottering Empire a
" considerable support, and, in case of need, may furnish it
" with maritime succour. The credit of the British government
" at Vienna and St. Petersburgh may, and ought also, to pro-
" duce an influence favourable to the existence of the Turks in
" Europe. It is through this influence alone, that their eventual
" safety can be effected: for it is *only on the continent*, that
" they are to be well defended; and it is solely by calling the
" attention of Russia and Austria to other objects that it is pos-
" sible to prevent an invasion, which would afterwards be too
" rapid to be stopped, if it had not previously been foreseen and
" obstructed.

" The interior of Turkey in Europe presents no adequate
" point of military defence. The few fortresses to be met with
" in the central provinces are half dismantled: no one defile is
" intrenched: no works have been prepared to defend those
" grand avenues of access, which we have already delineated.
" Wherefore, two battles lost within the line of frontiers would
" be sufficient to disperse the Turkish army; which, if only fol-
" lowed up in a close manner, would be unable to find a position
" on which to rally. The weakness and incapacity of the Divan,
" having served to encourage the insubordination of the great-
" est part of the pachas and to secure their independence, has
" prepared another not less dangerous mean of destruction.
" Scarcely would the enemy be arrived at the centre of the
" Empire, when the pachas of the western provinces would
" hasten

Digitized by Google

ten-horned monster from *the sea*, that Daniel in *his* time had beheld *prospectively*. But, when the angel foretells

" hasten to proceed towards their respective governments to " watch over their own particular interests. It is then beyond " doubt, that all, more especially the Vizir of Joannina (the " celebrated Ali Pacha), would seek, by fixing each his price, " to save for themselves some remnant of their power from the " general destruction they beheld around them.

" As long as Italy has remained at least neutral in the affairs " of Turkey, the intervention of France has sufficed to remove " and even to dissipate the storm by which the Ottoman Empire " was threatened. If Italy were independent of every foreign " power and formed into a state capable of being placed in the " first rank in the balance of Europe, her influence would then " be still greater; since she is near at hand, and too essentially " threatens the centre of the Austrian power for the latter to " make use of her forces against the dominions of Turkey. " But, now that Italy is at the disposal of Austria, no conti- " nental guarantee exists in favour of the Ottoman Empire but " that of the general interest of Europe. It therefore devolves " on England to watch, that this interest is not affected by a " fresh overthrow of the political balance. Her commerce in " the Mediterranean, and the permanency of her troops in the " Ionian islands, depend on this precaution: in like manner as, " on the interest of this trade and the possession of the Ionian " islands, in a great measure depends the salvation of the Otto- " man Empire.

" The Romans, in their war against Philip, holding Corfu at " their disposal, attacked Macedon through the Epirus: and, " from the time they were masters of the latter province and " of the chain of mountains which separate Thessaly from the " above kingdom, the whole of Greece was lost to the Mace- " donian kings. This blow struck at their power; which from " that moment did no other than decline, and thirty years after- " wards was dashed to the ground. In like manner, at the

Digitized by Google

foretells the rise of the same wild beast in his revived state from *the great abyss;* he describes him, as rising only under his *then future* eighth political form, *subsequent* to the fall of all the preceding seven forms: consequently, the *second* rise of the wild beast is to be understood *prospectively* with reference to the day of the vision, while his *first* rise is to be understood *retrospectively* still with reference to the same chronological epoch.

The *place* however, whence he is symbolically ex-

" present time, the power, which may be mistress of Italy and " also possessed of Dalmatia and the Ionian islands (for Dal- " matia and the Ionian islands are the real keys of the Ottoman " dominions, and Italy is beyond doubt the most advantageous " basis of operations against this Empire), might, by following " the same plan, cause the Ottomans to lose one half of their " empire in Europe in a single campaign, and threaten the rest " with an early and inevitable fall. The union of these two " keys in a single hand must infallibly produce the result, " which we have just delineated: if they are divided between " two different hands, the second alone is capable of effecting " the safety of the Crescent. The year 1811 was to the Otto- " man Empire the nearest and most probable term of its fall; " the whole of the elements, which might have accelerated it, " were then in one powerful hand. *The decree of fate warded* " *off the storm:* and it cannot be again formed under so " threatening an aspect, as long as the power, to whom the " protection of the Ionian islands is confided, equally wishes to " shield the Ottoman Empire; or at least to promote the indi- " visibility of that part of the European continent over which " the Crescent holds sway, should it be resolved that this shall " no longer be under the Mussulman dominion." Memoirs on the Ionian Islands by General de Vaudoncourt. chap. i and xiii.

hinted

hibited as rising, is alike in each case *the troubled ocean* or *the mighty aqueous abyss:* the inculcated *idea* must therefore, in each case, be also substantially the same. Now *the sea* denotes *a nation* or *nations collectively in a violent state of political agitation,* whatever the precise nature of that agitation may be. Hence, as all the four wild beasts seen by Daniel, the last of which was similarly seen by St. John, rise up from *the great sea,* while the four winds of heaven tumultuously strive upon it: so the now defunct fourth wild beast, or the Roman Empire, will at some future period again rise up, instinct with new life by the healing of his Francico-Imperial head, from the bosom of *the vast abyss.*

Both *the place* then, and *the idea,* of emergence being alike the same in each case: we must obviously conclude, that the revived beast will come up from the abyss, on which he now lies floating many a rood, during a time, when those *many waters,* which sustain the great harlot and which are declared by the hierophantic angel to be *peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues,* will be more or less in a state of agitation *.

VIII. Since we now appear to have established the point, with such moral evidence as is capable of being employed in a matter of this description, that *the yet future eighth form of Roman government* will be *the Francic Emperorship revived by the*

* Compare Dan. vii. 2, 3. with Rev. xiii. 1. xvii. 8, 1, 17. and see Parkhurst's Greek Lexic. vox Αβυσσος.

Digitized by Google

healing of that deadly wound which had been inflicted upon it by the sword: it is manifest, that we are once more brought to the same arrangement of all the latter part of the Apocalypse, as that which I have heretofore adopted. For, having concluded *rightly* though through a different and erroneous train of reasoning that the Francic Emperorship would prove to be the last form of Roman government, I of course ascribed to it, as I *still* do, all those yet future exploits, which are attributed to the wild beast subsequent to the effusion of the fifth vial upon his throne.

Hence, on the ground that the Francic Emperorship must be identified with the eighth Roman form (which form however I *now* believe to be altogether *future*), I suppose: that it will organize that mighty confederacy of vassal Latin kings, the formation of which is placed, together with the subversion of the Ottoman Empire, under the sixth vial; and that it will perish at their head under the seventh vial (agreeably to the angel's declaration that *it goeth into perdition*) in that awful encounter with the Word of God, which is described so energetically by the inspired apostle *.

Hence also I suppose, that, by some or other politico-ecclesiastical concordat, the revived Francic Emperorship will be in close alliance with the Romish false prophet: for the three frogs, whatever they may mean, come forth from the mouths of the dragon

* Rev. xvi. 12—16. xix. 11—21.

and

Digitized by Google

and the beast and the false prophet; and the same pretended universal seer is destroyed with his secular colleague the wild beast in the same great fight of Armageddon *.

Hence likewise I suppose, just as I formerly supposed, that the same Francic Emperorship, identified no less with Daniel's Infidel King than with the eighth political form of the Roman wild beast, will perform all those actions which the Infidel King is said to perform at *the time of the end* or (as I understand the phrase to mean) at *the close of the* 1260 *prophetic days.* He will fight with the vainly-opposing kings of the South and the North: he will enter into the countries, and overflow, and pass over; he will enter also into the glorious land; and many countries shall be overthrown: he will stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But tidings out of the east and out of the north will trouble him: therefore will he go forth with great fury to destroy and religiously to exterminate many. And he will plant the tabernacles of his pavilions between the seas in the glorious holy mountain: yet, in the fatal day of Armageddon, he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. At that same time will Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth up for the now scattered children of Daniel's people: and there will be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time. And, at that time, shall Daniel's people be delivered; also

* Rev. xvi. 13, xix. 20.

EVERY

Digitized by Google

EVERY ONE THAT SHALL BE FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK *.

May the name of the great protestant and maritime nation of Britain, now engaged in assiduously sending bibles and missionaries to every quarter of the globe, be found written in that same mystic volume of God †!

* Dan. xi. 40—45. xii. 1.

† Mr. Cuninghame, in the first edition of his Dissertation on the Apocalypse, threw out the following brief conjecture respecting the seventh and eighth forms of Roman government.

"The sixth head continued till the subversion of the German "Empire and the extinction of all the imperial titles of Rome, "in the year 1806. Since that period, Napoleon Buonaparte, "Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and Protector of the "Confederation of the Rhine, has been the acknowledged head "of the beast: and, if I mistake not, this is the seventh king "or form of government, which was not come when the apostle "saw the beast with the harlot seated on his back. This is a "new form of government, quite distinct from the sixth head, "inasmuch as at the present time the imperial titles of Rome "are not in existence; they are extinct. The eighth king, or "form of government, is, I apprehend, still future. Things "seem to be preparing for this last form of the Roman Empire. "The present head of the beast evidently aims at the re-establishment of the Roman Empire in all its pristine vigour and "splendour; and perhaps may assume, at no distant period, "the now extinct title and pretensions of *Cesar Augustus* "*emperor of the Romans*, and thus unequivocally identify himself with the Roman Empire. This seems the most probable "explanation of the expression, *the beast, that was and is not,* "*even he is the eighth, and is of the seven.* He is not really a "new form of the beast, but one of the preceding seven revived; namely, the sixth." Dissert. on the Apoc. p. 356—358.

Respecting

Digitized by Google

Respecting the characteristic marks of the seventh head, Mr. Cuninghame is wholly silent; nor does he enter into the subject beyond the limits of the preceding quotation. I likewise conceive him to be mistaken in his supposition, that the head slain by the sword was the sixth head; for it was most assuredly the seventh: and, on this principle, I of course deem him to be also mistaken in his conjecture, that the eighth form will be a revival of the sixth. The conjecture no doubt follows from *his* view of the matter; because, assuredly, the *same* head, that was slain by the sword, must likewise revive: but, if the slain head be the seventh and not the sixth; then the deadly wound must be healed by the revival, not of the sixth, but of the seventh.

Happy however in the main, as was the brief hint thrown out by Mr. Cuninghame in his first edition; instead of correcting the errors with which it stands associated, and instead of prosecuting it as it ought to have been prosecuted, he rejects, in his second edition, the whole idea as decidedly and intrinsically erroneous: that is to say, he discards a peculiarly felicitous conjecture at the very time when events have demonstrated it to be true, so far at least as its grand outlines are concerned. The consequence is, that this ingenious and able expositor now sets forth, as his ὑστεραι φροντιδες, a tissue of contradictions so glaring, that I can only wonder how his general acuteness could have suffered them to pass from him without dissatisfaction His *present* theory is as follows.

The sixth head is the Pagan Roman Emperorship from Augustus to Constantine: the *short-lived* seventh head is the Christian Roman Emperorship from Constantine to Augustulus, the last of the western Cesars. This seventh head was slain by the sword, when the imperial dignity in the West was extinguished by the Heruli and Turingi: and it was healed by the restoration of the Western Empire in the person of Charlemagne. But this revived seventh head ceased to exist; when, in the year 1806, the Christian Roman Emperorship of Charlemagne was abolished. What then is that eighth form of government, which is to follow the seventh, and which is to identify itself

Digitized by Google

itself with some one of the preceding seven heads? It is, if we may credit Mr. Cuninghame, "a sort of complex sovereignty, "consisting, not of the ten regal horns alone, nor of the em- "perors alone; but of the two taken together, forming one "federal system, and united by a community of religion and "civil polity." The existence of this eighth form we have witnessed, ever since the fall of the revived seventh head in the year 1806. When, in that year, the sovereign of Austria was compelled "formally to resign the imperial titles of Rome; "then, for the first time since its origin in the person of "Augustus, the title of *Emperor of the Romans* became "totally extinct. From that date till the abdication of Napo- "leon Buonaparte in the year 1814, the imperial power of the "West, though without its titles, appears substantially to have "rested in his person. Since his fall to the present moment, "the ten regal horns have reigned WITHOUT ANY SUPERIOR "CO-EXISTING POWER WHICH CAN BE VIEWED AS REPRE- "SENTING THE IMPERIAL DIGNITY." Dissert. p. 163—171. 2d Edit.

I would particularly direct the attention to the winding up of this theory. Mr. Cuninghame clearly perceives, as every man *must* perceive, that the Roman Empire now exists WITHOUT any superior dominant government, which may fitly be deemed its HEAD: in other words, it is now, for the first time, since the days of Romulus, in a HEADLESS condition. Yet does the learned expositor pitch upon this identical period of HEADLESSNESS, as the period appropriated for the eighth form of Roman government under which it is to go into perdition. I readily allow, that this *headless state of the Empire* might have been meant by the Spirit of prophecy as *the eighth form of Roman government*, if that Spirit had declared that it should be PALPABLY DIFFERENT from all the preceding seven forms: but the accurate language of the apostle pronounces, that *the very reverse* should be the case. When the eighth form comes, it is not to be DIFFERENT AND DISTINCT from its seven predecessors; but it is to be THE SAME as some one of them. "The eighth," says the interpreting angel, "is OF the seven:"

so

so that, although the beast *chronologically* subsists under eight successive forms; he *really* subsists only under seven, the eighth being no other than one of its seven predecessors revived. Such is the view, which Mr. Cuninghame himself most justly took of the apostolic language in his first edition: and there cannot be a doubt of its accuracy; for, on any other interpretation, the beast is made to have *eight distinct heads*, whereas he is positively declared to have no more than *seven*. Omitting then minor objections to Mr. Cuninghame's present theory, I would ask him, with which of the seven heads of the Roman Empire does he identify his supposed eighth form of Roman government? This eighth form, he tells us, is "a sort of com-"plex sovereignty, consisting, not of the ten regal horns alone, "nor of the emperors alone; but of the two taken together, "forming one federal system:" and the seven heads he maintains to be, Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, Military Tribunes, Pagan Emperors, and Christian Emperors. With which of these enumerated seven heads does he identify his imagined eighth form? At present, as he truly remarks, "the ten regal "horns are reigning *without any superior co-existing power* "*which can be viewed as representing the imperial dignity.*" Yet is this confessedly HEADLESS state of the Empire pronounced to be that eighth form of government, which should be one of the seven HEADS revived.

It may be proper to remark, that these Dissertations had been written and sent to the press without my having any recollection of Mr. Cunninghame's theory relative to the seventh and eighth forms of Roman government, as expressed in the first edition of his work. A considerable time had elapsed since I read his Treatise, and my attention had been subsequently directed to entirely different studies. The recent publication of his second edition led me to discover, that he had once advocated an interpretation which he has since injudiciously rejected.

DISSER-

Digitized by Google

DISSERTATION II.

Respecting the death of the apocalyptic witnesses.

MANY eminent men, among whom was the late Bp. Horsley *, have supposed, that the death of the two apocalyptic witnesses is *still future.* To this idea they seem chiefly to have been led, from thinking, that no past event has occurred of a sufficiently explicit or important nature to come up to the terms of the prophecy.

It may not be inexpedient in this place to give a view of the arguments on each side of the question, and then leave it to be finally determined by historical futurity. I am the more inclined to enter a little on the subject; because my last discussion has brought out an argument in favour of the opinion, that the predicted death of the witnesses has *not yet* been accomplished: and, though I am by no means convinced that I have erred in my exposition of the prophecy respecting them and therefore do not at present see any reason to retract it; yet I hold it

* As he informed me in a private conversation which I had with him on this subject.

dishonest

dishonest in a commentator ever to suppress *knowingly* an argument, which may seem to make against himself.

I. The chief arguments in favour of the opinion, that the death of the two witnesses is *yet future*, may, I believe, be given in the following manner.

1. No event has hitherto occurred of sufficient magnitude and importance and apparent definiteness, to correspond with the terms of the prophecy; which seem to announce a *general* death of the mystic witnesses in all parts of the world. For no such *general* death has ever taken place: whether we understand this *death* in a *moral* or in a *political* sense; whether it denotes *the silencing of the witnesses* or *their utter excision as a collective body corporate.* Therefore it is hard to believe, that the prophecy has ever yet been accomplished.

To this I reply, that the terms of the prophecy, instead of warranting any expectation of a *general* death of the witnesses, limit the whole scene of it to a *particular* province of the Roman Empire. Whence, unless we suppose that *all* faithful witnesses against the corruptions of Popery will hereafter be wonderfully collected into a *single* Roman province and there either silenced or destroyed, we must plainly give up this opinion of a *general* death. The bodies of the slain witnesses lie only, as we are carefully told, in *the forum* or *broad place* of the allegorical city*. Consequently, their death must have

* Rev. xi. 8.

been

Digitized by Google

been accomplished in this same *forum* or *broad place* only: just as, in the case of a disturbance within a large and populous literal city, the soldiery may kill their opponents in one particular street of it, while all the remaining streets are perfectly quiet. But, if they be slain only in *the forum* or *broad place* of the allegorical city or Roman Empire, then their death must be a *particular* and not a *general* event: unless we suppose (as I before observed), that, by some most extraordinary fatality, *all* the faithful servants of Christ from Europe and Asia and Africa and America will hereafter be collected into the chief province of the Roman Empire, and there suffer the predicted death whether it be *moral* or *political*. Hence it will follow, unless indeed we venture to hazard this last improbable speculation, that the death of the witnesses, let it be a *past* or let it be a *future* event, is a *particular* and not a *general* occurrence. Such being the case, it is obvious, that the main force of the objection to an interpretation like my own is completely weakened: for, if the death of the witnesses be only a *partial* occurrence limited to that chief province of the Roman Empire which in the prophecy is denominated *the forum* or *broad place*, we cannot reasonably expect its accomplishment, supposing it to be still future, in any much greater or more prominent event than that to which I have applied it, namely the *moral* death of the Germanic protestants by their reception of *the Interim*.

Thus it appears, that the present objection is, by its

Digitized by Google

its very nature, *incapable* of proving me mistaken. The event indeed may possibly shew, that I have been in an error: but the objection before us, when the terms of the prophecy are duly weighed, is an ineffective thunderbolt.

2. Another argument is, that the death of the witnesses is to occur when they shall have finished their testimony. But their testimony will not be finished until the end of the 1260 days: and the 1260 days cannot have expired, because their expiration has never yet been determined by the characteristic event of the death in question. Therefore we have no sufficient evidence, that the death of the witnesses has already taken place.

The whole of this argument is founded upon the assumed meaning of a word; which in the original, by the very genius of the Greek language, is necessarily ambiguous. I need scarcely remark, that the aorist, which our translators have rendered *they shall have finished*, may just as properly be rendered *they shall be a finishing* or *they shall draw near to the finishing*. Hence the death of the witnesses is no *decided* characteristic event, by which the end of the 1260 days *must* be marked. So far as *the mere abstract purport* of the Greek original is concerned, it either *may* or *may not* be a characteristic event of this description: because it may take place, either *shortly before* the expiration of the 1260 days, or *at the precise point* of their expiration. No proof therefore, that the death is either *past* or *future*, can be deduced from the phraseology of the prediction.

By

Digitized by Google

By that *phraseology* the question is left wholly undecided.

3. The strongest argument in my own judgment is that, which I have hinted at as having sprung out of the discussion in which I was last engaged.

When the Rôman wild beast enters upon his *first* term of political existence, namely that which he enjoys under his seven successive heads, he is said both by Daniel and St. John to rise up *out of the sea:* but, when he enters upon his *second* term of political existence subsequent to his intermediate state of death, namely that which he enjoys under his eighth form of government, he is then said by St. John to ascend *out of the abyss.* Now, though I am fully satisfied that *the sea* and *the abyss* mean the same thing, yet it may be fairly urged, that this peculiar variation of phraseology would not have been used by the apostle, unless he had some good reason for it: it may be fairly urged, that he would not have used it wantonly or carelessly, but that he employed it to constitute one of those connecting links by which the different corresponding parts of the Apocalypse are so curiously and artfully chained together.

If we suppose then, that the varied term *abyss* is *one* of these connecting links; we must inquire, what other part of the prophecy it chains to that part which foretells the still future rise of the revived wild beast from the abyss.

No other part however can be found, except that which treats of the death of the witnesses: and here we find as direct a *verbal* connection as possible. In

Digitized by Google

In the prediction relative to the witnesses, we read; "The beast, that ASCENDETH OUT OF THE ABYSS, "shall war against them, and shall overcome them, "and shall kill them*:" in the prediction relative to the yet future revival of the wild beast, we read; "The beast, that thou sawest, was, and is not, and "SHALL ASCEND OUT OF THE ABYSS†."

Now, by putting these two passages together, and by esteeming the word ABYSS the connecting link between them, we are naturally led to conclude; that St. John, when foretelling the revival of the wild beast, purposely used the word ABYSS rather than the synonymous word SEA, in order that he might thus be able to distinguish, between the actions which the beast should perform during his *first* term of political existence, and the actions which the same beast when revived should perform during his *second* term of political existence.

But, if this conclusion be just, then the death of the witnesses must be a *future* event: because it is ascribed to the beast THAT ASCENDETH OUT OF THE ABYSS, in apparent contradistinction to the same beast in his *first* state of existence when spoken of as RISING UP OUT OF THE SEA. In other words, it is *not* ascribed to the Roman beast during his *first* state of existence which is now PAST, but to the same

* Gr. Το θηριον το ΑΝΑΒΑΙΝΟΝ ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΑΒΥΣΣΟΥ ποιησει πολεμον μετ' αυτων, και νικησει αυτους, και αποκτενει αυτους. Rev. xi. 7.

† Θηριον, ὁ ειδες, ην, και ουκ εστι, και μελλει ΑΝΑΒΑΙΝΕΙΝ ΕΚ ΤΗΣ ΑΒΥΣΣΟΥ. Rev. xvii. 8.

Roman

Digitized by Google

Roman beast during his *second* state of existence which is still FUTURE.

This argument appears to me so strong for the FUTURITY of that death, which is ascribed to the witnesses; because the prophecy represents them as being slain by *the beast that ascendeth out of* THE ABYSS, and *the ascent of the revived beast from* THE ABYSS is a yet FUTURE event: this argument, I say, appears to me so strong for the FUTURITY of the death of the witnesses, especially when the peculiar genius of the Apocalypse is considered which deals largely in these almost hidden connecting links which may easily escape the notice of a careless observer; that I can only state the difficulties and objections which lie on the other side of the question, and leave the cautious reader to determine for himself in which scale the weight of probability preponderates.

II. Now to perform such a task is the same as to produce the arguments in favour of the opposite opinion, that the death of the two witnesses is *already past*.

1. The first of these arguments is, that, since the seven vials are vials of woe and final destruction to the persecuting powers of the Roman Empire, and since no hint is given that any such event as the war against the witnesses will occur under any one of them: it seems both incongruous and unwarrantable to seek for an event under some one of the vials, which is wholly irrelevant to their general tendency, and respecting which they themselves are uniformly silent. But, if the war of the witnesses be *still future*,

Digitized by Google

future, it must be placed under some one or other of the vials; because there is no where else in all the grand apocalyptic periods, where it consistently *can* be placed. Supposing it therefore to be *yet future*, we restrict ourselves, by the necessary arrangement of the Apocalypse, to seek it in the series of the vials. But, to seek any indications of it in that series, is only so much lost labour. All the vials are silent respecting it; nor can we even discover any subtle connecting link, by which we may chain it to any one of them. Nothing however is in itself more improbable and unaccountable than such a total silence, if indeed the war of the witnesses *be* destined to occur under some one of the vials. Hence the obvious presumption is, that it does *not* occur under any of them. But, if it do *not* occur under any of them, then it must be *past:* for the vials are the only chronological series under which we can consistently place it, if it be *yet future*.

To this argument I see not what answer can be given except the following one. Under the sixth vial, and again in the battle of Armageddon under the seventh vial, we find the persecuting false prophet in full action and evidently leagued with the revived beast or the beast that ascendeth out of THE ABYSS. This appearance therefore of the false prophet in such company may lead us to imagine, that he is once more engaged in his old practice of converting pretended heretics by fire and faggot: and consequently that the war of the witnesses must be placed, either under the sixth, or under the seventh,

Digitized by Google

vial. It may be added, that the battle of Armageddon is probably the final issue of that war; when, after the resurrection of the witnesses, their enemies are completely and ultimately overthrown.

But to such an answer it is not very difficult to put in an abundantly sufficient reply. The false prophet does indeed actively appear under the sixth vial: but not a hint is given, that he appears for the purpose of waging war against the witnesses. On the contrary, we have a very definite account given of *the object* of his appearance, however obscurely *the nature* of his machinations may be described. The *business* of the evil spirit, which proceeds from his mouth, is said to be, in conjunction with other two evil spirits, *the gathering of the Latin kings to destruction at Armágeddon.* Thus insufficient is our warrant to place the war of the witnesses under the sixth vial. Nor do we seem to have much better authority for placing it under the seventh. The revived wild beast indeed, with the false prophet and the congregated kings, wages war against Messiah and his army; but still we have no hint given, that he prevails even for a season over the people of God after the manner described in the war of the witnesses: we are simply told, that he goes forth to the battle and is completely routed. This however is not the whole that may be said. We have not the slightest ground, so far as the tenor of the prophecy is concerned, for imagining that *the battle of Armageddon* is the grand and final result of *the war of the witnesses.* As the prophetic account of *the battle* is wholly

Digitized by Google

wholly silent, as to any *antecedent* slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses; so the prophetic account of *the war* is equally silent, as to any immediately *succeeding* overthrow of the persecuting wild beast from the abyss. The enemies of the witnesses are indeed represented as grievously terrified by their resurrection and ascension, and a tenth part of the great Roman city is said to fall shortly afterwards by the shock of an earthquake: but not the least intimation is given, that those enemies, though *alarmed*, are *exterminated* as in the battle of Armageddon. Thus, on the whole, I deem it but lost labour to seek for any hint of the war of the witnesses in the series of the seven vials. If it *do* occur under some one of them, we have, at all events, no light thrown upon the subject by the prophecy itself.

2. The next argument is indeed an hypothetical one: yet the hypothesis, on which it rests, seems to be so wonderfully corroborated by the evolution of correspondent history and by the imperious claims of never-to-be-neglected homogeneity, that I confess it to be with myself, what the Roman application of Daniel's fourth wild beast was to Mr. Mede, *almost an article of faith.*

Of this hypothesis I shall give the ground in my own words: and I am the more disposed to do so, because my learned friend Dr. Hales, however he may differ from me on some other points, has both quoted those words and honoured them with his entire approbation.

"The time for the beginning of the last woe,"

Digitized by Google

says the author of the Analysis of ancient Chronology, " has long been a subject of the most eager " and anxious inquiry amongst the ablest interpre- " ters of the Apocalypse. Of all the interpretations " hitherto proposed, that of Mr. Faber appears to " be the most probable and the least exceptionable. " It cannot be better expressed than in his own " words.

" *The rise of Mohammedism and the conquests of* " *the Saracens form a singular epoch in history.* " *The rise and conquests of the Ottoman Empire* " *form another singular epoch. After these two,* " *where shall we pitch upon a third epoch equally* " *singular? Can any other answer be given, except* " *the French Revolution and its amazingly extensive* " *consequences? Now the Saracens and Turks are* " *universally allowed to be the subject of the two* " *first woes: and are they more worthy of a place in* " *prophecy, than the daring impieties, the unheard of* " *miseries, and the vast change in the whole Euro-* " *pean commonwealth, which have flowed from the* " *French Revolution? Since we are compelled to* " *date a new order of things from this tremendous* " *convulsion, is it improbable to suppose, that the* " *third woe-trumpet began to sound, when the reign* " *of Antichrist, of Anarchy, and of Atheism, com-* " *menced* ?*"

(1.) But more may be advanced in favour of such an opinion than I have here advanced.

* Hales's Synopsis of the signs of the times. p. 29, 30. Dissert. on the 1260 days. chap. x. sect. 1. § V. 2.

The

Digitized by Google

The grossly absurd fancy of the Romanists, that the third woe-trumpet is the allegorical trumpet which calls all mankind before the final judgment-seat of Christ, because it is the last in order of the seven apocalyptic trumpets, and because the judgment of the dead (by which is meant their vindication or reprobation in this world) is placed under it; is abundantly exposed, both by the absolute demonstration that the seventh apocalyptic trumpet introduces and comprehends all the seven vials which have obviously no relation to the solemnities of the *literal* day of judgment, and by the invaluable principle of *homogeneity* which requires us to esteem the third woe *similar in kind* to the two other woes *. Our principle then of *homogeneity* demands, that all the three woes, because classed together *as* three successive woes, should be *similar to each other in kind.* Hence no interpretation of any one of them can be admitted, which violates this palmary canon. Would we expound them aright, we must not simply discover three *very* calamitous events; but three *such* calamitous events, as will at once accord with the prophetic description of them, and resemble each other in their moral or political or religious object whatever that special common object may be.

Now, by jointly attending to the lapse of time and the narrative of history, our best interpreters have agreed in pronouncing, that *the two first woes* are *the Saracens* and *the Turks:* and this their exposi-

* Walmesley's Gen. Hist. p. 402—405.

tion

tion is, I think, absolutely riveted upon our rational conviction by its additional perfect adherence to the principle of *homogeneity*. The essence of the two first woes was eminently *antichristian:* for the very spirit of Mohammedism is *a vehement and bitter and rancorous hatred of Christians and of Christianity* AS SUCH. Hence the two first woes are homogeneous in their *principle* and *object:* and hence we shall ill discharge the duty of a consistent expositor, if we pitch upon any event for the third woe, which is not equally characterised by *a determined and malignant attack upon Christianity;* for, unless it possess such a leading characteristic, our principle of *homogeneity* will plainly be violated.

Exactly however of this description is the striking event, with which I suppose *the third woe* to have commenced. I conceive its introducing trumpet to have begun to sound at the breaking out of the French Revolution: and I esteem its characteristic spirit and principle to be *a lawless Infidelity, which opposes itself with a high hand to the very idea of a divine revelation, which has declared open war against the Messiah, and which has unreservedly avowed its purpose to be the utter extermination of Christianity.* In this fanatical hatred of the Gospel it is *homogeneous* with the two preceding woes: but *their* efforts were mere child's play, compared with the gigantic and systematic attempts to blot out all revealed religion which in these latter days it has been our fate to witness. Nor, though the first *open* struggle has passed by like the day-dream of feverish distemperature,

Digitized by Google

rature, has the *spirit* by any means evaporated: it is still in operation, ready again to burst out should any favourable opportunity present itself. In short, I suppose *the third woe* to introduce *the predicted and long-expected Antichrist:* him, who by way of eminence is specially denominated THE *Antichrist*, and who is prophetically characterised *as boldly denying both the Father and the Son.* The monster has appeared at the very time when the old fathers rightly expected him: though, like the modern Romanists, they strangely erred, in direct violation of the whole analogy of the sacred oracles, by adopting the crude conceit that the great Antichrist is an individual man. His introduction and successive development is the office of the third woe, extending as it does through its seven subordinate divisions chronologically marked out by the allegorical effusion of seven vials replete with the divine indignation.

Thus strictly homogeneous, according to the present exposition, are all the three woes; the third towering by an awful climax above its two predecessors, because it specially comprehends the history of the GREAT Antichrist.

(2.) Nor is this application of the third woe less agreeable to its well-defined *chronological notation,* than to its necessary homogeneity with the two former woes. "The second woe is past," exclaims the warning prophet; "behold, the third woe cometh "QUICKLY *."

* Rev. xi. 14.

Now

Digitized by Google

Now the second woe is the woe of the Euphratean or Turcomannic horsemen: and, though it may be impossible to decide with *absolute* certainty upon the precise moment of its passing away; yet it seems probable from the declining state of the Ottoman Empire, that this event took place, either in the year 1698 at the ratification of the peace of Carlowitz, or perhaps somewhat later when after the campaign of the year 1717 peace was again concluded at Passarowitz. But, however this may be, nothing can be more certain, than that the second woe *is* past: for, instead of Turkey being any longer a formidable woe to Christendom, her two powerful neighbours Austria and Russia are evidently ready to spring upon her as their destined prey.

If then the second woe be assuredly PAST, the third woe, according to the prediction, cometh QUICKLY.

Such therefore being the chronological disposition of the third woe with reference to the passing away of the second, it is obvious, that the application of that third woe to the reign of Antichristian Infidelity, viewed as commencing with the French Revolution, is *absolutely necessary* to the just and accurate accomplishment of the prophecy: for, if the third woe be *thus* applied, it came QUICKLY (agreeably to the prediction) after the passing away of the second woe; whereas, if it have not yet come, but if it be still remotely future, it must inevitably be divested of its announced chronological mark of QUICK *succession to the passing away of its predecessor.*

Thus,

Digitized by Google

Thus, in every way, are we bound to suppose, that the third woe commenced with the French Revolution in the year 1789.

(3.) This position I have been anxious most fully to establish, because it forms the basis of an argument to prove that the death of the witnesses must be a *past* event. The argument in question is abundantly plain, and will most probably have been already anticipated.

If the third woe *commenced* with the French Revolution in the year 1789, then the second woe must be *past*: for we read, "The second woe is PAST; be-" hold, the third woe COMETH QUICKLY." But, if the second woe be *past*, then the death of the witnesses must be *past* also: because the whole series, both of their death, of their resurrection, and of their ascension to the figurative heaven, is placed BEFORE the passing away of the second woe, and consequently much more BEFORE the coming of the third woe *. We have seen reason however to believe, that the third woe came in the year 1789. Therefore the death of the witnesses must have taken place PREVIOUS to that year.

Nay, even if the application of *the third woe* to *Antichristian Infidelity* should be disallowed, the very same result will still be equally brought out. For the death of the witnesses takes place BEFORE the passing away of *the second woe* or the woe of *the Turkish horsemen*. But the woe of the Turkish

* See Rev. xi. 7—14.

horsemen

Digitized by Google

horsemen has certainly passed away. Therefore the death of the witnesses must have ALREADY TAKEN PLACE.

In short, according to the most natural mode of understanding the grammatical arrangement of the whole passage, if we contend that the death of the witnesses is yet FUTURE, we thereby oblige ourselves to renounce, not only my own modern application of *the third woe* to *the reign of Antichristian Infidelity*, but likewise the old and universally received application of *the second woe* to *the Turkish horsemen*: for, if the second woe relate to the rise and progress of the Ottoman Empire, then the death of the witnesses (unless we depart from the obvious grammatical arrangement of the whole passage) must already have occurred *.

* It may be proper to remark, that, in my discussion of the war of the witnesses, when, on the supposition that their death is *past*, I ascribe the effecting of it to the Emperor Charles V; I state, that they were slain by the wild beast under his LAST head. This statement sprang from the hypothesis which I then advocated, that the LAST head of the wild beast was the Carlovingian Emperorship. But such an hypothesis I have been compelled by events to relinquish as untenable; those events having proved, that the Carlovingian Emperorship is not a *distinct* head from the Roman Emperorship, but that it is a mere continuation of it. Hence, if I be right in supposing that the death of the witnesses was effected by their constrained reception of *the Interim* during the reign of Charles V; it will have been effected through the agency of the wild beast, not under his LAST head, but under his SIXTH head. See above chap. x. sect. 1. § III. 1. (3.)

III. What

Digitized by Google

III. What shall we say then to the intimation of the prophet, that the witnesses are to be slain by the wild beast that ascendeth out of THE ABYSS: a term, which he uses when he foretells *the revival* of the wild beast; while, in describing his *original rise* as seen also by Daniel, he similarly speaks of him as proceeding out of THE SEA? It is not, as I have already observed, that I suppose there to be any difference in *the meaning* of the two terms SEA and ABYSS; on the contrary, I believe them to be perfectly synonymous: but there certainly is a difference in *the terms* themselves; and the argument, founded upon such *phraseological* difference, was this.

St. John styles the wild beast, at his *original* rise, THE BEAST FROM THE SEA; but at his *second* rise, when he is restored to the functions of vitality, he denominates him THE BEAST FROM THE ABYSS. Now he asserts, that THE BEAST FROM THE ABYSS is the power, that slays the witnesses. Whence, if he use the phrase *in studied contradistinction* to the other phrase, it would follow, that the witnesses are slain by the beast in his *revived* state, not by the beast in his *original* state. But the *revived* state of the beast is *still future*. Therefore the death of the witnesses is *still future* likewise.

1. This argument plainly cannot be confuted, except by denying the premises on which it is founded; that is to say, by denying that St. John, in the prophecy relative to the witnesses, employs the word ABYSS *in studied contradistinction* to the word SEA: and to such a denial we seem to be led by those counter

Digitized by Google

counter arguments, which to all appearance demonstrate so conclusively, that the war of the witnesses must be *past*.

If those counter arguments then have any force, and if we adhere to the obvious grammatical arrangement of the whole passage, we must suppose, that the apostle, in the prophecy relative to the witnesses, does NOT employ the word ABYSS *in any studied contradistinction* to the word SEA; as if he meant by such phraseology to intimate, that the witnesses would be slain by the beast in his *revived* state and not by the same beast in his *original* state of existence: but that, the two words being synonymous and equally denoting *the mighty oceanic assemblage of waters*, he uses them in every case *promiscuously* and *indifferently*.

2. Yet it is possible, that the passage may be so interpreted, as to make the death of the witnesses *still future*, by ascribing its infliction to the revived Roman beast when he shall have ascended out of the great abyss; and *this*, without rendering it necessary to withdraw the interpretation which has been given of the second and third woes.

(1.) I have intimated, that the obvious grammatical arrangement of the whole passage requires us to place the death of the witnesses BEFORE the departure of the second woe, and therefore much more BEFORE the commencement of the third woe: whence, if the second woe be *past* and if the third woe be *come*, which I suppose to be the case; it will follow, that the death of the witnesses has *already occurred*.

But,

Digitized by Google

But, though the *obvious* grammatical arrangement of the passage requires this conclusion, still it is *possible* so to view it, that the death of the witnesses shall be esteemed *future*, notwithstanding the second woe has *past*, and notwithstanding the third woe is *come*.

To accomplish such a purpose, it will be necessary to throw into a parenthesis all that portion of the prophecy, which is delivered from the fourth to the thirteenth verse inclusively. When this is done, we may interpret the parenthetic portion *proleptically;* supposing it to be here introduced, not in chronological relation to the subsequently mentioned *departure of the second woe* and *arrival of the third woe*, but only with a view to preserve the entire prophecy respecting the two witnesses unbroken and continuous. By such an arrangement therefore, the fourteenth verse will be made immediately to follow the fourth. Whence it will appear, that the second woe is declared to be past, *not* so soon as the great earthquake shall have overthrown the tenth part of the city, but at some indefinite time after the witnesses shall have commenced their sackcloth prophesying of 1260 days.

According to this possible arrangement, the prophecy will display itself under the following aspect.

" Chap. xi. 1. And there was given me a reed
" like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying;
" Rise, and measure the temple of God and the
" altar and them that worship therein. 2. But the
" court, which is without the temple, leave out, and
" measure

Digitized by Google

" measure it not: for it is given unto the Gentiles;
" and the holy city shall they tread underfoot forty
" and two months. 3. And I will give power unto
" my two witnesses; and they shall prophesy a thou-
" sand two hundred and three score days clothed in
" sackcloth. 4. These are the two olive-trees and
" the two candlesticks standing before the God of
" the earth.

" (5. And, if any man will hurt them, fire pro-
" ceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their
" enemies: and, if any man will hurt them, he must
" in this manner be killed. 6. These have power
" to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their
" prophecy: and they have power over the waters
" to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth
" with all plagues as often as they will. 7. And,
" when they shall have finished (or when they shall
" be a finishing) their testimony, the wild beast, that
" ascendeth out of THE ABYSS, shall make war
" against them, and shall overcome them, and shall
" kill them. 8. And their dead bodies shall lie in
" the broad place of the great city, which spiritually
" is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord
" was crucified. 9. And they of the peoples and
" kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their
" dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not
" suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.
" 10. And they, that dwell upon the earth, shall
" rejoice over them, and shall make merry, and shall
" send gifts to one another; because these two pro-
" phets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

" 11. And,

Digitized by Google

" 11. And, after three days and a half, the spirit of " life from God entered into them; and they stood " upon their feet: and great fear fell upon them, " which saw them. 12. And they heard a great " voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up " hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a " cloud: and their enemies beheld them. 13. And " the same hour there was a great earthquake; and " the tenth part of the city fell: and in the earth- " quake were slain seven thousand names of men; " and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory " to the God of heaven.)

" 14. The second woe is past: behold, the third " woe cometh quickly. 15. And the seventh angel " sounded."

(2.) Now, according to such an arrangement of the prophecy, *the passing of the second woe* does not chronologically follow *the great earthquake* which overthrows the tenth part of the city, but it occurs at some indefinite time *after the witnesses have commenced their sackcloth ministration:* and, in favour of this arrangement we may urge no less than *two* of those nicely connecting links, by which the inspired apostle is wont to chain together *designedly parallel* though *graphically disjoined* passages of the Apocalypse.

One of the supposed links I have already noticed, when I made it the basis of an argument in favour of the *yet future* death of the witnesses.

The beast, that slays those witnesses, is the beast that

Digitized by Google

that ascendeth from THE ABYSS*: but the beast, that ascendeth from THE ABYSS, is the *now* defunct Roman beast in his *yet future* state of revival or re-existence †: therefore the death of the witnesses must be *yet future* also.

This is the *first* of the supposed links! and the *second* is equally conspicuous when once it is pointed out.

The witnesses are figuratively said; according to the usual phraseology of prophecy, which ascribes *positive action* to those ministers of God who *literally* and *really* do nothing more than *denounce* his judgments ‡: the witnesses are figuratively said, in the course of their sackcloth preaching during the 1260 days, *to turn the waters into blood* and *to smite the earth with all plagues* §. Now this *turning of the waters into blood*, and this *smiting of the earth with all plagues*, are effected during the effusion of the seven vials; which introduce *the seven last plagues*, which *turn the waters both of the sea and of the rivers into blood*, and which *grievously smite and harass the earth* ‖. Hence, as the witnesses are to prophesy in sackcloth 1260 days, and as these events take place *in the course* of their prophesying; the six first vials, and the commencing plague of the seventh, must be included *within* the period of the 1260 days: and hence likewise, since these events

* Rev. xi. 7. † Rev. xvii. 8, 11.
‡ See Gen. xxvii. 37. xlix. 7. Isaiah vi. 10. § Rev. xi. 6.
‖ Rev. xv. 1, 7, 8. xvi. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 17, 18.

occur

Digitized by Google

occur *before* the death of the witnesses *, and since they also occur *during* the effusion of the vials; it will follow, that the death of the witnesses does not take place until *after* the seventh vial shall have begun to flow. But, if it *then* takes place, it must both be effected by the beast which ascends from THE ABYSS in his *yet future* state of re-existence, agreeably to the indication of the *first* connecting link: and it must likewise take place precisely at the end of the 1260 days; for, since *the turning of the waters into blood* and *the smiting of the earth with all plagues* at once occur during the lapse of the 1260 days and during the effusion of the six first vials, it is plain, that the 1260 days cannot expire until the seventh vial shall have commenced, agreeably to the monitory voice from the temple *It is done* †. In this case, the ambiguous aorist in the seventh verse of the eleventh chapter ought to be translated, as it stands in our common version, *when they shall have* FINISHED.

I have now fairly laid before the reader the arguments on each side of the question: and he will probably agree with me in thinking, that the matter can only be *determined* by the event.

(3.) Yet, whether the death of the apocalyptic witnesses be past or future, we have reason to expect, that, in some mode or another, the Church of Christ will undergo a thorough purgation before the final overthrow of the Antichristian faction and the

* Compare Rev. xi. 6 with xi. 7. † Rev. xvi. 17.

Digitized by Google

commencement of the millennium period of spiritual blessedness.

This very important matter Bp. Horsley deduces from the remarkable prophecy contained in the eighteenth chapter of Isaiah.

After calling upon some great maritime nation of the last ages to assist in converting and restoring the Jews, the inspired seer represents Jehovah as declaring: that, subsequent to a long cessation of the visible interpositions of Providence, he will prune with useful severity the too luxuriant vine of the Church, and even leave it for a season exposed to the rude assaults of the mystic birds and beasts of prey; but that, when matters shall seem to have been brought to an extremity, he will then wonderfully interpose by effecting the restoration of his ancient people and by destroying his irreclaimable enemies.

" For thus saith Jehovah unto me: I will sit still
" (but I will keep my eye upon my prepared habi-
" tation), as the parching heat just before lightning,
" as the dewy cloud in the heat of harvest. For
" afore the harvest, when the bud is coming to per-
" fection and the blossom is become a juicy berry;
" he will cut off the useless shoots with pruning
" hooks, and the bill shall take away the luxuriant
" branches. They shall be left together to the bird
" of prey of the mountains, and to the beasts of the
" earth. And upon it shall the bird of prey sum-
" mer, and all beasts of the earth upon it shall
" winter. At that season, a present shall be led to
" Jehovah of hosts, a people dragged away and
" plucked;

Digitized by Google

" plucked; even of a people wonderful from their " beginning hitherto; a nation, expecting expecting, " and trampled under foot, whose land rivers have " spoiled; unto the place of the name of Jehovah of " hosts, mount Sion *."

On the pruning of the Church, here predicted, Bp. Horsley makes the following remarks.

" These words express, not simply *sprigs* and " *branches;* but *useless shoots* and *luxuriant* " *branches*, which bear no fruit and weaken the " plant, and properly *such shoots and branches of* " *a vine*. A vine, in the prophetic language, is an " image of the Church of God: the branches of the " vine are the members of the Church: the useless " shoots and unfruitful luxuriant branches are the " insincere nominal members of the Church: and " the pruning of such shoots and branches of the " vine is the excision of such false hypocritical pro- " fessors, at least the separation of them from the " Church, by God's judgments. This verse there- " fore, and the following, clearly predict a judgment " to fall upon the Church for its purification and " the utter destruction of hypocritical professors of " the truth. This season is fixed in the beginning " of the verse: *for afore the harvest*. This pruning " will immediately precede the harvest and the in- " gathering. The season of the harvest and of the " in-gathering of the fruit is the prophetic image of " that period, when our Lord will send forth his

* Isaiah xviii. 4—7.

Digitized by Google

" angels to gather his elect from the four winds of
" heaven; of that period, when a renewed preach-
" ing of the gospel shall take place in all parts of the
" world, of which the conversion of the Jews will
" perhaps be the first effect. The purification of
" the Christian Church, by the awful visitations pre-
" dicted in this passage, seems to be the proper pre-
" parative for this renewal of the call, to them that
" are near, the Jews; and to them that are yet afar
" off, the Gentile tribes not yet converted. This
" then is the sum of this prophecy, and the sub-
" stance of the message sent to the people dragged
" about and plucked. That, in the latter ages, after
" a long suspension of the visible interpositions of
" Providence, God, who all the while regards that
" dwelling-place which he never will abandon, and
" who is at all times directing the events of the
" world to the accomplishment of his own purposes
" of wisdom and mercy; immediately before the
" final gathering of his elect from the four winds of
" heaven, will purify his Church by such signal
" judgments, as shall rouse the attention of the
" whole world, and in the end strike all nations with
" religious awe. At this period, the apostate faction
" will occupy the holy land. This faction will cer-
" tainly be an instrument of those judgments, by
" which the Church will be purified. That purifi-
" cation therefore is not at all inconsistent with the
" seeming prosperity of the affairs of the atheistical
" confederacy. But, after such duration as God
" shall see fit to allow to the plenitude of its power,

" the

Digitized by Google

" the Jews, converted to the faith of Christ, will be " unexpectedly restored to their ancient posses- " sions *."

The purgation thus announced, whatever may be its precise nature and extent, plainly coincides with *the unexampled time of trouble* foretold by Daniel and with the latter part of *those dreadful convulsions* which our Lord describes as succeeding the tribulation of the Jews †. How far we of the protestant Church of England are preparing ourselves to meet it, by internal harmony and brotherly love, by an abhorrence of schismatical party-spirit, by a freedom from secularity, by an abundance of spiritual mindedness, by the ornament of a meek and humble temper, by a zeal to promote the circulation of the Scriptures, and by an ardent wish to convey the treasures of the gospel both to the Jew and to the Gentile; it may be prudent for each individual member, whether clerical or laic, seriously to consider.

* Letter on Isaiah xviii. p. 84—89.

† Dan. xii. 1. Matt. xxiv. 29.

DISSER-

Digitized by Google

DISSERTATION III.

Respecting Christ's prophecy delivered from the mount of Olives, as immediately connected with the period of the 1260 *days.*

SHORTLY before the passion of our blessed Lord, when he was leaving the temple after having addressed a most energetic discourse to the assembled multitude, his disciples, with the not uncommon feelings (as it should seem) of national pride, detained him, that they might point out to his attention the various buildings of that august oratory. Their exultation however was soon cut short by a declaration, which his preceding sermon, had they given due heed to it, might well have rendered superfluous.

He had just foretold, that all the righteous blood of the martyred prophets should come in vengeance upon that present generation; and that, in consequence of it, their house or temple should be left unto them desolate *. While he was uttering this

* Matt. xxiii. 34—38.

denun-

Digitized by Google

denunciation, the attention of his disciples appears to have been wandering to the splendor of the surrounding edifices: so that, unconscious of what he had recently said, they idly called upon him to join in their own ill-timed admiration. This produced a second assertion on his part, still more pointed and definite than the first. Instead of acknowledging the accuracy of their taste, he abruptly declared to them, that the building, which had so distracted their attention from his monitory discourse, should be subverted to the very foundations; and that, massy as were the stones which composed it, not one should be left upon another that should not be thrown down *.

With these words he quitted the temple: and his disciples silently followed him, wrapped in solemn musings on the awful denunciation which they had just heard. From the temple he led the way to mount Olivet, whence there was a full prospect of the whole edifice: and there he took his seat apart from the multitude. The anxious curiosity of his disciples would now be no longer restrained. Coming to him privately, they eagerly requested a further explanation of the alarming words which he had recently uttered. This produced the remarkable prophecy; which, with some variations, has been handed down to us by three of the evangelists, and which in part at least had already (according to St. Luke) been delivered upon a prior occasion †.

* Matt. xxiv. 1, 2. † Luke xvii. 22—37.

I. Now,

Digitized by Google

I. Now, as our Lord's prediction has been handed down to us with certain variations by three different writers; and as those variations consist, not in any contradictory statements, but in an occasionally greater or less degree of copiousness; it will be necessary, before any attempt is made in the way of explanation, to harmonize the three several accounts of it and to exhibit them jointly in one single discourse. By this plan, we shall bring together immediately under our eyes the whole, which Christ is recorded to have uttered.

1. "And Jesus went out, and departed from the "temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew "him the buildings of the temple, how it was adorned "with goodly stones and gifts: and one of his "disciples saith unto him, See, what manner of "stones and what buildings are here *.

2. "And Jesus answering said unto them: See "ye not all these great buildings? Verily I say "unto you, the days will come, in the which there "shall not be left here one stone upon another that "shall not be thrown down †.

3. "And, as he sat upon the mount of Olives "over against the temple, the disciples, Peter and "James and John and Andrew, came unto him pri-"vately, saying: Master, tell us, when shall these "things be; and what shall be the sign, when all "these things shall be fulfilled; and what shall be

* Matt. xxiv. 1. Mark xiii. 1. Luke xxi. 5.
† Matt. xxiv. 2. Mark xiii. 2. Luke xxi. 6.

Digitized by Google

" the sign of thy coming and of the end of the " world *.

4. " And Jesus answered, and said unto them: " Take heed, that no man deceive you. For many " shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and " The time draweth near; and shall deceive many: " go not ye therefore after them †.

5. " But, when ye shall hear of wars and ru- " mours of wars and commotions, be ye not trou- " bled; for all these things must come to pass; but " the end is not yet ‡.

6. " For nation shall rise against nation, and king- " dom against kingdom; and there shall be great " earthquakes in diverse places, and famines, and " pestilences, and troubles, and fearful sights, and " great signs shall there be from heaven: all these " are the beginning of sorrows §.

7. " But take heed to yourselves: for then, before " all these, they shall lay their hands on you and " persecute you, and shall deliver you up to be " afflicted, and shall kill you, and shall deliver you " up to councils and into prisons; and in the syna- " gogues ye shall be beaten; and ye shall be brought " before rulers and kings for my name's sake for a " testimony against them: and it shall turn unto you " for a testimony ||.

* Matt. xxiv. 3. Mark xiii. 3, 4. Luke xxi. 7.
† Matt. xxiv. 4, 5. Mark xiii. 5, 6. Luke xxi. 8.
‡ Matt. xxiv. 6. Mark xiii. 7. Luke xxi. 9.
§ Matt. xxiv. 7, 8. Mark xiii. 8. Luke xxi. 10, 11.
|| Matt. xxiv. 9. Mark xiii. 9. Luke xxi. 12, 13.

8. " Settle

Digitized by Google

8. " Settle it therefore in your hearts not to me-
" ditate before what ye shall answer. But, when
" they shall lead you and deliver you up; take no
" thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither
" do ye premeditate: but, whatsoever shall be given
" you in that hour, that speak ye; it is not ye that
" speak, but the Holy Ghost. For I will give you
" a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries
" shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And this
" Gospel of the kingdom shall first be preached in
" all the world, for a witness unto all nations: and
" then shall the end come *.

9. " And then shall many be offended, and betray
" one another, and shall hate one another. And
" ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren
" and kinsfolk and friends; and some of you shall
" they cause to be put to death. For the brother
" shall betray the brother to death; and the father,
" the son: and children shall rise up against their
" parents, and shall cause them to be put to
" death †.

10. " And ye shall be hated of all nations for my
" name's sake. And many false prophets shall
" arise, and shall deceive many. And, because
" iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax
" cold. But there shall not an hair of your head
" perish: but he, that shall endure unto the end,

* Matt. xxiv. 14. Mark xiii. 10, 11. Luke xxi. 14, 15.
† Matt. xxiv. 10. Mark xiii. 12. Luke xxi. 16.

" the

Digitized by Google

" the same shall be saved. In your patience pos-
" sess ye your souls *.

11. " When therefore ye shall see the abomina-
" tion of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the pro-
" phet, standing in the holy place where it ought
" not (let him that readeth understand); and when
" ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies:
" then know, that the desolation thereof is nigh;
" then let them, which are in Judèa, flee to the
" mountains; and let them, which are in the midst
" of it, depart out; and let not them, that are in the
" countries, enter thereinto; and let him, that is on
" the house-top, not come down to take any thing
" out of his house; and let him, that is in the field,
" not turn back again to take up his garment †.

12. " For these be the days of vengeance, that
" all things which are written may be fulfilled ‡.

13. " But woe unto them that are with child, and
" to them that give suck, in those days: for there
" shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon
" this people. But pray ye, that your flight be not
" in the winter neither on the sabbath-day: for then
" shall be great tribulation, such as was not since
" the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall
" be §.

* Matt. xxiv. 9, 11, 12, 13. Mark xiii. 13. Luke xxi. 17, 18, 19.

† Matt. xxiv. 15, 16, 17, 18. Mark xiii. 14, 15, 16. Luke xxi. 20, 21.

‡ Luke xxi. 22.

§ Matt. xxiv. 19, 20, 21. Mark xiii. 17, 18, 19. Luke xxi. 23.

14. " And,

Digitized by Google

14. " And, except those days should be shortened " of the Lord, there should no flesh be saved: but, " for the elects' sake whom he hath chosen, those " days shall be shortened *.

15. " And then, if any man shall say unto you, " Lo here is Christ, or Lo he is there; believe him " not. For there shall arise false Christs and false " prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; " insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall de- " ceive the very elect: but take ye heed; behold, I " have foretold you all things †.

16. " Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Be- " hold he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, he " is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For, as " the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth " even unto the west: so shall also the coming of " the Son of man be. For, wheresover the carcase " is, there will the eagles be gathered together ‡.

17. " And wrath shall be upon this people: and " they shall fall by the edge of the sword: and they " shall be led away captive into all nations and " Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, " until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled §.

18. " But, in those days, immediately after the " tribulation of those days, there shall be signs in " the sun and in the moon and in the stars. The " sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not

* Matt. xxiv. 22. Mark xiii. 20.

† Matt. xxiv. 23, 24, 25. Mark xiii. 21, 22, 23.

‡ Matt. xxiv. 26, 27, 28. Compare Luke xvii. 23, 24.

§ Luke xxi. 23, 24.

" give

Digitized by Google

" give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven,
" and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.
" And upon the earth shall be distress of nations
" with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring,
" men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking
" after those things which are coming on the
" earth *.

19. " And then shall appear the sign of the Son
" of man in heaven; and then shall they see the
" Son of man coming in the clouds with great power
" and glory; and then shall all the tribes of the
" earth mourn †.

20. " And then shall he send his angels with a
" great sound of a trumpet, and shall gather toge-
" ther his elect from the four winds, from the utter-
" most part of the earth to the uttermost part of
" heaven, and from one end of heaven to the
" other ‡.

21. " And, when these things begin to come to
" pass: then look up, and lift up your heads: for
" your redemption draweth nigh §.

22. " Now learn a parable from the fig-tree and
" all the trees. When her branch is yet tender and
" putteth forth leaves, and when they now shoot
" forth; ye see and know of your own selves, that
" summer is now nigh at hand ‖.

* Matt. xxiv. 29. Mark xiii. 24, 25. Luke xxi. 25, 26.
† Matt. xxiv. 30. Mark xiii. 26. Luke xxi. 27.
‡ Matt. xxiv. 31. Mark xiii. 27.
§ Luke xxi. 28.
‖ Matt. xxiv. 32. Mark xiii. 28. Luke xxi. 29, 30.

23. " So

Digitized by Google

23. " So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these " things come to pass; know that he is near even at " the doors, know ye that the kingdom of God is " nigh at hand *.

24. " Verily I say unto you, This generation shall " not pass away, until all these things be fulfilled †.

25. " Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my " words shall not pass away ‡.

26. " But of that day and that hour knoweth no " man, no not the angels which are in heaven, nei- " ther the Son, but my Father only. Take ye heed: " watch and pray; for ye know not when the time " is. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any " time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting " and drunkenness and cares of this life; and so " that day come upon you unawares. For as a " snare shall it come on all them, that dwell on the " face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore and " pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to " escape all these things that shall come to pass and " stand before the Son of man §.

27. " But, as the days of Noah were, so shall also " the coming of the Son of man be. For, as, in the " days that were before the flood, they were eating " and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, " until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and

* Matt. xxiv. 33. Mark xiii. 29. Luke xxi. 31.
† Matt. xxiv. 34. Mark xiii. 30. Luke xxi. 32.
‡ Matt. xxiv. 35. Mark xiii. 31. Luke xxi. 33.
§ Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32, 33. Luke xxi. 34, 35, 36.

" knew

Digitized by Google

" knew not until the flood came and took them all " away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man " be *.

28. " Therefore be ye also ready: for, in such an " hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh †."

Such is the celebrated prophecy of our Lord, when the three accounts of it, as delivered by the three first evangelists, are blended together harmonically in one unbroken series. We may now proceed to the discussion of it.

II. As the whole prediction is in fact an answer to the question put by the disciples, we must obviously begin with considering the purport of that question.

" Master, tell us, when shall these things be: and " what shall be the sign, when all these things shall " be fulfilled: and what shall be the sign of thy " coming and of the end of the world ‡?"

Now, as our Lord had just before declared that *the temple should be utterly subverted;* the disciples must plainly be understood to ask, *when that event should take place.* This is agreed upon by all: but there has been some difference of opinion with respect to the *latter* clause of the question, as exhibited by St. Matthew; " What shall be the sign of " thy coming and of the end of the world?"

* Matt. xxiv. 37, 38, 39. Compare Luke xvii. 26—30.

† Matt. xxiv. 44.

‡ Matt. xxiv. 3. Mark xiii. 4. Luke xxi. 7. See above § I. 2.

From

Digitized by Google

From considering that the question owed its origin to a prophetic intimation of Christ relative to *the temple*, some writers contend, that the *latter* clause, no less than the *former* clause, ought to be interpreted with sole reference to *the destruction of that edifice:* whence they figuratively explain *the coming of our Lord* to denote merely *his coming in judgment against Jerusalem when it was sacked by the Romans under Titus*, and *the end of the world* to mean *the end of the Levitical age or dispensation.* Having laid down these principles, they of course suppose, that the whole prophecy, being no doubt an answer to the question put by the disciples, must relate exclusively to *the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple;* and that it contains no allusion whatsoever to *the day of judgment*, though the poetical imagery may be borrowed from the solemnities of that great day.

Others, on the contrary, maintain, that *the coming of our Lord* and *the end of the world* ought to be understood in their plain and literal acceptation: whence they suppose the disciples to have put two distinct questions to their Master; *When shall the temple be destroyed*, and *When shall be the day of judgment?* Having laid down these principles, they again conclude, that the prophecy, still being an answer to the questions, treats of two perfectly distinct events; *the destruction of the temple*, and *Christ's coming in judgment at the end of the world.*

That the expressions, *the coming of the Lord* and *the*

Digitized by Google

the end of the world, ought not to be understood figuratively of *the mere destruction of Jerusalem*, has, I think, been most amply demonstrated by Bp. Horsley *. But I doubt, whether he has either set forth the full purport of those phrases, or has distinctly pointed out the notion with which they were used by the disciples.

1. The preceding context seems to me imperiously to require, that we should refer the *whole* question of the disciples to *our Lord's assertion relative to the utter dilapidation of the temple.* This, I say, the entire context, according to every rule of just composition, seems to me imperiously to require †.

How then, it may be said, come the disciples, *in consequence* of an assertion relative to *the destruction of the temple*, to ask, not only *when the temple should be destroyed* which would be perfectly relevant, but likewise *when the day of judgment should be* which appears not a little irrelevant? For, if a prophet were to declare that *the British capital* (for instance) *should be utterly subverted:* it would be quite natural to ask him, when *that* event would occur; but no one probably would think of *also* asking him in the very same sentence, when the end of the world would be.

The clue to this peculiar and extraordinary mode of putting the question is afforded, if I mistake not, by the notion, with which the disciples seem to have

* Horsley's Serm. vol. i. serm. 1, 2.

† See above § I. 2, 3.

Digitized by Google

used the expressions *the coming of the Lord* and *the end of the world.* In *their* minds, the triumphant appearance of Christ in judgment, the close of the present mundane system, and the destruction of Jerusalem with its temple, were inseparably united: that is to say, they did not expect that the temple and city would be subverted until the second advent and the day of judgment. Hence, when our Lord announced the entire dilapidation of the holy place, they immediately associated with it the idea of the end of the world: and consequently, when they inquired the precise time of the one event, they were obviously and naturally and indeed inevitably led to inquire the precise time of the other event also.

This doctrine they seem to have borrowed from a mistaken apprehension of the ancient prophecies, coöperating with that national pride which led them to expect the triumphant perpetuity of their city and their temple. Messiah is described by the seers of old, as coming in the clouds of heaven to take vengeance upon his irreclaimable enemies, what time the thrones are placed and the judgment is set and the books are opened: and yet, *at that very same period,* he is also represented, as supernaturally appearing in defence of Jerusalem, then actually inhabited by the house of Judah and the house of David, and then actually comprehending within its sacred inclosure the temple of the Lord of hosts *. From

* See Dan. vii. 9, 10, 11, 22, 26. xi. 41, 45. xii. 1, 2, 3. Zechar. xii. xiii. xiv. and Isaiah lxvi.

such

Digitized by Google

such prophecies misunderstood they derived their belief, that Jerusalem and the temple would continue so long as this world should endure: consequently, when our Saviour announced *the utter destruction of the temple*, they immediately asked him a two-fold question, the clauses of which however were in *their* minds intimately or rather inseparably connected; for they could not, in *their* apprehension of the matter, put the *one* clause to him without either virtually or literally putting the *other* likewise.

Now this notion is neither contradicted nor directly confirmed in our Lord's subsequent prophecy. He largely sets forth the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, and he as largely describes the awful solemnities of the day of judgment: but his language is such, that his disciples, were they so disposed, might still continue to deem these two events either perfectly or at least nearly synchronical. For, after fully delineating the former event and after dwelling upon the extraordinary miseries of the Jewish nation, he proceeds: "But, in those days, "immediately after the tribulation of those days, "there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon "and in the stars: and then shall appear the sign "of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall they "see the Son of man coming in the clouds with "power and great glory *." From this passage it is obvious, that, just as the disciples *limited* the tribulation of the Jews to the overthrow of the city and

* See above § I. 18, 19.

 temple,

Digitized by Google

temple, or as they *extended* it beyond that event; precisely in the same proportion they would suppose the end of the world, either to *synchronize* with the destruction of Jerusalem, or to occur *long after it.* Of these two interpretations, they certainly adopted the *former:* that is to say, they still believed, that the overthrow of the temple would either *coincide with* or would *immediately usher in* the day of judgment; and in such an opinion they would be the more confirmed by mistaking, as it so perpetually *has been* mistaken, the import of that closing asseveration of our Lord, "Verily I say unto you, this ge- "neration shall not pass away, until all these things "be fulfilled."

After the crucifixion, their error spread itself far and wide; insomuch that it became a well-known prevalent opinion in the Church both Hebrew and Gentile, that the coming of Christ and the end of the world were near at hand: but the reason, WHY such an opinion prevailed, was, that they rightly expected the overthrow of the temple in the course of the then existing generation.

The first, who was commissioned to correct this mistake, was the apostle Paul. Finding, that it had taken deep root among the Thessalonians, and had not a little alarmed them; he writes to "beseech "them, that they be not soon shaken in mind or "troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by "letter as from him, AS THAT THE DAY OF CHRIST "IS AT HAND." And the ground, which he takes to convince them how absolutely impossible it was that

Digitized by Google

that that day should be nigh, is this: a great apostasy was *first* to take place in the Church, and the man of sin was to be revealed; but that wicked one is to be consumed with the spirit of the Lord's mouth, and is to be destroyed with the brightness of his coming; *therefore* the sure word of prophecy declares, that the day of Christ cannot arrive, *until after* the man of sin shall both have been revealed and shall have had sufficient time to deceive an immense multitude *.

The same theme was next taken up at large by St. John in the Apocalypse; and a long train of events was minutely predicted, as about to take place *previous* to the day of judgment: but, in the mean time, the actual destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, while all things continued as they were from the recess of the deluge, effectually confuted the fond opinion, that it was immediately connected with the end of the world.

2. So much for the reason, why the disciples in a single sentence made inquiry, both as to the time of *the destruction of the temple* and as to the epoch of *the day of judgment;* when, *previous* to their inquiry, our Lord had merely declared, that the sacred edifice should be utterly dilapidated: we have now to examine somewhat more at large into the purport of the phrases which they employed, *the coming of Christ* and *the end of the world.*

Against those, who would strangely refer these

* 2 Thess. ii. 1—12.

expres-

Digitized by Google

expressions to *the mere desolation of Jerusalem* and *the end of the Levitical dispensation*, Bp. Horsley argues most strongly and conclusively, that they relate to *the second advent of our Lord* and to *the great day of judgment*. But yet, by *so* limiting them to *the day of judgment* as to exclude every other idea than that of *the* LITERAL *awful day of final retribution when the lot of all men will be irrevocably fixed either in happiness or in misery*, the learned prelate seems to me to annex such a sense to them, as can be made to quadrate neither with the prophecy before us nor with other predictions of a similar import.

The day, respecting which Christ speaks, immediately succeeds those dreadful political revolutions, described after the ordinary mode of the Hebrew prophets by signs in the heavenly bodies, which are partly to *coincide with* and partly to *follow* the tribulation of the Jews: for Matthew and Mark, when viewed harmonically, place them both "IN those "days" and "IMMEDIATELY AFTER that tribula-"tion *." But, according to Luke, the tribulation of the Jews continues, "until the times of the Gen-"tiles are fulfilled †." The day therefore, of which Christ speaks, immediately succeeds the political revolutions, which partly *usher in* and partly *follow* the close of those times of the Gentiles. But there can be no doubt, that *the times of the Gentiles*

* Matt. xxiv. 29. Mark xiii. 24. See above § I. 18.
† Luke xxi. 23, 24. See above § I. 17.

mean

Digitized by Google

mean either *the times of the four great gentile empires* or *the three times and a half* mentioned by Daniel and St. John, which two periods coincide in point of termination. Hence the times of the Gentiles expire synchronically with the three times and a half or the 1260 years. Such being the case, the day, of which Christ speaks, immediately succeeds the political revolutions that mark the close of the three times and a half. But, at the close of those three times and a half or those times of the Gentiles which (according to our Lord) bring to an end the tribulation of the Jews, the judgment (according to Daniel) is to sit, and the Son of man is to come in the clouds of heaven to take vengeance upon the apostate Roman Empire and the little spiritual sovereignty which had long worn out the saints of the Most High. Now that little spiritual sovereignty is certainly the same as St. Paul's man of sin and as the false prophet of the Apocalypse. Hence the destruction of the man of sin or the false prophet by the brightness of the Lord's coming or by the sword of the apocalyptic rider on the white horse must plainly be identified with Daniel's judgment of the Roman Empire and its little spiritual sovereignty by the Ancient of days and the Son of man*. But that judgment takes place synchronically with our Lord's coming in judgment after the political revolutions, which mark the close of the times of the Gentiles and the expiration of the tribulation of the

* 2 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xix. 15, 20. Dan. vii. 9—14, 26, 27.

Jews.

Digitized by Google

Jews. Therefore *the coming of Christ* and *the end of the world*, respecting which the disciples inquire and of which our Lord treats so largely in his prophecy; the judgment of the Roman Empire and the little sovereignty; the consumption of the man of sin by the brightness of Messiah's coming; and the destruction of the Roman Empire and its false prophet by the fiery sword of the rider on the white horse: all coincide chronologically, at least in point of commencement; because they all begin in the course of the political troubles, which mark the close of the three times and a half and of the times of the Gentiles. But, AFTER the Roman Empire and the spiritual sovereignty have been judged by the Son of man, the saints have a kingdom allotted to them *under* the whole heaven and therefore *in* this world: and, AFTER the same Roman Empire and the false prophet have been completely overthrown, the saints reign with Christ *upon* earth for a thousand years *previous* to the destruction of the world and the final judgment both of the quick and the dead. The day of judgment therefore, which our Lord describes as commencing in the midst of the revolutions which mark the close of the times of the Gentiles, must necessarily commence at the least a thousand years before the literal end of the world and before that definitive judgment which assigns to every man his eternal portion: and the same remark applies to that brightness of the Messiah's coming, which (according to St. Paul) is to destroy the man of sin. For, unless this arrangement be adopted, it will be impossible

Digitized by Google

sible to make the prophecies of our Lord and St. Paul harmonize with those of Daniel and St. John; because Daniel and St. John make the world endure many years after the judgment at the end of the three times and a half; whereas, if *the coming of Christ* and *the end of the world* be limited to the final day of judgment, as Bp. Horsley would limit them, then our Lord and St. Paul describe the world as being absolutely destroyed after the judgment at the end of the times of the Gentiles, with which nevertheless the end of the three times and a half necessarily synchronize.

The need of such an extension of *the coming of Christ* and of *the day of judgment*, as those or similar terms are used by the prophetic writers, was long since clearly perceived by the excellent Mede. Our Lord is said to come, and the great day of judgment is said to commence, when, after the close of the 1260 years, the Messiah begins to judge and punish *in this world* his enemies of the Antichristian faction and to judge and reward *in this world* his faithful followers the saints. This day of Christ is viewed, as extending through the whole period of the millennium, and as comprehending at the termination of it a *second* judgment and punishment of a *second* Antichristian faction even that denominated by Ezekiel and St. John *the faction of Gog and Magog*. Subsequent to all these events arrives the evening of that great judicial day, or the *literal* judgment both of the quick and of the dead at the *literal* end of the world: and this concluding judgment is that, which we are ordinarily

Digitized by Google

ordinarily wont to term *the day of judgment*, and which involves the final destination of every individual either to everlasting happiness or to everlasting misery *. It was of this concluding judgment or of this

* The present question is of so much importance to the right understanding of our Lord's prophecy, that I shall give Mr. Mede's argument at full length.

" When Daniel's *times* are done," says this father of apocalyptic exposition, " the Son of man comes in the clouds of hea-" ven, to receive the empire of all the kingdoms of the world. " Dan. vii. 14.

" When St. Luke's *times of the Gentiles* are finished, then " shall be signs in the sun and moon; the Son of man comes " also in the clouds of heaven; the redemption of Israel and " the kingdom of God are at hand. Luke xxi. 27, 28, 31.

" *The first coming of Christ* was to be, while the fourth king-" dom was yet in being: *the second*, when it should end." Mede's Works book iv. epist. 8. p. 744, 745.

" *The times of the Gentiles* are that last period of the fourth " kingdom prophesied of, *a time times and half a time*; at the " end whereof the angel swears unto Daniel (chap. xii. 7.), " that *God should accomplish* or *finish to scatter the power of the* " *holy people*. This is that *fulness of the Gentiles*, which being " come, St. Paul tells us, *The deliverer shall come out of Zion*, " and *all Israel shall be saved*." Ibid. book iii. Treatise on Daniel's Weeks. p. 709. This identity of *the times of the Gentiles* and *the three times and a half* is, I think, decidedly established by the language of St. John in the Apocalypse. The outer court and the holy city are given to the Gentiles, with permission to tread them underfoot during the period of the 42 months or *the three times and a half*. But the phraseology of this passage, though applied mystically, is doubtless borrowed from that part of our Lord's prophecy, wherein he foretells that Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of

Digitized by Google

this evening of the great judicial day, the awful ceremonial of which our Lord so fully describes, that he speaks,

of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled. *The three times and a half* therefore in the one place answer to *the times of the Gentiles* in the other place. Nay, even independently of this coincidence, the apocalyptic prediction alone is sufficient to establish the point. *The Gentiles*, says St. John, are to tread the holy city underfoot during the space of *three times and a half*. Therefore *the three times and a half* are inevitably *the times of the Gentiles*. Comp. Luke xxi. 24. with Rev. ix. 2.

"The mother-text of Scripture, whence the Church of the "Jews grounded the name and expectation of *the great day of* "*judgment*, with the circumstances thereto belonging, and "whereunto almost all the descriptions and expressions thereof "in the New Testament have reference, is that vision in the "seventh of Daniel of a session of judgment when the fourth "beast came to be destroyed: where this great assize is repre-"sented after the manner of the great Synedrion or Consistory "of Israel; wherein the *pater judicii* had his *assessores* sitting "upon seats placed semi-circle wise before him from his right "hand to his left. *I beheld*, saith Daniel, *till the thrones or* "*seats were pitched down* (namely for the senators to sit upon, "not *thrown down*, as we of late have it), *and the Ancient of* "*days* (pater consistorii) *did sit. And I beheld, till the judge-*"*ment was set* (that is, the whole Sanhedrim), *and the books* "*were opened.*

"Here we see both the form of judgment delineated and the "name of judgment expressed; which is afterwards yet twice "more repeated: first, in the amplification of the tyranny of "the wicked horn (ver. 21, 22.), which (it is said) continued "*till the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the* "*saints of the Most High*, i. e. *potestas judicandi ipsis facta*: "and again in the angel's interpretation (ver. 26.); *But the* "*judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion to* "*consume and destroy it to the end.* Where observe also, that

"cases

Digitized by Google

speaks, when he declares, that "of that day and "that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels "which

"cases of dominion, of blasphemy, of apostasy, and the like, "belonged to the jurisdiction of the great Sanhedrim.

"From this description it came, that the Jews gave it the "name of *the day of judgment* and *the day of the great judg-* "*ment:* whence, in the epistle of Jude (ver. 6.), it is called "*the judgment of the great day.*

"From the same description they learned, that the destruc- "tion then to be should be by fire: because it is said (ver. 9.), "*His throne was a fiery flame, and his wheels burning fire;* and "(ver. 11.) *The beast was slain, and his body destroyed and* "*given to the burning flame.*

"From the same fountain are derived those expressions in "the Gospel, where this day is intimated or described: *The* "*Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven; the Son of man* "*shall come in the glory of his Father with his holy angels:* "forasmuch as it is said here, *Thousand thousands ministered* "*unto him;* and that Daniel saw *one like the Son of man coming* "*with the clouds of heaven, and he came to the Ancient of days* "*and they brought him near him.*

"Hence St. Paul learned, that *the saints should judge the* "*world;* because it is said, that *many thrones were set,* and "(ver. 22.) by way of exposition that *judgment was given to* "*the saints of the Most High.*

"Hence the same apostle learned to confute the false fear "of the Thessalonians, that the day of Christ's second coming "was then at hand: because that day could not be, till the man "of sin were first come and should have reigned his time ap- "pointed; forasmuch as Daniel had foretold, that it should be "so, and that his destruction should be at the Son of man's "appearing in the clouds whose appearance therefore was not "to be till then. This is επιφανια της παρουσιας αυτου in St. Paul: "*whom the Lord* (saith he) *shall destroy at the* επιφανια *of his* "*coming.*

Digitized by Google

" which are in heaven, neither the Son" in his human and mediatorial capacity, " but the Father only." The

" *coming*. Daniel's *wicked horn* is St. Paul's *man of sin*, as the " Church from her infancy interpreted it.

" But to go on: while this judgment sits, and when it had " destroyed the fourth beast, the Son of man, which comes in " the clouds, receives *domition and glory and a kingdom, that* " *all people, nations, and languages, should serve and obey him* " (ver. 14); which kingdom is thrice explained afterwards to " be *the kingdom of the saints of the Most High*. ver. 18, 22, " 27.

" These grounds being laid, I argue as followeth:

1. " The kingdom of the Son of man and of the saints of the " Most High in Daniel begins, when the great judgment " sits.

2. " The kingdom in the Apocalypse, wherein the saints " reign with Christ a thousand years, is the same with the king- " dom of the Son of man and saints of the Most High in " Daniel.

3. " Therefore it also begins at the great judgment.

" That *the kingdom* in Daniel and *that of a thousand years* in " the Apocalypse are one and the same kingdom, appeareth " thus.

1. " First, because they begin *ab eodem termino;* namely, at " the destruction of the fourth beast: *that* in Daniel, when the " beast (then ruling in the wicked horn) was slain, and his body " destroyed and given to the burning flame (Dan. vii. 11, 22, " 27.); *that* in the Apocalypse, when the beast and the false " prophet (the wicked horn in Daniel) were taken, and both " cast alive into a lake burning with brimstone. Rev. xix. 20, " 21.

2. " Secondly, because St. John begins the *regnum* of a " thousand years from the same session of judgment described " in Daniel; as appears by his parallel expression borrowed " from thence.

" Daniel

Digitized by Google

The *commencement* of the great day, in its extended or prophetic sense, was well known: because it was fixed to that short period, which Daniel places between the end of the three times and a half and the beginning of the millennium or the period of blessedness *. Its *progress* too, not long afterwards, became

" Daniel says, chap. vii.	St. John says, chap. xx.
9. " *I beheld, till the thrones* " *were pitched down, and the* " *judgment* (i. e. judges) *sat.*	4. *I saw thrones, and they sat upon them.*
22. " *And judgment was* " *given to the saints of the* " *Most High.*	*And judgment was given unto them.*
" *And the saints possessed* " *the kingdom:* viz. with the " Son of man who came in the " clouds.	*And the saints lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

" Now, if this be sufficiently proved that the thousand years " begin with *the day of judgment*, it will further appear out of " the Apocalypse, that the judgment is not consummate till " they be ended: for Gog and Magog's destruction and the " universal resurrection is not till then: therefore the whole " thousand years are included in *the day of judgment.*

" Hence it will follow, that, whatsoever Scripture speaks of " a kingdom of Christ to be at *his second appearing* or at *the* " *destruction of Antichrist*, it must needs be the same which " Daniel saw should be at that time, and so consequently be " the kingdom of a thousand years which the Apocalypse in- " cludes between the beginning and consummation of *the great* " *judgment.*" Mede's Works. book iv. epist. 15. p. 762, 763.

* This period comprises 75 years, which Daniel divides into 30 years and 45 years. The 30 years are produced by the excess

Digitized by Google

came equally well known: for it was revealed through St. John, that a *second* judgment should take place at the end of the specifically defined term of a thousand years. But *beyond* this last period all is darkness: neither Ezekiel nor St. John intimate, how long a time will elapse, between the overthrow of Gog and Magog at the close of the thousand years, and the final judgment of quick and dead at the *literal* end of the world: "of *that* hour," as our Lord assures us, "knoweth the Father only."

Such an intimation alone is sufficient to confute the vain humour of those, who, by a sort of rhetorical alchymy, would exclusively apply the whole prophecy of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem and the abrogating of the Levitical dispensation: for the commencement of *these* events was expressly determined by our Lord to the then current generation; and the epochs of many subsequent events are most accurately fixed by certain specific chronological numbers: but the precise time of the *literal* judicial hour is left in a state of awful indefiniteness; we know indeed, that it is the next grand event to the overthrow of Gog and Magog; yet we know not, at what interval the one follows the other.

III. The way being now prepared by considering the import of the question which the disciples put to our Lord, we may proceed with advantage to discuss the prophecy itself.

excess of 1290 beyond 1260: the 45 years, by the excess of 1335 beyond 1290: and the entire 75 years, by the excess of 1335 beyond 1260. See Dan. xii. 11,-12.

1. Here,

Digitized by Google

1. Here, the first particular, which offers itself to our notice, is the enumeration of the signs, that were to precede and announce the now rapidly approaching destruction of Jerusalem.

These are false prophets, who should assume the name of Christ, and who should deceive the Jews by loudly proclaiming that the time of their deliverance from the Roman yoke was near: wars and rumours of wars: the rising up of nation against nation: great earthquakes: famines and pestilences: fearful sights and great signs from heaven: and a general persecution of Christianity; which, though it should continue long after the subversion of the temple, should in point of commencement precede all the above-specified indications.

(1.) In the period then immediately preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, there were to be impostors, who should assume the name of the Messiah, and who should seek to avail themselves of the hopes and expectations of the Jews.

Accordingly, we have Simon Magus and Dositheus the Samaritan; each of whom claimed to be a manifestation of the Christ or of the great Filial Power of God: we have likewise Theudas; who, in the reign of Claudius, drew many after him by the promise that he would divide Jordan as in the days of old: and, in the reign of Nero, we find similar impostors starting up in such numbers, that they were even daily apprehended and put to death *.

* Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 216, 217.

(2.) During

Digitized by Google

(2.) During the same period, there were to be wars and rumours of wars.

Agreeably to this part of the prediction, there was a long series of bloody wars, before the final destruction of Jerusalem, between the Jews and the Romans: and, even when a short-lived peace prevailed, its permanence was interrupted, as in the time of Caligula who ordered his statue to be set up in the temple, by the apprehension of a speedy renewal of hostilities *.

(3.) Nation also was to rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

As these signs were for the information of the disciples, we must obviously look for their occurrence in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem. In strict accordance with this natural opinion, we find tetrarchy rising up against tetrarchy, and the most violent feuds taking place between the Jews and their neighbours the Syrians. The consequence of such a state, when (as Josephus forcibly expresses it) every city was divided into two armies, was; that vast multitudes perished, and that the whole land was polluted with incessant slaughter †.

(4.) Synchronically with these calamities were to occur numerous earthquakes, not only in the region of Judèa, but (as our Lord specially predicts) *in diverse places*.

Accordingly, as we learn from the historians of the

* Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 218, 219.
† Ibid. p. 219—221.

Digitized by Google

times, such concussions happened in Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Rome, Laodicèa, Hierapolis, Colosse, Campania, and Judèa.

(5.) There were likewise to be dreadful famines and pestilences.

Thus there was the famine in the days of Claudius, which is mentioned by Suetonius and the other historians, and which is said in *the Acts* to have been foretold by Agabus: and thus there were the concomitant pestilences, which famine never fails to bring in its train *.

(6.) Fearful sights and great signs from heaven are also enumerated by our Lord among the indications of approaching vengeance.

These are mentioned, not only by Josephus, but likewise by the pagan historian Tacitus. A comet or meteor, in form resembling a sword, hung over Jerusalem for a whole year: a great light shone, during the space of half an hour, round the altar and the temple, when the people were assembled to celebrate the feast of unleavened bread: a cow brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple: the massy eastern gate of the sacred edifice, which twenty men could scarcely shut and which was fastened by strong bars and bolts, was in the night-time seen to open spontaneously: before the setting of the sun, chariots and armies, fighting and besieging cities, appeared in the clouds over the whole country: and,

* Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 221—224.

at

Digitized by Google

at the feast of Pentecost, as the priests were going into the inner temple by night to perform the wonted service; they heard, first a motion and a noise, and then the voice as of a multitude exclaiming *Let us depart hence* *.

(7.) Previous however to all these matters, the Christians were to begin to be persecuted for the sake of their religion, to be brought before rulers and councils, and to be imprisoned and slain.

These trials, accordingly, commenced immediately after the miraculous communication of the Holy Ghost, when Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrim, when the apostles were cast into the common prison, when Stephen and James were murdered, and when the fires of persecution raged successively under the guidance of Paul and Herod †. Thus early did the troubles of the faithful begin: and all history, whether ecclesiastical or secular, testifies, how long they continued, and how minutely they corresponded with our Lord's description of them ‡.

(8.) Grievous as such varied calamities should be, Christ nevertheless declares them to be the mere beginning of sorrows: "the end," says he, "is not "yet."

Those, who would apply the whole prophecy to the destruction of Jerusalem and to the events imme-

* Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 224—228.

† Acts iv. 1—21. v. 17, 18. vii. 54—59. viii. 1—4. ix. 1, 2. xii. 1—5.

‡ Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 229—233.

Digitized by Google

diately connected with it, necessarily suppose, that by this expression our Lord meant to intimate that the end of the Jewish polity should not yet arrive: for it is manifest, that *the end*, of which he here speaks, is the same as *the end of the world* respecting the epoch of which the disciples had previously made inquiry: whence, as they conceive *the end of the world* to denote *the end of the Levitical dispensation*, they of course deem *the end* to be a phrase of similar import.

Now, just on the same principles, since I understand *the end of the world* according as I find the phrase used in other passages of Scripture, though with the chronological extension which has been specified above *: so I believe *the end*, which our Lord says *is not yet*, to mean, not *the end of the Jewish polity;* but *that end of the world or that commencement of the great judicial day the prophetic import of which has already been discussed and established.*

Agreeably to this view of the expression, I suppose, that Christ is in effect warning his disciples against the error to which they were inclined; the error of imagining, that the end of the world would synchronize with the dilapidation of the temple.

" The troubles, which I am now announcing," we may conceive him to say, " are but *the beginning of*

* See in the original Greek Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49. xxviii. 20; in all which places we have the same phrase, συντελια του αιωνος, that here occurs.

" *sorrows*

Digitized by Google

" *sorrows* and are merely the signs which announce " the approaching ruin of Jerusalem. Do not there- " fore too hastily conclude from their occurrence, " that the end of the world is near: so far from it, " THE END IS NOT YET. Much must be done, " before that awful time shall arrive. *This Gospel* " *of the kingdom must first be preached in all the* " *world, for a witness unto all nations:* not merely " throughout the whole Roman Empire, which in- " deed shall take place before the destruction of " Jerusalem; but unto every nation of the habitable " globe, whether men will hear or whether they will " forbear. Then, and not till then, *shall the end* " *come.*"

Now, according to such an explanation of the language used by Christ, it is evident, that *the universality of the preaching of the Gospel* is an indication, that the prophetic *end of the world* or *day of judgment* is near at hand; by which (as above) I mean, not the *literal* end of all things or the *literal* time when both the quick and the dead shall be judged, but that *figurative* commencement of the great judicial day which takes place after the end of the 1260 years and at the beginning of the 1000 years of blessedness.

With this arrangement, both the calendar of prophecy, and the present state of the world, exactly agree.

From whatever precise point the 1260 years ought to be computed, we cannot, as it is excellently remarked by Bp. Hurd, be *very far* removed from their termina-

Digitized by Google

termination: because a corrupt spiritual power, which minutely corresponds with the symbolical little horn of the Roman Empire both in time and in place and in character, has been in action at the least twelve centuries *. But, if we be thus demonstratively near the end of the 1260 years, which end coincides with the end of those *times of the Gentiles* mentioned by our Lord; we must also be near the prophetic or figurative *end of the world* and *day of judgment*. And, if we be near this figurative *end of the world*, we must expect that the Gospel either has been preached or is now preaching to all nations: because Christ has declared, that, when this universal evangelization shall have taken place, *then shall the end come*.

Accordingly, the fact perfectly tallies both with Christ's prediction and with the prophetic calendar. It may at present, I believe, be said, that there is scarcely a region upon the face of the habitable globe, where the Gospel has not, at one time or another, been preached either successfully or unsuccessfully: and the prophetic calendar teaches us to believe, that we have approached very near to the expiration of the 1260 years or to the end of *the times of the Gentiles*.

Hence we have a two-fold evidence, that we cannot be far removed from that *end* or (as Daniel calls it) that *time of the end;* which, as we learn

* See Pp. Hurd's Introd. to the study of proph. serm. xi. 190—194.

from

Digitized by Google

from our Lord, is to come, when the Gospel shall have been preached to all nations and when *the times of* the Gentiles shall have expired *.

2. The next particular after the signs, which announce the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, is the destruction itself of that city with its magnificent temple, of which Christ declares that not one stone shall be left upon another.

(1.) To the circumstances of this event Christ refers that *abomination of desolation*, which Daniel, in two of his prophecies, had foretold should stand in the holy place or where it ought not to stand: and its appearance he connects with the fact of Jerusalem being compassed with armies †.

Here I need scarcely remark, that *the armies* alluded to were the Roman armies, and that *the desolating abomination in the holy place* denotes the eagles planted within the precincts of the temple. So amply has this part of the prophecy been discussed, the misery of the Jews, the special calamities undergone by the female population of Jerusalem, the remarkable escape of the Christians, and the complete dilapidation of the temple; that it is plainly superfluous for me to dwell more at large upon the subject ‡.

(2.) Scarcely need I say more on the rising up of

* Dan. viii. 17. xi. 40.

† Dan. ix. 27. xi. 31.

‡ See my Dissert. on the proph. of the lxx Weeks. chap. vi. § IV, V, VI. and Bp. Newton's Dissert. xix. part 2.

false

Digitized by Google

false Christs and false prophets during that disastrous period.

We learn from Josephus, that many such impostors then started up, who promised to the Jews deliverance through the intervention of the Deity: and Hegesippus in Eusebius mentions, that, about the same time, numerous false Christs and false prophets made their appearance. Some of these last led their followers into the desert: and others carried on their imposition within the recesses of secret chambers *.

3. Great however as was the misery of the Jews during the siege of Jerusalem, their allotted period of tribulation is by no means limited to the mere continuance of the war. Our Lord, as his prediction is recorded by St. Luke, foretells, that "wrath "shall be upon this people, and they shall fall by "the edge of the sword: and they shall be led "away captive into all nations and Jerusalem shall "be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times "of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled."

This prophecy carries us far beyond the bare duration of the siege: since from it we learn, that the tribulation of the Jews was to be prolonged to the very end of a period, which Christ denominates *the times of the Gentiles*. Now *the times of the Gentiles*, as we have already seen, expire synchronically with the prophetic *three times and a half* or the 1260 years. Consequently, the tribulation of the

* Bp. Newton Dissert. vol. ii. p. 257—262.

Jews

Digitized by Google

Jews is to continue to the close of that grand period: and therefore, when that grand period shall have expired, their tribulation will be accomplished and a brighter day will open upon them. The tribulation itself is to consist, first in their falling by the edge of the sword, and next in their being led away captive into all nations while their chief city is successively occupied by various tribes of the Gentiles. Of these particulars, the former was accomplished, in the dreadful wars which took place under Titus and Adrian; and the latter was equally accomplished, in the general dispersion of the Jews which (agreeably to the prediction) continues even to this day, and in the successive occupation of their capital by the Romans and the Saracens and the Latins and the Turks. The Jews are still in captivity among all nations, and Jerusalem is still trodden down of the Gentiles: therefore, as their tribulation still *continues*, the times of the Gentiles or the 1260 years, which are to bring that tribulation *to an end*, cannot yet have been fulfilled.

4. Christ has now brought his prophecy down to the close of the times of the Gentiles and to the synchronical end of the tribulation of the Jews: he next proceeds to describe the events, which are to occur at this important epoch.

" In those days, immediately after the tribulation " of those days, there shall be signs in the sun and " in the moon and in the stars. The sun shall be " darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, " and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the " powers

Digitized by Google

" powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And " upon the earth shall be distress of nations with " perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring, men's " hearts failing them for fear and for looking after " those things which are coming on the earth *."

(1.) Bp. Newton, and those commentators who would apply the whole prediction of our Lord to the events connected with the siege of Jerusalem, dwell much upon the words *immediately after:* and, contending that *the tribulation of those days* relates to the events which *preceded* and *ushered in* the final destruction of the city, they urge, that the various signs, which are said to be IMMEDIATELY *after the tribulation of those days*, cannot denote *any* DISTANT *occurrence*, but must needs signify *the* RAPIDLY *approaching desolation of the Jewish capital.* On the same principle they maintain, that *the appearance in heaven of the sign of the Son of man* means only *the subversion of Jerusalem*, and that *the gathering together of the elect by angels with a great sound of a trumpet* denotes nothing more than *the gathering together of the Christian Church out of all the nations under heaven* †.

In adopting this hypothesis, they most arbitrarily and unnaturally shut out from the tribulation of the Jews that very thing which constitutes the most prominent feature of their tribulation, namely *the tremendous destruction of their capital city;* and, at

* See above § I. 18.

† Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 281—288.

the

the same time, very strangely confound together, as denoting one single event, *certain prophetic signs* and *the awful occurrence which those signs are described as introducing*, namely *the portents in the allegorical heaven and earth* and *the coming of the Son of man which those portents announce.*

Now, from the tribulation of the Jews, it is manifestly altogether incongruous to exclude their very greatest tribulation, *the complete overthrow of their city and temple.* Consequently, when St. Matthew and St. Mark proceed to say, that *immediately after the tribulation of those days there shall be various signs in heaven and in earth;* they clearly say, that such signs shall occur AFTER the destruction of Jerusalem. But, if they occur AFTER the destruction of Jerusalem, they assuredly cannot denote that identical destruction itself.

So again: the signs in heaven and in earth USHER IN the coming of the Son of man: consequently, *the signs* must be something quite distinct from *the coming.* But, in the present exposition, they are alike said to denote one and the same event, namely *the destruction of Jerusalem.*

Nor is this all: the commentators before us seem to have altogether overlooked the very important clause of the prophecy, which has been preserved by St. Luke. The two other evangelists dwell so exclusively upon the miseries of the siege, that they might seem to confine the allotted period of the tribulation of the Jews to the continuance of the war: whence, as they agree in saying that certain signs should be manifested

Digitized by Google

manifested *immediately after the tribulation of those days*, we might hastily imagine, with the present commentators, that the signs must necessarily occur in the age of Titus. But any such erroneous conclusion is effectually corrected by St. Luke. He teaches us, that the tribulation of the Jews was by no means to be confined to the period of the siege, but that we are to view it as prolonged *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.* After this statement he introduces the passage, which is parallel to those of St. Matthew and St. Mark wherein they say that various signs should appear in heaven and in earth *immediately after the tribulation of those days.* Hence it is evident, that, as *the tribulation of those days* continues *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;* the expression *immediately after*, so far from directing us to a period synchronical with *the age of Titus*, does in truth direct us to a period immediately consecutive to *the times of the Gentiles:* for *the tribulation of those days* expires, when *the times of the Gentiles* expire: therefore, whatever occurs immediately after *the tribulation of those days*, must necessarily occur immediately after *the times of the Gentiles* also.

(2.) The confutation of error will prepare us for the adoption of what I am persuaded is the truth. IN *those days*, IMMEDIATELY AFTER *the tribulation of those days*, say St. Matthew and St. Mark, *there shall be signs in the heaven and in the earth.* Now, as St. Luke informs us that *the tribulation of those days* expires when *the times of the Gentiles* expire, the

Digitized by Google

the preceding declaration is exactly equivalent to the following one. IN *the times of the Gentiles,* IMMEDIATELY AFTER *the times of the Gentiles, there shall be signs in the heaven and in the earth.*

Here we may observe a most important double notation of time. The signs in question are to occur, not only IMMEDIATELY AFTER the tribulation, but likewise IN the days of the tribulation: that is to say, they are to occur, partly AFTER the times of the Gentiles shall have been fulfilled, and partly IN the actual lapse of those times; their occurrence is to *begin* BEFORE the times of the Gentiles shall have expired, but it is to *continue* AFTER the expiration of those times, so that the times themselves are to expire IN THE MIDST of the occurrence of the signs.

The accuracy of this double notation is very remarkable, both as it corresponds with the declarations of other parallel prophecies, and as it has hitherto been decidedly confirmed by events which have taken place in our own days.

Thus Daniel places the manifestation of Antichrist or the wilful king BEFORE *the time of the end* or *the short period which follows the three times and a half:* and describes a series of calamities, which synchronize with the restoration of the Jews, as occurring AFTER the commencement of that short final period which comprehends the space of 75 years *. Thus also St. John, not to multiply instances, represents

* Dan. xi. 36—39, 40—45. xii. 1.

six

Digitized by Google

six of the last plagues as being in full activity BEFORE the expiration of the 1260 years at the commencement of the seventh plague: and therefore places all the miseries produced by that last plague, such as the downfal of the mystical Babylon and the overthrow of the great Antichristian confederacy, AFTER the 1260 years shall have expired *.

As prophecy thus harmoniously corresponds with prophecy, so does the event equally correspond with what has been foretold.

I need scarcely observe, that, in the figured language of the Hebrew seers, the *darkening of the sun and moon*, the *precipitation of the stars*, the *shaking of the powers of heaven*, and the *roaring of the mighty ocean*, signify *vast and extensive political revolutions;* by which regularly constituted authorities are subverted or weakened, by which the limits of nations are changed, and by which scenes of phrenzied anarchy and bloodshed are violently introduced.

Now, according to the prediction of Christ, such revolutions are to occur, both shortly BEFORE the end of the Jewish tribulation at the close of the 1260 years or the times of the Gentiles, and likewise IMMEDIATELY AFTER the accomplishment of that tribulation. But the mere page of history shews to us, that, whatever may be the *precise* point from which the fatal 1260 years ought to be computed, a corrupt spiritual power, which minutely corresponds

* See above vol. i. chap. i. § IV. 3.

with

Digitized by Google

with Daniel's little horn of the Roman Empire and with the apocalyptic false prophet who is specially attached to the same Empire, has already existed within the pale of the Latin Church and within the limits of the Roman Empire more than twelve centuries. Hence it is evident, that we cannot be far removed from the end of the 1260 years: and, consequently, we cannot be far removed from the end of the tribulation of the Jews. If then we be near the end of the tribulation of the Jews, we may expect to behold those dreadful and extensive political revolutions, which, according to our Lord's prophecy, are to commence IN the days of that tribulation.

Agreeably to this reasonable expectation, has the event turned out. We have beheld a series of most astonishing convulsions; which have shaken Christendom to its very centre, which have displaced ancient authorities, and which have removed the old land marks of nations. These have happened in perfect accordance, both with the prediction of Christ, with the miseries which Daniel's wilful king is to introduce PREVIOUS to *the time of the end*, and with the horrors so graphically depicted in the apocalyptic account of the four earliest vials of the third and last grand woe. Again, we have beheld a scarcely less wonderful counter-revolution: and we now, for the first time, may see the Roman Empire in its state of predicted headlessness and political non-existence*. All this however has happened in

* See above Dissert. i. sect. 2. § VIII. 2. This was written in the August of the year 1816.

strict

Digitized by Google

strict agreement with the prophecy of the fifth vial; which foretells, that the Roman wild beast under its short-lived seventh head should be hurled from its Francico-Imperial throne, that its whole kingdom should be filled with allegorical darkness, and that its blaspheming adherents should gnaw their very tongues with rage and pain while yet they repented not of their former evil deeds *. But such a state of depression or figurative death, as we are plainly taught in the Apocalypse and as we may infer from the prediction of our Lord, is not to be permanent. The deadly wound, inflicted by the sword of violence, is to be healed: and the now defunct wild beast is to start up into a new term of political re-existence †. Under the sixth vial we may observe the occurrence of another revolution, by which the Antichristian power recovers all its lost ascendancy, mounts again the throne of empire as the yet future eighth form of Roman government, and successfully organizes a mighty confederacy of vassal Latin sovereigns ‡.

With these, as we learn from Daniel, the great king labours to effect yet additional political revolutions. The time of the end, or the expiration of the times of the Gentiles, or the close of the Jewish tribulation, or the period which commences at the com-

* Rev. xvi. 10, 11. See above Dissert. i. sect. 3. § II. 2.

† Rev. xiii. 3, 12, 14. xvii. 8, 10, 11. See above Dissert. i. sect. 4. § I, II, III, IV, V.

‡ Rev. xvi. 12—16. xvii. 10, 11. See above Dissert. i. sect. 4. § VI.

pletion

Digitized by Google

pletion of the 1260 years, having at length arrived (for all these particulars are strictly synchronical); the *second* series of revolutions will commence, which Christ describes as occurring IMMEDIATELY AFTER *the tribulation of those days.* Through some combination of events hidden as yet in the womb of futurity, the Jews will be put in motion: the wilful king, having regained his lost authority by the healing of the mortally wounded seventh head, will enter into the countries, and overflow, and pass over, and will enter into the glorious land while many countries shall be overthrown, and will stretch forth his hand upon the countries, and will go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many: and some mighty maritime nation, which had previously acted a distinguished part in conveying papyrine implements or papyrine books to the utmost extremities of the world by the hand of certain sacerdotal angels or swift messengers, will now lend itself to facilitate the restoration of a people; which had long been dragged away and plucked, which had been wonderful from the beginning hitherto, which had never ceased to expect the promised Messiah, and whose ancient land the metaphorical rivers of foreign invaders had perpetually spoiled *. At this period, according

* Dan. xi. 40—45. Isaiah xviii. 1, 2. Malach. ii. 7. Rev. i. 20. In Isaiah xviii. 2, Bp. Horsley, agreeing with our common translation, renders בכלי גמא *in bulrush vessels*; and supposes *the light ships* of the maritime nation to be meant by the expression. I much doubt however, whether the original will bear such

Digitized by Google

cording to Daniel, there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that

such a sense. The word כלי rather denotes *an utensil* or *instrument* of any sort: and I am inclined to think, that it will be impossible to produce any passage where it is used in the sense of *a ship*. Hence I conclude, that the maritime character of the nation is not set forth in *this* expression, but in the description of its being a land of the perpetual shadow of sails and of its being accustomed to send messengers or sacerdotal angels or preachers of God's word by sea. The two first verses therefore I would translate, as follows.

" Ho! land of the perpetual shadow of wings (or sails), which " art beyond the rivers of Cush! accustomed to send messen- " gers by sea, even with papyrine implements upon the surface " of the waters."

By *the messengers* I understand *sacerdotal messengers* or *angels*, agreeably to the usual phraseology of Holy Scripture (See Malach. ii. 7. iii. 1. comp. with iv. 5. Rev. i. 20.): and by *the papyrine implements* I understand, as is most natural, *books made of paper*. What the subject of these *paper books* is, we are not specifically informed: but, since *the messengers*, as we may argue from the very circumstance of their bearing a message to the Jews connected with their restoration and conversion, are *sacerdotal messengers*; it seems but reasonable to infer, that *the paper books*, which they carry with them, and which the maritime nation is engaged in sending by water apparently to various parts of the world, are *the Holy Scriptures* emphatically denominated *the Bible* or *the Book*. Hence we appear to collect, that this great maritime nation is to be remarkable in the last ages, for its systematic employment of missionaries, and for its wide and zealous circulation of the Sacred Volume.

Our English word *Vessel* is of so unfortunately ambiguous a nature, that I cannot help a little suspecting that it has served to mislead even Horsley himself. We familiarly employ the term *Vessel* to designate alike *a ship* and *a kettle*: but this is purely

Digitized by Google

that same time: and, at this period also, according to our Lord, there shall be upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.

Such are the revolutions, which Christ foretells as occurring, partly IN the days of the tribulation of the Jews, and partly IMMEDIATELY AFTER the tribulation of those days. The *first* series we have ourselves beheld; and it is described by St. John, as the harvest of God's wrath: the *second*, which he describes as the vintage of God's wrath, is yet future, commencing as soon as the tribulation of the Jews shall have ended and as the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled *.

5. The prophecy goes on to inform us, that all these awful revolutions are but signs of the now rapidly approaching advent of the Son of man: and it intimates, that, just as we may prognosticate the speedy arrival of summer by the budding of the trees;

purely idiomatical; and I conceive, the Hebrew כלי would as little excite the idea of *a ship* in the mind of a Jew, as the Latin *Vas* would in the mind of a Roman. Yet both the English *Vessel* and the Latin *Vas* are words of much more limited signification than the Hebrew כלי. The Seventy plainly understood the original to mean *books* or *writings* of some description or another; and as plainly connected them with the message of the Αγγελοι, as they express what *we* term *Messengers*. They render גמא בכלי επιστολας βιβλινας or *epistles written upon papyrus*.

* Rev. xiv. 14—20.

Digitized by Google

so, when we see these things beginning to come to pass, we may know that Christ is near even at the doors, we may know that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

This advent of our Lord, which we may thus anticipate (as we are directed to do) from the thickening signs of the times, is that, which takes place at the *prophetic* end of the world or at the beginning of the *prophetic* great day of judgment: that is to say, as I have already most fully shewn, it is the advent of Christ, not for the *literal* judgment of the quick and the dead at the *literal* end of the world, but for the judgment of the Antichristian faction *upon earth* and for the deliverance and vindication of his people whether converted Jews or pious Gentiles *.

Now the *prophetic* great day of judgment commences with the destruction of the rebel rout of God's enemies, which occurs shortly before the introduction of the millennian period of blessedness: and with this synchronizes the final settling of the Jews in the land of their forefathers. Accordingly, as our Lord makes *his appearance in the clouds of heaven* immediately to succeed *the revolutionary signs which follow upon the expiration of the times of the Gentiles;* so Daniel fixes his *judgment of the Roman Empire and of its tyrannical little sovereignty* to *the close of the three times and a half*, and represents Messiah under the name of *the great prince*

* See above § II. 2.

Michael

Digitized by Google

Michael as standing up for the children of his people *.

After this earthly judgment, which the prophets view as the commencement of the grand judicial day, come the days of blessedness; which both Daniel and St. John describe as occurring, not in the invisible kingdom of heaven, but in the course of the present visible world †.

For such days there must needs be an adequate preparation: and this, if I mistake not, is set forth, when Christ declares, that the Son of man "shall "send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, "and shall gather together his elect from the four "winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the "uttermost part of heaven, and from one end of "heaven to the other ‡." The *gathering together of the elect* is spoken of, as synchronizing with the appearance of our Lord in the midst of those revolutionary signs, which are displayed IMMEDIATELY AFTER the tribulation of the Jews. Hence it cannot be a gathering of them to the *literal* day of judgment; but must inevitably be some gathering of them *upon earth* to the *prophetic* judgment, which *precedes* the long period of the millennium. Now the *prophetic* judgment at the close of the 1260 years, like the *literal* judgment at the proper end of all things, will respect both the good and the bad, both

* Dan. vii. 9, 10, 11, 21, 22, 24—27. xii. 1.

† Dan. vii. 14, 22, 27. Rev. xx. 3—9.

‡ See above § I. 20.

God's

Digitized by Google

God's friends and God's enemies. Consequently, as the latter will be condemned and punished, so the former will be acquitted and rewarded. For this purpose, while the enemies of God are destroyed in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem or in the glorious land between the two seas; his elect, through the instrumentality of certain appointed angels or sacerdotal messengers, will be gathered together into one hallowed community under the spiritual domination of the Prince of peace *. Foremost among them will stand the converted Jews and the long-lost Israelites; and next the various churches of the Gentiles, now happily reformed from all superstition, and cleansed from all impurity. The first, we have reason to believe, by virtue of the ancient covenant with their father Abraham, will enjoy some kind of spiritual metropolitan superiority: for, when the throne of the Messiah is established for ever and ever, his

* The allegorical trumpet, introduced by our Lord in connection with his angels or messengers, is the same, I apprehend, as that, which Isaiah similarly introduces in connection with the angels or messengers whom the maritime nation is to send to the Jews. See Isaiah xviii. 3. So again: the ensign, which Isaiah connects with the trumpet, is the same as that ensign, which he elsewhere declares shall be set up in the day when Judah and Israel are converted and restored. But this ensign is no doubt the preaching of the Gospel, when the time shall arrive for its universal prevalence: because, the prophet declares, that he means by it *the root of Jesse*. Compare Isaiah xviii. 3. with xi. 10, 12. and both with Matt. xxiv. 31. See also Bp. Horsley's Letter on Isaiah xviii. cited above Dissert. ii. § III. 2. (3.)

allegorical

Digitized by Google

allegorical queen, or his long repudiated though now reëspoused consort, claims and is allowed a manifest precedence over the kings' daughters her companions, who shadow out the several pure churches of the Gentiles *. Yet abundant shall be the peace and blessedness of all: and their happiness, under their divine lawgiver and sovereign, perfect as any sublunary happiness can be, shall continue undisturbed during the space of a thousand years.

6. At some indefinite time after the expiration of that period, and when a second Antichristian rebellion shall have been miraculously quashed, the *prophetic* great day of judgment is brought to a close, and terminates with introducing as its final chronological portion the *real* end of the world and the *literal* judgment both of the quick and of the dead.

Respecting the precise epoch of this grand consummation, our Lord declares that it is known to the Father only; while every other being, even the Son himself in his human capacity which (we are told †) admitted of a growth in wisdom, is altogether ignorant. *Of* THAT *day and* THAT *hour*, namely that proper end of the world which the disciples had erroneously associated with the subversion of the temple, *knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only.* Yet, though the absolute moment may thus be kept

* Psalm xlv. See Bp. Horsley's Serm. vol. i. ser. 4, 5, 6, 7.
† See Luke ii. 52.

secret,

Digitized by Google

secret, even that awful event will not be without its sufficiently unambiguous harbingers. It appears, that, when the bulk of the millennian saints shall by the hand of death have been translated to heaven, a great degeneracy will take place among the survivors subsequent to the expiration of the thousand years. Unawed by the successive judgment and destruction of *two* Antichristian factions, the *one* previous to the commencement and the *other* at the end of the millennium, men will again corrupt themselves to such a pitch, that the Christian faith will be well nigh obliterated from the face of the earth. The present world, in short, immediately before its dissolution by fire, will but too accurately reflect the image of the old world, immediately before its devastation by water. "As the days of Noah were," says our Lord, "so shall also be the coming of the Son of "man;" that is to say, his coming to the *literal* judgment both of quick and dead: for *the coming* here spoken of is at THAT day and THAT hour, of which no one knoweth save the Father only. "For, "as in the days that were before the flood, they "were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in "marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the "ark; and knew not, until the flood came and took "them all away: so shall also the coming of the "Son of man be." Nor will the period immediately before the *literal* day of judgment be more distinguished by the prevalence of iniquity, than by the want of faith. In this particular again, the present world will bear a close resemblance to the world of the

Digitized by Google

the antediluvians. The world, that was destroyed by water, seems to have been eminently characterized by a daring spirit of infidelity; which, originating with Cain, gradually infected the whole human race save the family of Noah: and, in a similar manner, the world, that is to be destroyed by fire, will be in such a state at the time of Christ's final advent, that, in a question which implies the very strongest negation, he asks; "When the Son of man cometh, shall "he find faith on the earth*?"

This final judgment, of which our Lord declares that no one knoweth the day and the hour save the Father only, manifestly coincides with that consummating judgment, which St. John places, not only after the judgment of the Roman Empire and the false prophet, but even after the miraculous judicial destruction of the last Antichristian confederacy at the close of the thousand years.

"I saw a great white throne and him that sat on "it, from whose face the heaven and the earth fled "away; and there was found no place for them. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before "God; and the books were opened: and another "book was opened, which is the book of life: and "the dead were judged out of those things, which "were written in the books, according to their "works. And the sea gave up the dead, which "were in it; and death and Hades delivered up the

* Luke xviii. 8.

dead,

Digitized by Google

" dead, which were in them: and they were judged,
" every man, according to their works*."

IV. We have now gone through the whole of our Lord's very remarkable prophecy; which, step by step, leads us in strict chronological order from his own time to the universal judgment both of the quick and of the dead: and so lucid is the arrangement, when the three different accounts of it as given by the three first evangelists are properly harmonized in one single strain or discourse, that, except a discussion respecting the true idea of the *prophetic* great day of judgment, we have had little to do beyond barely following the tenor of the prediction and comparing it (so far as it has hitherto been accomplished) with the page of history. But we have next to consider a very serious difficulty, which must by no means be passed over in silence; more especially as the passage, where it occurs, has been the chief ground of that erroneous exposition, which would confine one of the most magnificent prophecies of Holy Writ to the mere destruction of Jerusalem and the temple.

In all the three evangelists, between *the coming of the Son of man after the end of the tribulation of the Jews* and *the arrival of that awful day which is known to the Father alone*, our Lord is described as making a solemn declaration, which our English translators have expressed in the following terms:

* Rev. xx. 11—13.

" Verily

Digitized by Google

" Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not " pass away, until all these things be fulfilled *."

Now from such language he has been understood to intimate, that all those things, which he had been foretelling, should come to pass, ere the then existing generation of men should have been removed by death from off the face of the earth. Such therefore being the case, his whole prophecy, until he comes to speak emphatically of THAT *day and* THAT *hour*, cannot reach beyond the sacking of Jerusalem by Titus: nay, some would even refer exclusively to the same early period what he says of THAT *day and* THAT *hour*, plainly as he then begins to describe the ultimate literal judgment, on the strange plea, that *the precise moment* when the temple should be overthrown was known only to the Father, though the Son was commissioned to declare *in general terms* that it should be destroyed *some time* in the course of the then living generation †.

This difficulty has of course been felt by those expositors, who, with whatever smaller variations, would view our Lord's prediction as chronologically extending to the very consummation of all things: and they have consequently perceived the absolute necessity of endeavouring to remove it. As for the passage itself where the difficulty occurs, none have pretended that it has been misplaced by the error of transcribers: for, since it appears exactly in the same

* Matt. xxiv. 34. Mark xiii. 30. Luke xxi. 32.

† See Bp. Newton's Dissert. vol. ii. p. 317, 319—324.

situation

Digitized by Google

situation in all the three evangelists; if any such hypothesis were adopted, it would be necessary to hazard the highly improbable conjecture that a *triple* error in transcription had taken place, a conjecture which must immediately be discarded with contempt as manifestly excogitated for the sole purpose of serving a turn. The passage therefore has been universally received, as it has been found: and all attempts, that have been made to obviate the difficulty, have been made solely in the way of interpretation.

1. Among those, whose efforts have been directed to this purpose, the illustrious Mede may justly be first mentioned.

To do away then the force of a passage, which might seem to confine the whole accomplishment of the prophecy to the then current generation, this great expositor asserts, that the original word *Genea* does not here mean *a generation of coëxisting men*, but *a race* or *nation:* and the nation spoken of he supposes to be that of the Jews. Hence he contends, that the real purport of the passage is this: *the nation of the Jews shall in no wise be dissolved, but shall continue a distinct body however dispersed, until all these things shall be fulfilled**.

Such an interpretation, notwithstanding the great name by which it stands recommended, seems to me to labour under too many objections to be safely embraced.

(1.) The interpretation itself is harsh and unna-

* Mede's Works, book iv. epist. 12. p. 752, 753.

tural,

Digitized by Google

tural, not springing easily out of the words, but bearing evident marks of force and constraint.

(2.) We may reasonably doubt, whether the proposed translation of *Genea* be itself tenable. Even the Greek word, whenever it is used to denote *a people*, ordinarily conveys likewise the idea of *a people as existing in the persons of the present generation:* but our Lord, who spoke Hebrew and not Greek, used in all probability the word *Dor;* which exclusively means *a generation*, and never signifies *a people* *.

(3.) If however we adopt it, we shall find ourselves obliged, by the express tenor of the exposition, to bring out a conclusion, the very opposite both to truth and to what Mr. Mede himself would wish to maintain. The real import of the passage, he informs us, is this: *the nation of the Jews shall in no wise be dissolved, but shall continue a distinct body however dispersed,* UNTIL *all these things shall be fulfilled.* But, if the Jews are to *continue* a distinct body UNTIL all these things shall be fulfilled; then, WHEN all these things *are* fulfilled, they will *cease* to be a distinct body: for the idea of *cessation* is necessarily involved in the word UNTIL. Thus, when we are told that the sceptre shall *not* depart from Judah UNTIL Messiah shall come; we are evidently told also, that, WHEN Messiah *does* come, the sceptre *shall* depart from Judah: and thus, if we say that

* Thus the authors of the Hebrew translation of St. Matthew express Γενεα by דור.

the

Digitized by Google

the reign of Harold did *not* end UNTIL the battle of Hastings; we plainly say also in effect, that WHEN that battle *had* been fought, his reign *did* end. The Jews however, as we are most unequivocally taught by the voice of prophecy, will *not* cease to be a distinct people, WHEN all these things shall be fulfilled; nor is it Mr. Mede's intention to assert any such matter: on the contrary, they will then be *nationally* restored, *in one great unbroken body*, to the land of their forefathers.

2. Bp. Horsley, as if dissatisfied with the gloss of Mr. Mede, endeavours to obviate the difficulty after another method.

The expression, ALL THESE THINGS, occurs in TWO successive clauses of the prophecy: *So likewise ye, when ye shall see* ALL THESE THINGS *come to pass, know that he is near even at the doors;* and *This generation shall not pass away, until* ALL THESE THINGS *be fulfilled**. Now the bishop contends, that ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *latter*

* "Now learn a parable of the fig-tree and all the trees. "When her branch is yet tender and putteth forth leaves, and "when they now shoot forth; ye see and know of your own "selves, that summer is now nigh at hand. Matt. xxiv. 32. "Mark xiii. 28. Luke xxi. 29, 30.

1. "So likewise ye, when ye shall see ALL THESE THINGS "come to pass, know that he is near even at the doors, know "ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Matt. xxiv. 33. "Mark xiii. 29. Luke xxi. 31.

2. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass "away, till ALL THESE THINGS be fulfilled." Matt. xxiv. 34. Mark xiii. 30. Luke xxi. 32.

clause

clause *This generation*, are the same as ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*. But ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*, corresponding as they do with the parabolical budding of the trees, he rightly pronounces to be exclusively *the signs* of an approaching event, and not *the event itself*. Now *the event itself* he maintains to be *the destruction of Jerusalem*. Consequently, he maintains *the signs* of that event to be *the troubles which preceded the overthrow of the Jewish capital*. The troubles therefore which preceded its overthrow being exclusively *the signs* denoted by the expression ALL THESE THINGS, and those troubles taking place in the course of the then existing generation; when our Lord said *This generation shall not pass away until* ALL THESE THINGS *be fulfilled*, he in effect said nothing more than *This generation shall not pass away until* ALL THE TROUBLES WHICH USHER IN THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM *shall have occurred**.

(1.) In such an exposition we might safely, I think, have rested, had the bishop satisfactorily established his *second point*: that is to say, we might have safely rested in it, if he had proved that ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*, relate to *the troubles which were to precede the destruction of Jerusalem*. But this matter, so far as I can judge of evidence, he has *not* proved.

* Bp. Horsley's Serm. vol. i. serm. 1. p. 17—20.

The

Digitized by Google

The expression ALL THESE THINGS, as it occurs in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*, palpably relates to *those signs in the allegorical heavenly bodies*, which are to precede the judicial advent of the Son of man: for we are *first* told, that such signs *are* to precede the advent of Christ; *then* we are referred to the parable of the budding of trees being a sure prognostic of the nearness of summer; and *lastly* we are taught to argue in like manner from the occurrence of ALL THESE THINGS, that the Son of man is near even at the doors *. If therefore the occurrence of ALL THESE THINGS be a sign of *the near approach of Christ's advent*, just as *the budding of trees* is a sign of *the near approach of summer;* and if the parable of the trees be introduced, as it plainly is, by way of elucidating what our Lord had immediately before predicted: then ALL THESE THINGS, which thus announce his approaching advent, must needs be the same as those *signs in the allegorical heavenly bodies* which *similarly* precede his coming in the clouds with power and great glory †. But those *signs in the allegorical heavenly bodies*, as the bishop himself rightly interprets them, so far from relating to *the troubles which ushered in the destruction of Jerusalem*, do not occur until about the close of the

* See the entire passage above § I. 18—23.

† Let any one carefully peruse the entire passage, as given above § I. 18—23; and he will be convinced, I think, that the expression ALL THESE THINGS in § 23 cannot but relate *exclusively* to *the agitation of the heavenly bodies and the violent working of the whole figurative mundane system* described in § 18.

times

Digitized by Google

times of the Gentiles and the end of the tribulation of the Jews: and, when they *do* occur, they will be accomplished, partly *in the revolutions which we have already witnessed*, and partly (to adopt the language of the learned prelate) *in the overthrow of some wicked nations in the last ages who shall pretend to oppose by force of arms the return of the chosen race to the holy land and the reëstablishment of their kingdom**. Such then being the undoubted import of *the signs in the heavenly bodies*, since the whole context imperiously requires us to refer to those *signs* the expression ALL THESE THINGS as it occurs in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye:* it will follow, that the expression, as it occurs in *that* clause, cannot relate to *the long past troubles which ushered in the destruction of Jerusalem.*

This indeed is abundantly manifest from the very necessity of the passage. *The signs in the heavenly bodies* are *immediately* to precede *the coming of the Son of man:* so that, when ALL THESE THINGS namely *the signs in the heavenly bodies* are seen, it may be concluded that *the Son of man is so near as to be absolutely at the very doors;* just as, *when the trees bud*, we know that *summer is so near as to be the very next season.* But this *coming of the Son of man*, which the bishop rightly places at the end of the times of the Gentiles, bears no such chronological relation to *the troubles which ushered in the destruction of Jerusalem:* for, instead of its being

* Bp. Horsley's Serm. vol. i. serm. 3. p. 50—56.

Digitized by Google

the *next* grand event to *those troubles*, instead of its following them *so closely* as to be at the very door while *the troubles* were occurring, more than seventeen centuries have already elapsed since the sacking of Jerusalem by Titus, and we have not yet arrived at the end of the times of the Gentiles because we have not yet beheld the end of the tribulation of the Jews.

I am perfectly aware, that the bishop endeavours to elude this difficulty by saying, that *soon* and *late* are merely comparative terms; and that the first link in the grand chain of events, which is to terminate with the coming of Christ, was composed of *those troubles* which took place in the course of the then existing generation *.

The whole of this may be very true, but it does not exactly meet the objection. Christ clearly speaks of *his advent*, as being the *very next* event to ALL THESE THINGS namely *the signs in the heavenly bodies:* insomuch that he intimates, that, when ALL THESE THINGS shall be seen, that we may be sure that he is so near as to be at the very doors. But, if ALL THESE THINGS mean *the troubles which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem* (a point necessary to the bishop's arrangement, and yet a point which even he himself does not maintain; for he supposes *the signs*, to which the expression relates, to denote *the overthrow of some wicked nations which oppose the return of the Jews):* then *the coming of Christ*

* Serm. vol. i. serm. 1. p. 14—20.

at

Digitized by Google

at the end of the times of the Gentiles was NOT the *very next* principal event to *those troubles;* neither were *those troubles* any such indication that *he was near even at the doors,* as *the budding of trees* is an indication that *summer is nigh at hand.*

In fact, what our Lord evidently makes *the sign of his coming* is *the allegorical confusion among the heavenly bodies:* and this *allegorical confusion* the bishop himself most properly refers to *the revolutions which take place about the close of the times of the Gentiles,* NOT to *the troubles which ushered in the destruction of Jerusalem.* Let the passage then be *thus* understood, and the whole is perfectly clear: *the revolutions* in question occur about the close of the times of the Gentiles; and *immediately afterwards* the prophetic *great day of judgment commences,* and *the Lord comes* (agreeably to the predictions of Daniel and Paul and John) to overthrow the man of sin and the Latin Antichristian faction. But, by no other interpretation, can we exhibit *the judicial advent of Christ* at the end of the tribulation of the Jews, as being *near even at the very doors,* when ALL THESE THINGS are seen.

If then it has been satisfactorily proved, on the principles of the bishop himself, that the expression ALL THESE THINGS, as it occurs in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye,* cannot relate to *the troubles which ushered in the destruction of Jerusalem,* but must relate (as in fact the bishop declares they *do* relate) to *the revolutions which occur about the close of the times of the Gentiles:* if this point has been satisfac-

Digitized by Google

torily proved, the whole hypothesis of Bp. Horsley, relative to the meaning of the text *This generation shall not pass away until* ALL THESE THINGS *be fulfilled*, must plainly fall to the ground; for it rests entirely upon the referring of the expression ALL THESE THINGS, as it occurs in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*, to *the troubles which preceded the sacking of Jerusalem by Titus.*

(2.) There is yet another matter likewise, which will inevitably follow from it.

The bishop, as we have seen, contends, that ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *latter* clause *This generation shall not pass away*, are the same as ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*. Now, if the main hypothesis falls to the ground, such an opinion must of necessity fall to the ground with it.

ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *latter* clause *This generation*, must certainly include *the troubles which preceded the sacking of Jerusalem;* because our Lord declares, that the then-existing generation should behold them: but ALL THESE THINGS, mentioned in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*, can have no relation whatsoever to *those early Jewish troubles;* because the context obliges us to refer them WHOLLY to *the revolutions which take place about the end of the times of the Gentiles.* Hence it appears, that the two expressions, instead of being *precisely* of the same import, bear a meaning *less* and *more intense*, according to the tenor of their respective contexts.

The

Digitized by Google

The *first* of them, which occurs in the *prior* clause *So likewise ye*, relates only to the matters LAST handled by our Lord; namely, *the revolutions which are to be the sign of the coming of the Son of man:* and the phraseology of the second person here used by him, *So likewise* YE, *when* YE *shall see*, no more limits the time to the days of the apostles, as if THEY were especially to see ALL THESE THINGS, than his commanding them to watch, *for* YE *know not what hour your Lord doth come*, can be construed as implying that THEY specially should be alive and watching at the day of judgment; in both cases, such phraseology is but a natural and familiar mode of pointing out, how *Christians in general* ought to act under an abiding impression of the great day of account.

But the *second* of them, as it occurs in the *latter* clause *This generation*, bears a much more extensive meaning; it relates, not only to the matters LAST handled by Christ, but *additionally* to the WHOLE of his preceding discourse, from *the early troubles which ushered in the destruction of Jerusalem* down to *the judicial coming of the Son of man at the end of the tribulation of the Jews:* for at this resting-place he pauses, ere he proceeds to speak of the solemnities of THAT *day and* THAT *hour* which is known to his Father alone; and, summing up ALL that he had previously said, he solemnly assures his auditors, with express reference to that ALL, *This generation shall not pass away until* ALL THESE THINGS *be fulfilled.*

3. A third

Digitized by Google

3. A third writer, who has not given his name, proposes a yet different mode of solution.

By erasing the aspirate from the beginning of the Greek pronoun, which is used in the present passage, he enables himself to translate it *that* instead of *this*. Hence, after such a correction of the original, the clause will run: "THAT generation shall not "pass away, until all these things be fulfilled." Having thus obtained a different version, he would explain the passage in the following manner.

All these things, here foretold by our Lord, are to occur immediately after the expiration of *the times of the Gentiles* or *the period of* 1260 *years*. But "all these great and awful events," when they *do* occur, "shall occupy a space of time *less* than a "generation. Now *a generation*, we know by the "consent of all chronologers, is *thirty three years* "*and a half:* and we likewise know from the book "of Daniel, that *the time of the end*, in which all "these great events are to be accomplished, is pre- "cisely thirty years; or three years and a half *less* "than a generation." Hence *all these things*, here foretold by our Lord, will be accomplished in *less* than a generation; and consequently THAT generation, or the generation which flourishes during their occurrence, will not pass away until they shall all be fulfilled. The events however themselves have already been occurring for more than twenty years, because *the signs in the heavenly bodies* denote *the awful revolutions which have lately shaken Europe to its very centre*. Such being the case, *the times of the*

Digitized by Google

the Gentiles or *the* 1260 *years* must have expired more than twenty years ago. Consequently, in less than ten years from the time when this exposition was written we may expect *all these things* to be fulfilled: and therefore, at the end of the same period, we may expect the Son of man to come in the clouds of heaven for the purpose of executing judgment upon the Antichristian faction *.

In this plan there is a considerable degree of ingenuity: yet I fear it will not bear the test of a close examination.

I shall not stop to inquire, how far the proposed alteration of the text be allowable; though it may be proper to observe, that in *all* the three Gospels the Greek pronoun is equally aspirated, which of course diminishes the probability of an error in transcription: I am persuaded that the exposition built upon it is so perfectly untenable, that this very circumstance alone would convince me of the genuineness of the present reading and therefore of the strict propriety of the common translation.

(1.) The hypothesis before us rests entirely upon the assumption, that *the signs in the allegorical heavenly bodies*, or in other words *the great revolutions which usher in the coming of the Son of man*, will BEGIN to take place at the expiration of *the times of the Gentiles* or at the close of *the* 1260 *years:* for the 30 years immediately succeed *the* 1260 *years;*

* See a paper in the Christian Observer of Jan. 1815. p. 5—7.

and

Digitized by Google

and the hypothesis limits the accomplishment of the revolutions to those 30 years, in order that they may all be brought within the compass of THAT generation: hence, if the revolutions do NOT commence at the end of *the* 1260 *years*, but if on the contrary they commence at an *earlier* point of time, it is manifest, that a SINGLE generation will *not* be a chronological space within which they will all be fulfilled.

Now the assumption in question, so far from being well founded, is altogether erroneous. The present writer quite overlooks our Lord's most accurate DOUBLE notation of time. From harmonizing the two Gospels of Matthew and Mark we learn, that *the signs in the heavenly bodies* are to occur, both IN the days of *the Jewish tribulation*, and IMMEDIATELY AFTER *that tribulation*. But *the tribulation of the Jews*, as we are specially informed by our Lord according to St. Luke, ends synchronically with *the times of the Gentiles:* and *the times of the Gentiles*, as the present writer truly remarks, end synchronically with *the* 1260 *years*. Hence it is plain, that, as the signs in the heavenly bodies are to *occur* partly IN the days of *the Jewish tribulation* and partly IMMEDIATELY AFTER *that tribulation*, they are to *commence* BEFORE *the Jewish tribulation* shall have terminated. But, if they are to *commence* BEFORE the end of *the Jewish tribulation*, they must also *commence* BEFORE the end of *the times of the Gentiles:* because *the Jewish tribulation* and *the times of the Gentiles* expire synchronically. And, if

Digitized by Google

if they *commence* BEFORE the end of *the times of the Gentiles*, they must likewise, for the same reason, *commence* BEFORE the end of *the* 1260 *years*. It is absolutely necessary however for the present hypothesis, that they should *commence* SYNCHRONICALLY with the end of that period.

Thus does the assumption, which supports the whole fabric, fall at once to the ground.

(2.) So again: the present writer contends, that the predicted revolutions have *already* commenced; whence, agreeably to his assumption, he argues, that *the times of the Gentiles* or *the* 1260 *years* have *already* expired.

The position necessarily flows from the last: but it has been effectually disproved even by absolute matter of fact. *The tribulation of the Jews* ends synchronically with *the times of the Gentiles:* and *the times of the Gentiles* end synchronically with *the* 1260 *years*. But we have not yet beheld the end of *the Jewish tribulation*. Therefore *the* 1260 *years* cannot as yet have expired. I most readily allow indeed, that *the predicted revolutions* have already commenced: but I by no means allow, that on *that* account we have reached the end of *the* 1260 *years*. Quite the contrary: for, as *the predicted revolutions* are to occur partly IN the days of *the Jewish tribulation*, and as *the Jewish tribulation* expires SYNCHRONICALLY with *the times of the Gentiles;* it is plain, that *the predicted revolutions* must *commence* BEFORE the end of *the times of the Gentiles*,

Digitized by Google

Gentiles, with which end the end of *the* 1260 *days* undoubtedly synchronizes.

With this conclusion the event exactly tallies. *The predicted revolutions* have commenced, but *the tribulation of the Jews* has not yet terminated. We have therefore hitherto beheld only the signs, which occur IN the days of *the Jewish tribulation:* we have yet to witness those, which occur IMMEDIATELY AFTER *that tribulation.*

(3.) Should this writer deny the DOUBLE notation of time, and should he maintain that the two phrases *immediately after the tribulation of those days* and *in those days after that tribulation* mean like *the period immediately consecutive to that tribulation;* he would, in that case, find his hypothesis even still more unmanageable. For *then*, according to *that* arrangement, the predicted revolutions cannot at all have commenced: because, by *such* an arrangement, they are all made *successive* to *the Jewish tribulation;* and *the Jewish tribulation* has certainly not yet expired, because the Jews are still dispersed and their city is still trodden down by the Gentiles.

Neither would the matter be in any wise mended, if, still denying the DOUBLE notation, he should contend that the two phrases *immediately after the tribulation of those days* and *in those days after that tribulation* mean alike *the period immediately before the end of that tribulation.* For *then* he would both positively contradict the assertion, that the signs should occur IMMEDIATELY AFTER the Jewish tribulation:

Digitized by Google

bulation: and he would likewise contradict his own position, that *the times of the Gentiles must have expired because the predicted revolutions have commenced;* inasmuch as *the Jewish tribulation* and *the times of the Gentiles* are declared by St. Luke to end SYNCHRONICALLY.

Thus untenable in every point of view is the hypothesis now before us, however plausible it may be at the first sight and however marked by ingenuity.

4. Dissatisfied as yet in our pursuit, we must now inquire whether some fourth less objectionable mode of solving the difficulty may not be devised.

(1.) It is obvious, however they may differ in other points, that the three commentators, who have passed in review before us, all understood the word γενηται in the sense of *absolute accomplishment:* for, agreeably to the turn of our common translation, they suppose our Lord to have said, *until all these things shall be* FULFILLED. Hence upon this idea of *absolute accomplishment* their expositions are invariably founded.

But the question is, whether any such idea be *necessarily* involved in the original expression. Now this I apprehend to be by no means the case. The Greek aorists, particularly in the subjunctive mood, bear, as it is well known to grammarians, a *present* sense; which however they bear, with an ascription of the event spoken of to a time not yet arrived. Hence the original Greek may indeed be translated, *until all these things shall be* FULFILLED: but then it may just as properly be translated, *until all these things*

Digitized by Google

things shall be A FULFILLING, or *until all these things shall be* PUT INTO A COURSE OF FULFILMENT *. Let the passage be *thus* rendered, and the grand difficulty will immediately vanish. For, in that case, our Lord will not say, *This generation shall not pass away until all these things shall be* FULFILLED: but he will say, *This generation shall not pass away until all these things shall be* A FULFILLING; in other words, *This generation shall not pass away until all these things shall be* PUT INTO A COURSE OF FULFILMENT or *shall* BEGIN TO BE FULFILLED. Christ therefore does nothing more than declare, that the series of events which he had been foretelling, a series which extends from *the first appearance of the false Messiahs* down to *his own judicial coming*, should COMMENCE before the then existing generation should have passed away. Accordingly, as we have already seen, impostors, who claimed to be the promised Saviour, began to spring up within a very short time after the crucifixion: and thus the *earliest* predicted event in the chronological series took place almost immediately after the delivering of the prophecy.

(2.) Here however an objection may be made, on account of the force which the word ALL may be supposed to bear. For it may be argued, that, if ALL the predicted matters were to be put into a

* Exactly in the same manner, as Mr. Mede has justly remarked, the original Greek of Rev. xi. 7. may be translated, either *When they shall have* FINISHED *their testimony*, or *When they shall be* A FINISHING *their testimony*.

course

Digitized by Google

course of fulfilment ere the *then current* generation had passed away; those revolutionary convulsions ascribed to the last ages, which occur *in* and *immediately after* the days of the Jewish tribulation, and which are foretold under the imagery of a great agitation in the whole allegorical mundane system, must likewise have commenced during the lapse of the *then current* generation. The present translation therefore will leave us in no better plight than it found us: because it matters little, so far as the difficulty is concerned, whether ALL the predicted events were to be *absolutely accomplished* or were only to *begin to be accomplished;* ere the *then current* generation had passed away.

To such an objection I reply, that the expression ALL *these things* must be taken *collectively;* as must ever be the case, when a summary mode of describing *a series of successive events* is adopted. Hence, when it is said that *this generation shall not pass away until* ALL *these things shall be put into a course of fulfilment*, the meaning must plainly be; that *the collective series, which comprehends* ALL *these things, shall be put into a course of fulfilment, ere the present generation shall have passed away.*

Such a mode of speaking is so familiar to us, that I have noticed this possible objection, rather because it *was* possible than because it was of any weight. When we say, ALL *the great events, which have changed the face of modern Europe, were put into a course of accomplishment at the breaking out of the French*

Digitized by Google

French revolution: who does not at once understand our meaning? No person would imagine for a single moment, that, because we use the word ALL when speaking *collectively* of the whole series, we would intimate, that *every* event, which has occurred within the last twenty seven years, *began* to occur in the year 1789. So far from it, he would immediately perceive, that, by the expression ALL *the great events*, we would describe *the collective series which comprehends them all:* and that, by the general assertion respecting them, we would intimate *this collective series to have commenced with the French revolution.*

Now it in this identical sense of *collectiveness*, a sense most abundantly plain and obvious, that I would understand our Lord's phraseology: *this generation shall not pass away, until* ALL *these things shall be* PUT INTO A COURSE OF FULFILMENT.

(3.) But the meaning of Scripture is perhaps best ascertained by comparing it with itself.

Now it is worthy of observation, that an exactly parallel mode of using an aorist of the very same verb occurs at the beginning of the Apocalypse; which is, in fact, an elaborate prophetic evolution of that identical series of events spoken of by our Lord as being about to be put into a course of fulfilment ere the then existing generation should have passed away.

" The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave " unto him, to shew unto his servants things which " must

Digitized by Google

" must shortly" (not COME TO PASS or BE FULFILLED, as our translators in the same erroneous manner explain the original Greek, but) " BE A " FULFILLING" or " BE PUT INTO A COURSE OF " FULFILMENT *."

Now the things here alluded to, as appears from the whole tenor of the book, reach to the very end of the world. Hence, in the first place, they could not be *fulfilled* or *be finished* or *come to pass* shortly; therefore the aorist infinitive, which is here used as the aorist subjunctive of the very same verb is used in our Lord's declaration, *must* be understood in the sense of *commencement extending into prolonged action:* and, in the second place, *all* the matters foretold in the Revelation *could not* be fulfilled shortly or even begin to be fulfilled shortly, because they were to be *successive* through a long period of many ages; therefore the *things* must clearly be spoken of *collectively*, and the commencement intended must be the commencement of *the series.*

It is precisely in this same manner and no other, that I conceive our Lord's parallel expression ought to be understood. Just as the long series of the apocalyptic prophecies was shortly to be put into a course of fulfilment; so the long series of all those things foretold by Christ was similarly to be put into

* Αποκαλυψις Ιησυ Χριστυ, ην εδωκεν αυτω ὁ Θεος, δειξαι τοις δουλοις αυτυ ἁ δει ΓΕΝΕΣΘΑΙ εν ταχει. Rev. i. 1.

Ου μη παρελθῃ ἡ γενεα αὑτη, ἑως αν παντα ΓΕΝΗΤΑΙ. Luke xxi. 32.

a course

Digitized by Google

a course of fulfilment, ere that generation had passed away *.

(4.) I have

* Commentators, whose plan of exposition leads them to notice the first verse of the Apocalypse, are unanimous in giving this obvious sense to it.

" *Things which must shortly come to pass:* that is, things to " come to pass, some shortly, and other some in succession of " time; as all interpreters agree." More's Works. p. 721.

" The book opens with the title or inscription of the book " itself; the scope and design of it to foretell things, which " should shortly BEGIN to be fulfilled, and should SUCCEED in " their due season and order till all were accomplished." Bp. Newton's Dissert. in loc.

" This book contains an account of many things, that should " shortly BEGIN to be accomplished." Lowman's Paraph. in loc.

" *Which must come to pass in a short time.* The same ex- " pression is seen to recur at the close of the book: and we " may collect from it, that the events foretold in this prophecy " BEGIN to be fulfilled even from the time of its delivery, and " are to FOLLOW in a rapid succession until the final consum- " mation." Woodhouse on the Apoc. in loc.

" *Things which must shortly come to pass.* It was to be a pro- " phecy of the future state of the Church, and such A SERIES " of events then to come to pass, as should BEGIN immediately " after the visions themselves were seen by St. John." Whis- ton on the Rev. part i. p. 32.

Mr. Mede is not led to notice this particular verse of the Apocalypse; but, how he understood it, may be distinctly seen from his comment on the third verse of the same chapter. " *Tempus enim prope est*: id est, jam adest tempus, quo verba " prophetiæ hujus impleri COEPERINT, et indies MAGIS MA- " GISQUE IMPLEBUNTUR." Works. book v. c. 7. p. 907.

Even Bp. Walmesley could see, that such was the undoubted meaning of the passage. " The purpose of the Apocalypse is to

Digitized by Google

(4.) I have argued without hesitation from the well known use of the Greek aorist, because the *inspired* Gospel of Luke was certainly written in the Hellenic language, whatever may have been the case with that of Matthew or of his evident copyist Mark: and the self-same word, in the self-same tense and mood, is employed by the *first* of these authors to express the declaration made by his divine Master. That declaration however must *originally* have been uttered by Christ himself, not in the Greek, but in the Hebrew. Now the word, which he most probably used in that language, will still bring us to the same result *. "This generation shall not pass "away, until all these things shall be a doing" or "shall be coming inceptively into existence."

(5.) On the whole, I may remark in conclusion, that the present mode of explaining a passage, the

"to disclose to the Christians A SERIES of events very interest-"ing to them, which must shortly come to pass." Gen. Hist. p. 1, 2. Yet with such strange closeness do sense and nonsense border upon each other, that almost in the same breath he actually tells us, that the angel, through whose instrumentality the Apocalypse is said to have been conveyed to St. John (Rev. i. 1.), is neither more nor less than his namesake John the Baptist. Gen. Hist. p. 2, 3. He might just as well for the same reason, namely the use of the word *angel*, assure us, that this internuncias was some one of the seven angels of the seven Asiatic churches.

* I should conceive, that the word used by our Lord must have been יהיו. Accordingly the Hebrew translators of St. Matthew's Gospel employ that very word to express the Greek γενηται.

Digitized by Google

difficulty of which has long been felt and acknowledged, will remove the only objection that can be made to the consistent and uniform interpretation of the entire prophecy which has now been exhibited: and we thus obtain a wonderful prediction, in all respects worthy of its divine author; a prediction, not stopping short with the mere overthrow of Jerusalem and a figurative synchronical coming of the Son of man, but reaching in regular chronological succession from the apostolic age to the final consummation of all things.

Digitized by Google

DISSERTATION IV.

A Vindication of the Protestant mode of calculating the 1260 *days in opposition to that adopted by the Romanists.*

THERE is a celebrated period, mentioned in the prophecies of Daniel and St. John under the varied appellations of *a time two times and the dividing of a time* or *forty two months* or *twelve hundred and sixty days.* Both Romanists and protestants are agreed, that the same period is intended by these three several designations: for, at the ancient rate of assigning 360 days to a year, three years or times and a half, 42 months, and 1260 days, will be found exactly equivalent *. Nor is this the only proof of their identity: either the same, or necessarily parallel, events are ascribed both to the three years and a half, to the 42 months, and to the 1260 days;

* Bp. Walmesley's General Hist. of the Christ. Church deduced from the Apocalypse; published under the assumed name of *Signor Pastorini.* p. 348, 349. Mede and all other protestant expositors in loc.

Digitized by Google

but, if the same or parallel events occur during the lapse of each, they must plainly coincide in their chronological duration.

So far, then no difference appears among expositors, whether of the Papal or of the Protestant communion: but, at this point, a very essential discrepancy commences. The Romanists, for obvious reasons, maintain, that the period, thus variously expressed, is to be understood *literally;* or, in other words, that the period in question comprehends no more than three *natural* years and a half or 42 *natural* months or 1260 *natural* days: the Protestants, on the contrary, maintain (and they deem themselves to have ample reasons for their opinion), that the period is to be understood *mystically;* or, in other words, that it comprehends 1260 *prophetic* days which are equal to 1260 *natural* or *solar* years. On this point therefore it is, that the parties join issue.

A work, which is intitled *A Key to the Old Testament*, has recently been printed in the diocese of Durham by Mr. Rutter, a clergyman of the Romish Church. To the vein of primitive piety, which runs through it, I am most happy to bear my testimony. Perhaps it may be a little too much tinctured, with what we Protestants should call *Hutchinsonianism*, or with what our Romanizing brethren (I presume) would denominate *Origenism:* but, in a *practical* work, a Christian will delight to find his Master, even where strictly legitimate criticism might not be able to discover him; and, in the present

Digitized by Google

sent *practical* work, the reformed Christian will perceive with satisfaction, that relics and images and deified saints and all that constitutes the proper machinery of papal mythology have disappeared, leaving only the true foundation on which all sincere believers equally build. I have observed indeed a passing reference to purgatory and to prayers for the dead: but, with this and a few other exceptions, the book, like some of a similar strain which I have seen written by pious Romanists, is remarkably free from Popish peculiarities *.

It

* Mr. Rutter would fain prove from a passage in 2 Maccabees *the lawfulness and efficacy of prayers for the dead*, which of course involves the doctrine of *purgatory*: and he expresses his astonishment, that Protestants should reject from the sacred canon of inspiration the Apocrypha of the Old Testament; while yet they admit into it certain books of the New Testament, respecting which doubts were for some time entertained in the Church. Key. p. 223, 224, 437.

I. It is not very difficult to give him a sufficient reason for our rejection of the Apocrypha.

All the books arranged under that title *purport* at least to have been written *before* Christ. If then any of them were written *after* Christ, their very profession of higher antiquity stamps them with the brand of imposture: if, on the contrary, they were *actually* written *before* Christ, and if (as the Romanists pretend) they ought to be received as inspired; it is utterly unaccountable, that, from the time of their composition down to the present day, they should have been uniformly rejected from the sacred canon of the Old Testament by the Jewish Sanhedrim. We all know the even superstitious veneration of the Jews for their holy books, which prompts them to the singular mode of authenticating their canon by numbering every

Digitized by Google

It was to be expected, that a Protestant could not discuss the predictions of Daniel and St. John without

every letter contained in each separate tract. Is it credible then, that, while they were providentially led to such extreme carefulness respecting the *genuine* oracles of God, they should pertinaciously reject as *uninspired* certain books for which the Romish Church claims the authority of *inspiration*?

In fact, Mr. Rutter does not seem to be aware of the strange contradiction, which the system of his Church necessarily involves.

A book, which expressly professes itself to have been written by Ezra (Ezra vii. 28), was received by the Sanhedrim into the sacred canon: yet two other books, which *equally* profess themselves to have been written by the *very same* Ezra or Esdras (1 Esdr. viii. 68, 71—74. 2 Esdr. i. 1, 4.), have been uniformly rejected by the Sanhedrim. Now, if these two other books, which *profess* to have been written by Ezra, were *not* written by him; they are *ipso facto* gross impostures. If, on the contrary, they *were* written by him agreeably to their own *profession*, and if they are *equally* inspired with that Hebrew book of Ezra which we *all* agree in deeming canonical; let Mr. Rutter inform us, how it happened, that the Jews admitted *one* book of Ezra into the canon; but rejected *two other* books, notwithstanding those *two other* books claim, not only to have been written by *the same author*, but to have been composed under *the same divine inspiration*.

Just the same remark applies to *the Wisdom of Solomon*. It *professes* to have been written by that prince (Wisdom vii. 1—13.): if therefore it was *not* written by him, it is a palpable forgery; if it *was*, how came the Sanhedrim to reject it from their canon while they admitted *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiastes*?

I need scarcely say, that *the song of the three children* and *the history of Susanna* and *the destruction of Bel and the Dragon*, which all claim to have been written by Daniel, are in a similar predicament: or that *the prayer of Manasseh* and *the pretended supple-*

Digitized by Google

out giving offence to a person in communion with the Church of Rome, however truly devout that person

supplemental chapters of Esther will equally, on the same grounds, demand the exertion of Mr. Rutter's ingenuity.

Nor is this all: we Protestants reject the Apocrypha, as well from internal, as from external, evidence.

So palpably unlike to the *genuine* wonders of Revelation is the strange story (for instance) of Tobit smoking a devil out of a young woman with the liver of a fish, and so closely allied is it in texture to the marvellous Rabbinical tales of the gigantic cock and the fish leviathan, that we cannot hesitate to pronounce it a mere Jewish figment.

Again: if Mr. Rutter wishes us to join him in prayers for the dead, let him produce *a single solitary warrant* for the practice from *any one* of those books which are *universally* received as canonical; and we will readily comply with his invitation. But, so long as he can only produce a passage from *the Maccabean history* in favour of the usage, that very circumstance speaks trumpet-tongued to our conviction, that the history so cited is apocryphal and uninspired: for passing strange it is, that EVERY book both of the Old and New Testament, which Protestants and Papists *agree* to receive as canonical, should be WHOLLY *silent* respecting such a practice.

II. Mr. Rutter however assures his readers, that several of the most learned Protestants, while they reject the *name* of purgatory, seem to admit the *thing*. *Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.* The reason assigned is this: many Protestants deny not, that there is a middle state of departed souls before the final day of judgment. Key. p. 437.

What resemblance exists between such an opinion and the Popish doctrine of *purgatory*, I possess not critical acumen sufficient to discover.

Many Protestants suppose, that, after the separation of soul and body, the spirits of the righteous are received into the safe keeping of Paradise, where they enjoy the sure and blissful anticipa-

Digitized by Google

person might be as an individual: but I wish it to be distinctly understood, that what I attacked was *a*

anticipation of future glory; while the souls of the wicked pass into the strong hold of a separate prison, where they writhe under the horrid expectation of future inevitable misery: that in this state they respectively remain, while disembodied; and that they receive not their final doom, until, at the last day, they are reünited to their bodies.

Such is the doctrine held by some of us Protestants, in favour of which it were easy, to produce numerous passages of Scripture.

But the Romanists fancy, that *all the souls of the righteous* (with the exception, I believe, of infants which die immediately after baptism) flit after death into a place of purgatorial torment; where, for the several sins which they have *personally* committed, they suffer misery differing from that of hell not in intensity but only in duration. Out of this region of horrors, the several parts of which are arranged on the exact model and principle of the pagan purgatory so largely described by Virgil in the sixth book of the Eneid, the prayers of the Church can deliver the wretched victims even before their allotted time of cleansing has been completed: and these sovereign prayers for the dead are to be purchased by the money of the faithful; a simoniacal abomination, which (as it is well known) first moved the indignation of the illustrious Luther, and ultimately led to the glorious Reformation.

Such is the doctrine of *purgatory* held by the Romanists, in favour of which not the shadow of an argument can be produced from Holy Scripture. Yet does Mr. Rutter assure the Roman laity, for whose special instruction his Key is written, that many Protestants, while they reject the *name* of purgatory, SEEM to admit the *thing*. Well however may he cautiously insert the qualifying word SEEM (your SEEMS and your IFS are great peace-makers), lest peradventure the prying eye of *those without* should look too curiously into these *Aporreta* of the Romish school.

system

Digitized by Google

system and *the corrupt and interested upholders of a system;* not those numerous excellent individuals, who, in the midst of great disadvantages, faithfully hold Christ the head, and who *tacitly* give up that heterogeneous mass of hay and stubble which has been industriously accumulated upon the divinely laid foundation of the Gospel. With our own judicious Hooker I can cheerfully say; "God, I doubt "not, was merciful to save thousands of our fathers "living in Popish superstitions, inasmuch as they "sinned ignorantly:" and, whatever tinge of unauthorized will-worship there may have been in such men as the venerable Fenelon and à Kempis and Pascal and Arnauld; yet (so far as fallible man can judge), bearing as they do the very impress of the Holy Ghost, I can venture to take up the words of an ancient father, "May my soul be with them!" But the vigorous piety of *individuals* neither will, nor can, sanctify a radically corrupt *system.* In the worst of times, Christ has ever had those who are his: but they owe their own character, not to the *system* in which they are unhappily entangled, but to that *divine infusion of sound evangelical principle* which prevents their *system* from being one entire mass of rank putridity. God, I believe, has a people scattered among all denominations of Christians, *who hold the grand fundamental truths of the Gospel:* and, since these are doubtless held (though with occasional obscurity and with many superadded fancies) in the Church of Rome, I feel joyfully assured, that many of that communion will be saved *through the*

Digitized by Google

the alone merits of Christ, though the natural prejudices of education, and the shuddering terrors of early implanted superstition may have closed their eyes to the manifold corruption of the entire system. In short, I do not believe the Romish Church to be the predicted Antichrist, though I am convinced that it is the predicted apostasy from sincere Christianity *.

Mr. Rutter, perhaps not imprudently since he specially writes for the benefit of his own communion, will not pretend to follow the train of reasoning which pervades my two large volumes: he rather contents himself with observing, that, if the basis of my elaborate work be unsound, the whole superstructure must fall. Now he asserts the basis of that work to be, that *the* 1260 *days denote* 1260 *solar years*. Whence, if I have no authority for this mode of calculating the 1260 days; the whole, that rests upon it, must of course fall to the ground †.

I might here very fairly deny the validity of Mr. Rutter's assertion: for, though the confutation of my calculating principle would destroy my application of the Roman beast's little horn to the Papacy, it would not at all affect my application of the apocalyptic harlot to the same ecclesiastical power; because this latter application depends not upon *the computing of any prophetic numbers*, but simply upon *circumstantial evidence*. Still less will his

* 2 Thess. ii. 3. 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.

† Key, p. 306.

proposed

Digitized by Google

proposed confutation affect what I have written respecting Daniel's Wilful King, the development of Antichrist, and various other matters which I might mention. But let this pass: though I thought it good briefly to notice it, because it serves to shew Mr. Rutter's want of care and strict accuracy even *in limine*.

I. The first objection, brought against the protestant mode of computing the 1260 days, is the opinion of Jerome and certain others of the fathers.

These pious men, it seems, like the modern Romanists, supposed the 1260 days to be 1260 *natural* days. THEREFORE; namely because fallible mortals, who had no greater advantages for deciding the question than we ourselves have, pronounce the days in question to be *natural* days: THEREFORE Protestants MUST NEEDS err in dissenting from them *.

1. Now, even if we grant to the fathers all the authority in *other* points which our Romish brethren could wish us to grant: still it must be abundantly obvious, that persons, who lived *before* the accomplishment of a prophecy, are of all others the most improper to cite as the *authoritative* interpreters of it, as interpreters from whose decision there can lie no appeal. What is *absolute* and *explicit*, they may see indeed as well as those who live *after* the accomplishment of any prediction: but, however preëminent they may be in talents, on all *other* particulars they must *inevitably* and *from the very nature of things* be quite in the dark; on all *other* particulars,

* Key. p. 306.

the

Digitized by Google

the accurate knowledge of which is involved in *the accomplishment* of the prophecy, they must plainly rank far beneath the very least of modern interpreters.

Nor is this any derogation from such merit as may be fairly conceded to them: every rational and thinking member of the Romish Church cannot but admit the principle here insisted upon; cannot but admit, on this identical ground, that even Bp. Walmesley himself is at least a more *competent* expositor than St. Jerome. Whether he be a more *successful* one, is altogether a different question.

2. Yet, while such is manifestly the case, I am inclined to suspect, that the fathers, when their opinions are fairly exhibited, will be found to confirm, not the papal, but the protestant, principle of exposition.

(1.) Mr. Rutter perfectly agrees both with the fathers and with ourselves, that Daniel's fourth wild beast symbolizes the Roman Empire: and Bp. Walmesley is equally explicit in maintaining, still with the fathers and with ourselves, that the same Empire is symbolized by the seven-headed wild beast of the Apocalypse *. In short, as our protestant Bp. Newton remarks, all are unanimous on these points, whether ancients or moderns, whether Papists or Protestants.

Now, according both to Daniel and St. John, this well-understood hieroglyphical wild beast, puts forth ten horns: and these ten horns, according to the

* Key. p. 294. Gener. Hist. p. 117.

angelic

Digitized by Google

angelic interpreter in *each* prophecy (as his exposition is rightly understood by those *unobjectionable* authorities in papal estimation Irenèus and Cyril and Jerome*), symbolize ten kings or kingdoms; so that the dominions of the Roman Empire, when divided, are to be distributed among ten independent kings or to be split into ten distinct sovereignties.

Hitherto then we are still agreed: and I have the additional happiness to find, that, in my proposed identification of these ten horns, I am supported by the authority of Bp. Walmesley himself. He rightly pronounces them to be the ten Gothic kingdoms, into which the Latin Empire was originally divided†. On this point St. Jerome, whom the Romanists (when it suits their purpose) would erect into a sort of oracle, is woefully puzzled: and the reason is obvious; *he lived* BEFORE *the event.* Bp. Walmesley, on the contrary, is clear and explicit: and the reason is equally obvious; *he lived* AFTER *the event.*

(2.) Behind and among the ten horns, so judiciously interpreted by Bp. Walmesley, Daniel beheld a little horn spring up: and before this little horn, so as to make room for it, three of the ten *primary* horns were plucked up.

Such being the case, the chronology of the little horn is at once determined. It was doubtless to be CONTEMPORARY with the ten *primary* horns: for, *otherwise*, how could it spring up among them;

* Iren. lib. v. c. 25, 26. Cyril. Hieros. Catech. 15. c. 6. p. 211. Hieron. Comment. in loc.

† Gen. Hist. p. 120.

other-

Digitized by Google

otherwise, how could three of them be plucked up before it? Now Bp. Walmesley, respecting whose work Mr. Rutter quotes with approbation the sagacious remark of a foreign Abbè; that "it is the "only good comment, which England has produced "upon the Apocalypse," and which fully redeems her lost credit for having given birth to "the extravagant "notions" of such a mere babbler as "Sir Isaac "Newton *:" Bp. Walmesley, I say, this Coryphèus of English expositors, has determined the ten horns of the Roman beast to be the ten *primary* Gothic kingdoms. Hence, on the authority of the learned prelate himself, it will plainly follow, that the little horn, mean it what it may, must have sprung up SYNCHRONICALLY with the rise of those ten primary Gothic kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was divided †.

Here

* Key. p. 467. Editorial preface to Gener. Hist. p. vii.

† Bp. Walmesley, with a slight variation from my own list which I took from the historian Machiavel, pronounces the ten primary kingdoms to be 1. The Goths. 2. The Huns. 3. The Alans. 4. The Vandals. 5. The Saxons. 6. The Burgundians. 7. The Franks. 8. The Heruli. 9. The Suevi, and 10. The Quadi: "the chief," says he, "of the barbarous nations, that "invaded the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century." Gen. Hist. p. 120. *Therefore*, as the little horn sprang up *synchronically* with the ten *primary* horns, and as the bishop determines the ten *primary* horns to be the above-enumerated ten kingdoms: the little horn must have sprung up *synchronically* with the ten kingdoms so enumerated. Such at least would be deemed logic by us heretical protestants: but Mr. Rutter may possibly rebut the preceding conclusion by a syllogism

Digitized by Google

Here then we have got firm ground to tread upon. Some small kingdom, prefigured by the little horn, is to spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten primary Gothic kingdoms: and, after it shall have thus sprung up, it is to domineer over and wear out the saints in a very extraordinary manner during the precise term of *three times and a half* or *forty two months* or *twelve hundred and sixty days;* at the end of which it is to be cut off, apparently in some preternatural manner, by Christ himself *.

(3.) Now the question at present before us is, whether the period, thus allotted to the tyrannical reign of the little horn, be a period of only 1260 *natural* days as the Romanists contend, or a period of 1260 *solar* years as the Protestants maintain. This is the point in litigation between Mr. Rutter and myself, by the decision of which he professes himself to have at once overturned my elaborate work of more than 900 pages †.

On this point, the fathers could not, *a priori*, be *certain:* because, from various passages in the Old

gism of such sovereign efficacy, that it may well be deemed a real *catholicon*. The reader will find it in his Key. p. 251, 252. *All valid prophetic interpretation is withheld from those, who are estranged from Jesus Christ. But all who become heretics by differing from the Church of Rome, are so estranged. Therefore all dissidents from the Romish Church are ipso facto incapable of rightly interpreting prophecy.* It must be confessed, that this summary process makes short work with all us English expositors, save Bp. Walmesley.

* Dan. vii. 8—11, 20, 24—6.

† Key. p. 306.

Testament,

Digitized by Google

Testament, they would find; that, by the inspired writers, the word *day* is used, sometimes *literally* for *a natural day*, and sometimes *mystically* for *a natural year*. But they would be *quite sure*, from the unequivocal language both of Daniel and of St. John; that the Roman Empire was destined to be split into ten kingdoms, and that SYNCHRONICALLY with this its division a small kingdom was to arise which should domineer over the saints for the space of three years and a half or 1260 days. Accordingly, Irenæus, Cyril, and Jerome (as before cited), all agree, that the little horn was to rise SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten primary horns.

Thus *certain* on one point, and thus in the very nature of things *uncertain* on another, they understood the years and a half *literally*: notwithstanding, at *that* time, they *could* have no specific means of determining the question either one way or the other. Hence they took upon themselves to pronounce, when it was utterly impossible that any *uninspired* human being could *definitely* pronounce; that, upon the division of the Roman Empire among ten kings, a small king would SYNCHRONICALLY spring up and tyrannize over the saints during the precise period of three years and a half *literally* understood.

Agreeably to this, it was their firm persuasion; that, whenever the Roman Empire should be broken in pieces, and when ten kingdoms should spring out of its ruins, the little horn, which they rightly identified with St. Paul's *man of sin*, should likewise arise: and, in consequence of this, the primitive Church, as it

Digitized by Google

it is well known, prayed for the duration of the Empire *.

(4.) Now, whatever may be meant by the little horn, we are taught by the incontrovertible voice of history, that, when the Roman Empire was dismembered by the Gothic warriors, it was divided into precisely ten kingdoms: and these ten kingdoms are acknowledged by Bp. Walmesley to be symbolized by the ten horns of the Roman beast, among which an eleventh little horn was to spring up.

Such being the case, according to the prophecy *as expounded by the fathers themselves;* for the fathers (as we have just seen) rightly judged that the eleventh horn would SYNCHRONIZE with the ten primary horns: such being the case, *the fathers themselves being judges,* we must look for the rise of the little horn at this identical period of the rise of the other ten horns. But Bp. Walmesley says, in strict accordance with history, that the ten horns rose, when the ten primary Gothic kingdoms were founded within the limits of the Roman Empire. Therefore, if Bp. Walmesley and the fathers conjointly be right in their opinion: the former, as to *the identification* of the ten horns; the latter, as to their evident *synchronization* with the little horn: then it is clear, that the little horn must also have risen, when the Roman Empire was parcelled out into ten kingdoms by the Gothic warriors.

* Tertull. de Resur. Carn. c. xxiv. p. 340. Apolog. c. xxxii. p. 27.

Digitized by Google

(5.) Here therefore the event itself will determine with unerring certainty, whether the 1260 days are to be understood *literally* or *mystically*.

If Mr. Rutter or any other member of his communion can shew from history, that a small kingdom rose SYNCHRONICALLY with those ten larger kingdoms, which Bp. Walmesley so properly identifies with the ten horns of the Roman beast; that this small kingdom performed the sufficiently definite actions, which the prophet ascribes to the little horn; and that, when it *had* performed them, it was cut off just 1260 *natural* days after the commencement of its tyranny: then we protestants will freely concede, both that the 1260 days ought to be understood *literally*, and that the little horn cannot denote the Papacy.

But, if Mr. Rutter and his friends can point out no kingdom thus characterised, which I suspect will prove to be the case; then they will be driven to the following very serious alternative: either Daniel was a false prophet, because he foretold a circumstance which never came to pass; or a small kingdom, minutely corresponding in character with the little horn, *did* actually spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten Gothic horns, but by its long duration after the time when the saints were delivered into its power *practically* demonstrated that the 1260 days of its tyranny were 1260 *mystical* days or 1260 *literal* years.

(6.) I will venture to say, that neither Mr. Rutter nor any other Romanist can escape from this dilemma:

Digitized by Google

lemma: if, on the one hand, they confess with those fathers, whom they delight to adduce when their purpose may thus be served, that *the little horn was to be* SYNCHRONICAL *with the ten primary horns*, as manifestly indeed appears by its eradicating three of them which it certainly *could not* do if it were *not* synchronical; and if, on the other hand, they confess with "the only good commentator whom Eng-"land has produced on the Apocalypse," Bp. Walmesley to wit, that *the ten horns of the Roman beast are the ten original Gothic kingdoms*, as no less manifestly appears from the irrefragable testimony of authentic history.

The Romish prelate and the early fathers *conjointly* prove all, that a protestant can wish to be proved; and to the authority of *neither* can Mr. Rutter consistently object: for the Romish prelate has shewn from history, that the ten horns are the ten primary Gothic kingdoms which sprang up out of the ruins of the Western Empire; and the early fathers have declared from that view of the prophecy which every unprejudiced person must take, that the little horn was to rise SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten horns.

3. The protestant reader will be curious to know, how Bp. Walmesley and Mr. Rutter dispose of the little horn which the fathers make *synchronical* with the ten horns, after the learned prelate has shewn thus satisfactorily that those ten horns are the ten primary Gothic kingdoms. Doubtless he will conclude, that they have *attempted* at least to discover

Digitized by Google

some power, which, springing up *synchronically* with the ten Gothic kingdoms, played the tyrant for the exact space of 1260 *natural* days, and was then brought to sudden destruction. So he would conclude, according to any ordinary principles of reasoning, from the premises with which they set out. But he will find himself grievously mistaken, if he fancies that the Church of Rome is to be shackled by any vulgar rules of logic.

These active expositors, while panting time toils vainly after them, spring at one brave bound over *a yet undetermined number of centuries*, and seek the little horn in the character of *a still future personal Antichrist*. At the end of the world, they tell us, an individual shall arise, who will be a perfect monster of iniquity. He will appear as the seventh head of the Roman beast, but he will establish an universal domination. The catholic Church will be crushed by his persecuting tyranny: and Enoch and Elijah, those two apocalyptic witnesses who are to prophesy in sackcloth 1260 days, will receive their death at his hands. But the time of his triumph will be limited to the same short period of 1260 *natural* days. When this period shall have elapsed, then will the Lord consume that wicked one with the spirit of his mouth and destroy him with the brightness of his coming *.

(1.) Nothing, according to the triumphant Bp.

* Gen. Hist. p. 119, 120, 270—278. Key. p. 306, 399—402.

Walmesley,

Digitized by Google

Walmesley, can be more self-evident than the propriety of such an interpretation.

" Hence then appears," says he, " the absurd " presumption of those, who, from their enmity to " the catholic communion, have asserted the two " witnesses to be, not two single persons (Enoch to " wit and Elijah), but the whole succession of here- " tics, who in different ages have revolted from the " mother-church and opposed her doctrine *."

Clear however as all this may be to the mind of a Romanist, the more tardy apprehension of a Protestant is unable to travel quite so rapidly to a conclusion.

If the ten horns be the ten primary Gothic kingdoms which sprang up in the fifth and sixth centuries, as Bp. Walmesley with much truth assures us they are; and if the eleventh little horn was to spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten horns, as the fathers with no less truth unanimously pronounce it to be the evident declaration of the prophet: a sober Protestant is quite unable to comprehend, how this same little horn can all the while be a *yet future* individual Antichrist.

So much for the very consistent *chronology* of our Romish expositors: let us next observe their close adherence to *analogy* and *homogeneity*.

The ten horns, says Bp. Walmesley, are not any ten INDIVIDUAL KINGS, but they are the ten primary Gothic KINGDOMS †. True, rejoins Mr.

* Gen. Hist. p. 278.

† Gen. Hist. p. 120.

Rutter;

Digitized by Google

Rutter; and, on the same principle, the two horns of the Medo-Persian ram, and the four horns of the Macedonian goat, are the same number of KINGDOMS, not the same number of INDIVIDUAL KINGS*. *Therefore*, a protestant logician will naturally say, the little horn of the Roman beast and the little horn of the Macedonian beast must similarly be, not each an INDIVIDUAL KING, but each an INDIVIDUAL KINGDOM. Nothing of the sort, exclaim our two expositors with one breath: the little horn of the Roman beast is certainly no KINGDOM or SUCCESSION OF KINGS, but the single INDIVIDUAL KING Antichrist: and the little horn of the Macedonian beast is clearly no KINGDOM or SUCCESSION OF KINGS, but the single INDIVIDUAL KING Antiochus Epiphanes†.

What shall we say to these truly Protean interpretations, which alike bid defiance to *chronology* and to *consistency?*

(2.) But Bp. Walmesley deems it no better than so much absurd presumption in us protestant heretics, to apply the character of the two apocalyptic witnesses, to a long succession of faithful and persecuted servants of God; rather than to the two individuals Enoch and Elijah, whom he expects to reappear personally on earth during the reign of that *yet future* Antichristian little horn, which neverthe-

* Key. p. 294, 296.

† Gen. Hist. p. 119. Key. p. 296, 297, 305, 306, 307.

less

Digitized by Google

less (paroxidical as it may be) rises *synchronically* with the *long since risen* ten horns.

Absurd as this presumption may be, and highly probable no doubt as is the personal manifestation of Enoch and Elijah respecting whom (by the way) St. John is most unfortunately quite silent; still this very presumption will inevitably spring from the conclusion to which we have already been conducted by the stubborn pertinaciousness of history.

The bishop, like the old fathers and like us modern Protestants identifies *the* 1260 *days during which the two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth* with *the* 1260 *days during which the little horn plays the tyrant.* Now *the prophecy,* as interpreted by Bp. Walmesley and as understood by the fathers, positively determines, that *the* 1260 *days of the little horn* must have commenced either during or shortly after the rise of the ten horns or the ten primary Gothic kingdoms: and *the event* has shewn, that these 1260 days cannot be 1260 *natural* days. But *the* 1260 *days of the two witnesses* are the same period, Bp. Walmesley himself being judge, as *the* 1260 *days of the little horn.* Therefore *the* 1260 *days of the witnesses* must have commenced either during or shortly after the rise of the ten primary Gothic kingdoms, and consequently cannot be 1260 *natural* days.

Such then being the case, it is at once abundantly clear, that the two witnesses are *not* Enoch and Elijah, and that they *are* a succession of men who have

Digitized by Google

have been protesting against the tyranny of the little horn for many centuries by-past.

4. In the physical economy of animals, whence (as I have often observed) the prophetical hieroglyphic of *a wild beast* is manifestly borrowed, the most skilful zoölogists (I believe) have not yet discovered, that any creatures of this class can live *in a decapitated state:* and, if I mistake not, it has been universally remarked, that the horns of animals grow upon their *heads*, not upon their *backs* or their *shoulders*. We have already seen Bp. Walmesley hurling a proud defiance at *chronology* and *homogeneous consistency:* we must now prepare ourselves to witness a most extraordinary discovery, which this ingenious expositor has made in zoölogy.

St. John describes the hieroglyphical wild beast, which represents the Roman Empire, as having seven heads: and these seven heads are manifestly not coexistent but successive; for the interpreting angel informs us, that five had fallen at the time when the Apocalypse was written, that one was then in existence, and that the other was future. Hence, by this *succession* of heads (the imagery being plainly borrowed from the fabulous hydra), the wild beast is consistently represented by the divine artist, as never being *without* a head until the seventh is lopped by the sword: *then*, and not *till then*, he sinks into a state of death; just as, in the economy of nature, any *decapitated* animal must inevitably do.

(1.) But *the zoölogical accuracy* of the inspired prophet

Digitized by Google

prophet is as little regarded by his Romish commentator, as *chronology* and *homogeneous consistency*.

The five *fallen* heads, says Bp. Walmesley, are the five individual emperors Nero, Domitian, Severus, Decius, and Valerian: the sixth, which the angel assures us was *existing* when St. John wrote, is Dioclesian: and the *yet future* seventh is Antichrist *.

In this arrangement, it is hard to say, whether we are most invited to admire the learned prelate's consummate knowledge of zoölogy or his magnanimous contempt of chronology.

Five, says the angel, *are fallen*. Now the Apocalypse, according to Irenèus, was written toward the end of Domitian's reign; certainly not later, though some have fixed an earlier period. Five heads therefore, if we may believe the angel, had already fallen *before* the expiration of Domitian's reign. Bp. Walmesley however is quite of a different opinion: if we may credit this prince of English expositors, four out of the five *fallen* heads are Domitian himself, Severus, Decius, and Valerian. *One*, says the angel, *now is*. This one therefore was in existence *during the reign of Domitian*, if the testimony of the angel be deserving of credit. But here again Bp. Walmesley and the angel are found to differ *toto coelo*: for, according to the adventurous prelate, the *then existing* sixth head was no other than the *as-yet-unborn* Dioclesian.

* Gen. Hist. p. 119.

So

So much for the bishop's chronology: turn we next to his zoölogy.

The wild beast he very rightly pronounces to be the Roman Empire; and his ten horns, the ten primary Gothic kingdoms: but then his seven heads are six individual emperors and the yet future seventh individual emperor Antichrist. Behold now a portent, such as Daunia never bred in her wide ash-forests *. The Roman Empire, as we are generally told, commenced with Romulus some seven or eight centuries before Christ. But, according to Bp. Walmesley, the *very first* of its seven heads was Nero. Hence it is plain, that, if the bishop be in the right, the Roman wild beast throve and grew *without any head* for full eight long centuries; when, first discovering the want of one, he protruded the emperor Nero, and thus became like any other wild beast. But so inveterate are bad habits, that he soon relapsed into his old acephalic independence. Nero died: and the beast had no head, until Domitian arose. Again, upon the death of Domitian, he became headless: and again he protruded a new head in the person of Severus. That emperor soon went the way of all flesh: and the beast was headless, until the rise of Decius. This new head fell in its turn: and the beast was once more headless until the reign of Valerian. Valerian followed the fate of his cephalic predecessors: and again the beast

* Quale portentum neque militaris.
Daunia in latis alit æsculetis.

was

Digitized by Google

was headless, until his sixth head Dioclesian arose. But even yet we have not arrived at the end of his strange eventful history. Dioclesian died: and the beast, as before, relapsed into his favourite headless state; nor will he recover from it, until, at some undetermined future period, he shall put forth his seventh head Antichrist. Yet, during this last long period of headlessness, so far from suffering any material inconvenience from his lack of what *most* animals find an indispensable appendage; he is not only healthy and cheerful, but he actually protrudes ten horns which Bp. Walmesley rightly determines to be the ten primary Gothic kingdoms. Here then, since the horns of beasts usually grow upon their heads, the question is, upon *which* of the seven Roman heads, as specified by Bp. Walmesley, did the ten horns of the hieroglyphical wild beast appear to St. John to flourish. The bishop assures us, that the beast had *no* head at the time when he protruded his ten horns: for the sixth head, Dioclesian, had then *fallen;* the seventh head, Antichrist, had *not yet come;* and the ten horns, namely the ten Gothic kingdoms, had *meanwhile arisen.* Thus it is evident, that, in the zoölogical system of our expositor, a beast may not only live without the needless trouble of wearing a head; but his horns may bud even while he is in a headless state. *Where* the horns of the acephalic Roman beast grew, the bishop does not inform us: but, as the creature had no head at the time of their protrusion, they must, I presume, have

Digitized by Google

have appeared to grow portentously out of his back or his shoulders.

So much for our expositor's zoölogy.

(2.) But to be serious, if indeed it be possible to rehearse this comedy of errors with undisturbed muscles, we may surely deem it most extraordinary and unaccountable, that Bp. Walmesley should ever have advanced so strange an interpretation, when the use of the word *head*, in its natural and obvious acceptation as applied to a body politic, must have been familiar to him from his very infancy.

When he styled (as doubtless he often styled) the bishop of Rome *the head of the catholic Church*, did he mean to restrict this imaginary headship to *the single reigning Pope:* so that none, either of his predecessors or of his successors, ought to be deemed such a head; but that *the then existing Pontiff alone* ought to be invested with that dignified character? Mr. Rutter no doubt will readily answer for the departed prelate, that such manifest heresy was as far as possible from his cogitations. When he asserted the Pope to be *the head of the catholic Church*, he of course meant not exclusively *the reigning Pope*, but *the whole line or succession of Popes*, each of whom was no less a head than another: and yet it were absurd therefore to say, that the catholic Church had as many heads as Popes; the orthodox doctrine is, that the Popes *viewed collectively* constitute one and the same head of the Church universal.

So, I presume, Mr. Rutter would answer for the bishop:

Digitized by Google

bishop: and, doubtless, he would answer very properly. If then the head of a body politic be not *any exclusive individual*, but *a succession of individuals exercising the same supreme domination*: how could Bp. Walmesley, accustomed as he must have been to the proper use of the term, fall into the marvellous error of pronouncing the seven heads of the Roman beast or the Roman body politic to be *seven individual men*, when they are so manifestly *seven successions of dominant individuals* or (in other words) *seven successive forms of government?*

It is possible indeed, that any single form may begin and end with a single individual; but this is purely incidental, not inherent in its nature: for any dominant form of government, from its rise to its fall, may be administered by five hundred successive individuals or by five or by one, just as it happens; its characteristic not being *the number* of those who have administered it, but its *distinctive constitutional peculiarity* whereby it differs from any other form, as monarchy (for instance) from aristocracy and the like. Hence, no doubt, the yet future eighth form of Roman government *may* be administered, from first to last, by a single individual; just as we have seen the recently overthrown seventh form thus administered: but so completely is this circumstance *incidental* and not *inherent*, that the eighth form, for any thing *we* can assert to the contrary *a priori*, may be administered either by a single person or by twenty successive persons.

Let us then adopt that interpretation of the Roman heads,

Digitized by Google

heads, which even his own familiar use of the term *head* in reference to the Pope and the Catholic Church might have taught Bp. Walmesley to adopt; and we shall exhibit a rational and consistent description of the bestial hieroglyphic, instead of making St. John absurdly represent it, with a palpable disregard to the economy of nature, as subsisting and acting and putting forth horns in a headless condition.

5. Before this subject be entirely dismissed, I cannot refrain from pointing out the wonderful accuracy with which the symbol of the Roman beast has been framed.

When an ancient empire is conquered and partitioned, its own proper dominant head usually ceases to exist: whence the empire, *as* an empire is dissolved. But it was the fate of the Roman Empire, though divided into ten sovereignties, still to retain an acknowledged political head of the whole when viewed *collectively*.

This peculiarity was to be expressed in an hieroglyphic: and, with wonderful art, it *has* been expressed.

The ten horns rise up on the sixth or Romano-Imperial head, which still continues to exist subsequent to their rise: and the interpreting angel accordingly tells us, that, at the time when he was speaking to St. John, the ten kings represented by them had received no kingdom as yet; but that they should *in one season* or *synchronically* receive power as kings *in conjunction with* the beast, not *separately*

Digitized by Google

rately from him. Still should he continue to exist under his vivacious sixth head, notwithstanding his dominions had been partitioned into ten Gothic sovereignties *. When the sixth head fell, the modern representatives of the ten primary horns were transferred to the seventh head: and, accordingly, we have beheld them, with the exception of England (which, as we Protestants venture to hope, lost its character of a bestial horn at the time of the Reformation), acknowledging in no equivocal manner the supremacy of the Francic Emperorship. At length, when the seventh head was slain by the sword, and when the beast viewed as a collective empire died in consequence of the blow; the ten horns still existed as independent monarchies, but they lost that peculiar relation to the head which constituted them horns of a living wild beast. They assumed, in short, the identical aspect, which they *now* wear; an aspect, which heretofore they had *never* worn: and this aspect they will continue to wear during the defunct condition of the Empire, until it shall revive under the yet future eighth form. Then, as before, and as we are taught indeed to expect by the voice of revelation itself, they will again become

* Such is the meaning of Rev. xvii. 12. Εξουσιαν ὡς βασιλεις μιαν ὡραν λαμβανουσι, META του θηριου. I was once erroneously led, by the ambiguity of our common English translation, to suppose the passage to mean, that the ten kings should receive power SYNCHRONICALLY WITH the beast: whereas its plain import is, that the ten kings should receive power SYNCHRONICALLY indeed with *each other*, but IN CONJUNCTION WITH *the beast*.

horns

Digitized by Google

horns of the beast, and again decorate that eighth head which is to be the same as one of the preceding seven *.

II. Here I might fairly close the argument: for, on the *joint* authority of the fathers and Bp. Walmesley (the former pronouncing the little horn to rise SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten horns, and the latter rightly determining from history that the ten horns are THE TEN PRIMARY GOTHIC KINGDOMS), an authority which I am sure Mr. Rutter will be the last man in the world to impugn; on this joint authority I have shewn, either that Daniel has by the event been convicted of falsehood, or that the *a priori* doubtful period of 1260 days must needs be interpreted as denoting a period of 1260 natural years. I consider therefore the point as settled: yet I am not unwilling, *ex abundanti*, to follow Mr. Rutter through his other objections; which, I suspect, will not prove more formidable than that deduced from the authority of the fathers.

This gentleman then, while he styles the protestant calculation of the period *novel* and *groundless* and *arbitrary*, notwithstanding it is confessedly built upon the express authority of two texts in Numbers and Ezekiel †; contends, that we must have some *more direct* proof, than that afforded by the texts in question, that the 1260 days denote 1260 solar years. His second objection therefore is, that

* See Rev. xvi. 13, 14. xix. 19.

† Numb. xiv. 34. Ezek. iv. 6.

we

Digitized by Google

we have not a sufficiency of direct authority to warrant the protestant calculation *.

I might here reply, that, since the texts from Numbers and Ezekiel prove that the period *may* be computed mystically, and since the preceding argument demonstrates to every one who allows the divine inspiration of Daniel that it *must* be computed mystically; no one can justly say, that the protestant calculation labours under any want of direct authority: but I shall endeavour, if possible, to give full satisfaction to Mr. Rutter.

1. St. John, I conceive, may be allowed without danger to act as his own interpreter, and at the same time as Daniel's interpreter also: for Romanists and Protestants are perfectly agreed, that *the three times and a half* end *the* 42 *months* and *the* 1260 *days* of these two prophets express one and the same period, whatever that period may be †.

Now

* Key. p. 307.

† So fully satisfied is Bp. Walmesley on this point, that he even argues from it the necessity of computing the period *literally*. His argument is one of the most original, which it has been my fortune to encounter.

"There can be no real doubt," says this great expositor, "that the term of Antichrist's persecution is confined to *three* "*years and a half* or 1260 *days*, and not extended to 1260 "*years*, as some moderns have pretended with a view of calum- "niating the Catholic Church. For, though, in some parti- "cular places of the Scriptures, *a day* may be found to denote "*a year*, or *a month* to denote *a month of years* that is *thirty* "*years*, or *a week* to signify *a week of years* or *seven years:* yet "there is no instance of a period of time mentioned in Scrip-

 "ture

" ture under the three denominations of *years* and *months* and " *days*, that is not to be taken in its natural sense." Gen. Hist. p. 348, 349.

Any person, unacquainted with the Bible, would obviously conclude from this most extraordinary piece of reasoning, that nothing occurred more frequently in Holy Writ than a description of the same period under the three different denominations of *years* and *months* and *days;* that, wherever such a description occurred, the period so described was *uniformly* to be calculated according to the *literal* sense of the different denominations employed; and that Protestants, contrary to the whole analogy of Scripture and out of pure spite to the innocent and persecuted Church of Rome, have nevertheless taken upon them to calculate *mystically* a single solitary period thus variously described by Daniel and St. John.

Such must evidently be the form of the learned prelate's argument, if he mean it to have any weight: and, under *such* a form, I freely confess, that it has very considerable weight.

But, most unfortunately for the bishop's argument, it so happens, that the period under dispute is the ONLY period in the whole Bible, which is variously set forth under the three several denominations of *years* and *months* and *days*. Hence, whatever may be thought of the cogency of his professed *analogical* reasoning, he certainly speaks an undoubted truth when he says; that, *except* the litigated period of 1260 days, " there is NO " INSTANCE of a period of time mentioned in Scripture under " the three denominations of *years* and *months* and *days*, that is " not to be taken in its *natural* sense." He may safely defy the most malignant heretic to produce any SECOND INSTANCE: yet protestant pravity will be apt to suspect, that this most notable argument was framed for the benefit of those, who are not much in the habit of reading their Bible; of those, from whom *the Catholic Church* would piously withhold the sacred books on the laudably cautious principle, as Mr. Rutter happily remarks

Digitized by Google

Church of Smyrna, which should last *ten days* *. What then are we to understand by this period? Will Mr. Rutter maintain, that the days are only ten *natural* days: or will he allow, that they are ten *mystical* days equivalent to ten *natural* years? He will adopt, I presume, the latter mode of computation; and will pronounce the oracle to have been accomplished in that famous persecution of ten solar years, which is recorded by Eusebius, Lactantius, and Orosius †. But, if the predicted event thus early demonstrated St. John's *prophetic days* to be *natural years:* we have as direct a proof (furnished by *the book itself*), as the professedly enigmatical nature of prophecy could allow; that, since his *ten days* are *ten years*, so analogically and homogeneously his 1260 *days* are 1260 *years*.

2. To this may be added that internal proof, which springs from the very necessity of the case.

The slain apocalyptic witnesses lie dead *in the letter* no more than three days and a half. But, in this very brief period, the joyful intelligence is spread throughout all the peoples and kindreds and tongues and nations, which own the supremacy of the great Babylonic harlot ‡: and they not only find time to

remarks in opposition to the profane labours of the Bible-Society, that *we ought not to throw pearls to swine*. See the argument for extinguishing the noxious light of the Gospel drawn out with much logical precision in Key. p. 208, 209.

* Rev. ii. 10.

† Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. viii. c. 15, 16 Lactan. de mort. persec. c. 48. Oros. lib. vii. c. 25. p. 528.

‡ Compare Rev. xi. 9. with xvii. 15.

Digitized by Google

receive this intelligence; but, still during the *same* brief period, they contrive to make merry and to send gifts to one another *. Now, unless the mechanical ingenuity of Mr. Rutter can contrive some yet more expeditious mode of conveying news than the too tardy modern telegraph, he must acknowledge the physical impossibility of crowding such transactions within the narrow compass of three *literal* days and a half, the time set forth by the prophet. But, if these days plainly *cannot* be *literal* days, they *must* be *mystical* days: and, if *they* are *mystical* days, then, by every rule of good composition, the 1260 days *must* be *mystical* days also; because, in the self-same continued narrative, the two witnesses are said to lie dead *three days and a half* and to prophesy *twelve hundred and sixty days* clothed in sackcloth. Doubtless, of whatever sort of days the smaller period is composed, of that same sort must also be composed the larger period.

3. After all, since I wish (as in duty bound) to shew all possible deference to the celebrated comment of Bp. Walmesley: let us hear the decision of this oracle of the Romish Church; a decision, to which Mr. Rutter, as an orthodox catholic, cannot reasonably object.

Bp. Walmesley then, otherwise known by the war-name of *Signor Pastorini*, teaches us, that, by *the apocalyptic locusts which issue from the bottomless pit*, we are doubtless to understand *the protestants*

* Rev. xi. 9, 10.

who

Digitized by Google

who (as every body knows) *issued forth at the time of the Reformation from the Church of Rome.* But the locusts are to torment *the men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads* FIVE MONTHS; and this period of FIVE MONTHS is twice repeated: whence the bishop concludes, professedly after that heretical commentator Sir Isaac Newton, that TWICE FIVE MONTHS or a period of TEN MONTHS is the period specified by the prophet. Now these TEN MONTHS or THREE HUNDRED DAYS are *capable*, as the bishop truly remarks, of being understood either *literally* or *mystically.* The event however has shewn, as the bishop further remarks, that the TEN MONTHS allotted to the locusts of the Reformation cannot be ten *literal* months: because it is a clear case, that those troublesome animals have tormented *the Romanists*, pointed out (it is presumed) under the descriptive appellation of *men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads*, during a much longer space than that of ten *literal* months or 300 *literal* days. But, if they be not ten *literal* months, as the bishop most triumphantly argues from *the fully established fact* that the apocalyptic locusts cannot but mean the protestants of the Reformation; a fact, no doubt, *quite* as well established as that the Roman Empire was partitioned into ten kingdoms during the fifth and sixth centuries: if they be not ten *literal* months, they *must* be ten *mystical* months; that is to say, they must be equivalent to 300 solar years. Such being the case, the woe of Protestantism, with which (says the bishop) Apollyon

or

Digitized by Google

or the devil has so grievously tormented the innocent Catholic Church ever since he entered into the apostate monk Luther, is of course, from first to last, limited to exactly three centuries, neither more nor less *.

The

* Gen. Hist. p. 169—229. The learned expositor, as the reader will conclude from the length of his discussion, evidently treats the subject *con amore*. Though my limits only permit me to give a *spicilegium*, I trust that I have omitted nothing essential to the argument; notwithstanding I adduce it, *solely* on account of *the numerical computation* which it involves.

The bishop makes his 300 *mystical* days commence in the year 1525: whence we may clearly perceive, that they will run out in the now rapidly approaching year 1825.

I strongly suspect, that this unambiguous oracle has produced a strong sensation among our Romanizing brethren, particularly those of Ireland; for whose special edification the last edition of Bp. Walmesley's Comment, if we may judge from its Dublin origin, seems to have been intended. At least, as the fated 300 years draw to their end, we begin to hear, if the public prints do not grossly abuse our protestant credulity, certain speeches from certain orators: which teach us, that every religious novelty has its day; that the Church of England must speedily vanish, like sundry other religious novelties; and that the venerable and long maltreated Catholic Church advances to the charge under the sacred oriflamme, like a compact body of heavy infantry, while the Dissenters and Methodists act in this holy warfare the part of rifle-men and Cossacks.

It *may* be so: and doubtless there *is* such a thing, as an oracle tending to work its own accomplishment. Through God's mercy however, we will hope for the best: and this hope I am the rather willing to encourage; because, whatever partial departure from the faith there may be in *mere individuals*, I am persuaded, that no church in the world is more sincere than our excellent

Digitized by Google

The merits of this interpretation I shall not stop to discuss, because it is irrelevant to the present question:

excellent Anglican Church, when she speaks either *for herself* though the mouth of her Articles and Liturgy and Homilies, or by the voice of her ministers who preach the doctrines there set forth. At all events, *our* fall, if we *do* fall, will be no proof that the pretensions of the Romish Church are well founded; will be no security to *her*, that *she* also shall *not* fall: for the overthrow of a degenerate Church (and we are safe if we have *not* degenerated) proves nothing save the fact, that that particular Church *has* degenerated. *More* than this it neither does, nor can, prove. The overthrow of the seven churches of Asia affords no demonstration, that they were of the number of those religious novelties, which are to have their day and then expire: still less does it demonstrate, that the provincial Church of Rome shall *never* fall.

While I am on the subject of Bp. Walmesley and his locusts, I cannot refrain from noticing the heavy complaints which he makes relative to the dreadful persecutions sustained by that meek and inoffensive communion the Church of Rome ever since these same locusts commenced their operations in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Gener. Hist. p. 186—190, 454.

The good bishop must either be strangely ignorant himself of modern history; or he must take it for granted, that those laics, for whom his work is intended, know just as little of it as he seems to conclude they do of their Bible. If the former, what becomes of his fitness for an expositor? If the latter, I tremble for the moral honesty of his character. Truly an ecclesiastic is in a lamentable predicament, when his honesty can only be defended at the expence of his learning.

Is Bp. Walmesley then so unacquainted with the history of England, as never once to have heard of those hecatombs of victims whom the execrable Mary devoted in the flames to the Moloch of Popery; while the Romish prelates and monks exulted

Digitized by Google

question: *valeat, quantum valere potest.* My only business with it is *the* NUMERICAL PRINCIPLE *upon which it avowedly rests.*

Now

ulted to behold the tortures of men, whom they found it more easy to murder than to confute?

Have no faint rumours of the blood-stained Eve of St. Bartholomew or the revocation of the edict of Nantz reached his unsuspecting ears?

Knows he nothing of the duke of Alva's holy exploits in the Netherlands, or of the pious warfare of the house of Savoy in the Valleys?

Is he quite ignorant of all the godly labours of the Inquisition, private as well as public; the dread secrets of its prison-house; and the emphatically denominated *Acts of faith?*

A modern Popish bishop may be ignorant or forgetful of these matters as he most affects: but they stand recorded in the imperishable page of history, and never will they be effaced from the shuddering recollection of humanity. I designedly omit the atrocities of that corrupt Church, so well stigmatized by the apostle as even DRUNKEN with the blood of the saints, which were perpetrated *before* the Reformation: I purposely confine myself to that period, which, according to our profound historian Bp. Walmesley (for he has actually the modesty to style his production *a history*), was so eminently marked by dreadful persecutions, not *inflicted* but *suffered*, by what he is pleased forsooth to call *the Catholic Church.* Doubtless a Chinese or a Japanese, who knew nothing of modern Europe save from the notable history of Bp. Walmesley, would conclude, that Protestants, ever since the time of the Reformation, had been in the daily habit of roasting and torturing a lamb-like race of men denominated *Romanists* merely on account of their pretended idolatry and misbelief: while these meek-spirited persons were alike unwilling and unable to retaliate. How would he be surprized, when made acquainted with the *real* state of the case! What would he think of Bp. Walmesley's competency

Digitized by Google

Now I conceive, that, if in the hands of Bp. Walmesley TEN MONTHS may be legitimately expounded as tency *as an historian*, if told; that, after every barbarity had been perpetrated by the Romanists upon the Protestants, when the latter gained the ascendant, instead of repaying their once bloody and insulting tyrants in kind, they contented themselves with enacting such restrictive laws as should effectually pare the talons of the vanquished tyger without doing any injury to his carcase. This is the sum and substance of that dreadful persecution, respecting which Bp. Walmesley whines so piteously: the tyger claims to be nothing less than a martyr; because the man, who has him in his toils, with a strong hand prevents him from doing any further mischief. If indeed a Jesuit or a monk play the rebel, let him not fancy that his sheep's cloathing will protect him: but, in that case, *his treason*, not *his religion*, will be inquired into by a protestant government. The Romanists have the fullest *liberty of conscience;* and God forbid, that it should ever be otherwise: but they must not expect to have *power* given them; that again, as in former times, they may deprive *others* of that same natural and inalienable liberty. Hence, and hence only, the doleful lament of our expository historian.

Perhaps Mr. Rutter, like the Jews in the time of our Lord, may disallow these deeds of darkness achieved by his fathers of persecuting celebrity.

Be it so: but what then becomes of that slippery infallibility, which, by a series of strangely perverted texts, he attempts to establish as the property of the Church; though, even if those texts proved any such thing as *infallibility in the Catholic Church*, he would still have to demonstrate the palpable contradiction, that *the particular Church of Rome is the universal Church of Christ*, before his pretended proof of *catholic infallibility* would stand him in any stead? Key. p. 415—424.

The ridiculous claim, which Mr. Rutter (apparently in good sober earnest) would set up, reduces him to the following alternative.

If

Digitized by Google

as denoting 300 *solar years;* it is passing hard to comprehend, why, in the hands of a protestant presbyter, FORTY TWO MONTHS cannot possibly denote 1260 *solar revolutions.* Surely Mr. Rutter, though from his book I believe him to be a truly pious man, does not mete out *quite* an equal measure to the Roman prelate and to the protestant presbyter. On the part of the *latter*, to interpret FORTY TWO MONTHS, as denoting 1260 *natural years*, is "a novel "and arbitrary and groundless exposition," or (in the language of the energetic Bp. Walmesley) "an "absurd presumption." But, on the part of the *former*, to interpret TEN MONTHS, as denoting 300 *natural years*, is one of the numerous proofs, that his work is "the only good comment which England "has produced on the Apocalypse:" one of the numerous proofs, in short, as the Abbè Feller says, that he himself was raised up in an auspicious hour to console our sorrowing island for the disgrace which she has incurred by giving birth to Sir Isaac Newton *. "Lucem redde tuæ, dux bone, patriæ!"

If he maintains *the infallibility of his Church;* then he pledges himself to *approve* of all the enormities which it has committed, and thereby fully demonstrates the still-existing need of wise legislative restrictions: if he disclaims, with honest abhorrence and indignation, the various murders which it has perpetrated under the avowed plea of *a religious duty;* then he must needs give up its *infallibility*, by confessing that it was decidedly in the wrong.

Let him freely take his choice; though, peradventure, the selection may not be very agreeable to a Romish taste.

* Key. p. 467. Gen. Hist. in pref. p. vii.

III. Mr.

Digitized by Google

III. Mr. Rutter however has a direct proof, that the 1260 days *cannot* mean 1260 years. St. John, he rightly observes, must be interpreted by Daniel. But, in some unreferred to passage of Daniel, the three times and a half are applied to Antiochus Epiphanes who was a type of Antichrist. Now, when so applied to a single individual, they *must* denote three *natural* years and a half. Therefore, when applied to the little horn, they *must* denote three *natural* years and a half likewise *.

I am willing to hope, that the statement of Mr. Rutter's proof has not suffered in my hands; though I cannot discover that unreferred to passage of Daniel, on which the proof is built.

1. Allowing however for a moment his premises, I confess myself unable to discern the validity of his conclusion.

(1.) Why should it necessarily follow, that, because the tyranny of the alleged *type* lasted only three *natural* years and a half, the tyranny of the *antitype* should *therefore* last no longer than the same period? The *probability* rather leans the other way, because the *antitype* usually *exceeds* the *type* †.

(2.) Mr. Rutter will doubtless reply, that, however the *antitype* may outdo the *type* in point of *enormity*, it cannot outdo it in point of *duration:* because Antiochus and Antichrist are alike indivi-

* Key. p. 307.

† See Numb. xiv. 33, 34. and Ezek. iv. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9.

dual

Digitized by Google

dual men; and no individual man can domineer for a space of 1260 years.

This would be a very good argument, if Mr. Rutter had *first* proved, that *the little horn*, which he ultimately identifies with Antichrist, must symbolize *an individual man:* but, without such a preliminary, his argument evidently rests on a mere begging of the question. Now I will venture to say, as I have already hinted, that, on the principles of Bishop Walmesley and Mr. Rutter themselves, *the little horn* CANNOT symbolize *an individual.* The former rightly pronounces *the ten horns* of the Roman beast to be *ten* KINGDOMS, not *ten individual* KINGS: and the latter rightly pronounces *the four horns* of the Macedonian beast to be, not *four individual* KINGS, but *four* KINGDOMS. Nothing can be more just than these expositions: and I will fearlessly add, that no where in the prophecies of Daniel and St. John can *a horn* ever be found denoting *an individual man,* unless it be *the little horn* now under litigation.

The question then is; whether we can, with any decent shew of propriety, *thus* interpret *the little horn.*

Of the scriptural symbols the meaning is best established by Scripture. But, the Romanists themselves being judges, *a horn,* unless *the little horn* be a solitary exception, INVARIABLY denotes, not *an individual* KING, but *a* KINGDOM. If then they depart from the UNIVERSAL analogy of Scripture, *as allowed even by themselves,* when they expound *the little horn* to mean *a single individual:* they must produce

Digitized by Google

produce reasons for such a departure nothing short of absolute demonstration. Where are these overwhelming reasons? I find them not in the bond. The *sole* reason, in fact, of their palpably anomalous interpretation of *the little horn* is the manifest inconvenience which will result to their desperate cause, if that symbol be interpreted *analogically* to every other parallel symbol.

Nothing can afford a more striking instance of the miserable shifts to which they are reduced, than their exposition of Daniel's prophecy respecting the Roman beast: this single exposition alone is enough to damn their cause for ever.

The ten horns, says Bp. Walmesley, are not *ten* KINGS, but *ten* KINGDOMS. Yet, when Daniel without *the least specification* of any change in his meaning, describes *an eleventh small horn*, as rising up synchronically with the ten larger horns and as subverting three of them: then this consistent expositor forthwith shifts his ground; and authoritatively declares (as his echo Mr. Rutter does after him), that *the eleventh horn* is plainly not *a* KINGDOM, but *an individual* KING.

In favour of such palpable legerdemain, resorted to for the evident purpose of merely serving a turn, I suppose I shall hear the infallibility of the Catholic Church adduced; or perhaps Mr. Rutter's famous syllogism may be brought forward to prove, that a heretic, *quoad* a heretic, is *ipso facto* incapacitated from giving a right interpretation of prophecy*. But

* See above § I. 2. (2.)

I suspect,

Digitized by Google

I suspect, that plain common sense will prove too hard both for infallibility and the syllogism.

2. So much for Mr. Rutter's conclusion; the validity of which however I am not at all disposed to allow, even if his premises were well founded: let us now attend to the premises themselves.

Where then, let me ask, does Mr. Rutter ever find the period of three times and a half or 1260 days applied to Antiochus Epiphanes?

I am fully aware, that he will take refuge as usual among those *necessarily* most inadequate expositors of unfulfilled prophecy, the fathers. But this will not serve his turn: nor will he mend the matter, if he bring forward the Jew Josephus into the bargain.

The only power in the book of Daniel, to which the period of the three times and a half is *directly* applied, is *the little horn of the Roman beast*: yet there is considerable reason for believing, that it is also *indirectly* applied to *the contemporary little horn of the Macedonian beast*; each of these two little horns being suffered to tyrannise, the one in the west and the other in the east, during the self-same allotted period*.

If then Antiochus be at all represented by any of Daniel's symbols connected with the three times and a half (a position, on which Mr. Rutter would fain build a proof that the 1260 days *cannot* denote 1260 years); it must be, either by *the one*, or by *the other*, or by *both*, of the two little horns.

* Compare Dan. xii. 7, 11, with viii. 11, 12, 13.

By

Digitized by Google

By the little horn of the *Roman* beast, he plainly *cannot* be represented: because that horn was to spring up synchronically with the ten kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was destined to be divided; and the Roman Empire (according to Bp. Walmesley's own interpretation of the ten horns) was so divided long after Antiochus was dead and laid in his grave.

Neither can he be represented by the little horn of the *Macedonian* beast: both because Antiochus, as a Syrian king, is included in the dynasty of the great Syrian horn, which Mr. Rutter himself justly pronounces to be one of the four notable Greek horns or kingdoms; and because, without a gross and unauthorized violation of the whole analogy of Scripture, the symbol of *a horn* can never be made to represent *a solitary individual.*

Thus it is clear, that the three times and a half have no sort of relation to Antiochus; and, if we wanted any additional proof, we should have it in the decisive circumstance, that the profanation of the temple by that prince did *not* continue for the determined space of *three years and a half* but only for the space of *three years* *. Accordingly, though Mr. Rutter may have overlooked or forgotten it, even his favourite Jerome, whom he and Bp. Walmelsey would erect into the *magnus Apollo* of prophetic exposition, perceived so clearly that the little horn *could not be* Antiochus Epiphanes, that he

* Compare 1 Macc. i. 59. with iv. 52.

actually

Digitized by Google

actually took the pains to confute Porphyry, who had advanced that crude opinion as a basis from which he might conveniently attack the authenticity of Daniel's predictions *. Yet does Mr. Rutter now adduce this exploded fancy, as a mean of proving that the 1260 days *cannot* mean 1260 years.

3. I need scarcely in conclusion point out to the judicious reader the strange confusion, under which Mr. Rutter labours, as to the *primary* and *ultimate* accomplishments of the same prophecy.

Of these twofold accomplishments, no predictions are capable save those which are *unchronological.* A strictly *chronological* prophecy, such as those of Daniel and St. John, is neither more nor less than a *series of anticipated history;* and, as such, it is necessarily and from its very nature incapable of a double accomplishment. As well therefore might we say, that, when the history of England treats of William the Conqueror, it *primarily* means king Arthur; as affirm, that, when Daniel draws the character of a persecuting Roman power under the symbol of a little horn, he *primarily* means Antiochus Epiphanes. But the Romish expositors, so far as I have seen of them, do not appear to trouble themselves with acquiring distinct notions, either as to symbolical homogeneity, or as to consistent prophetic application. Loose and disjointed, their systems fall asunder at the slightest touch.

IV. Mr. Rutter however has yet another argu-

* Hieron. Comment. vol. iii. p. 1101. Edit. Benedict.

ment,

Digitized by Google

ment, which properly enough brings up his rear-guard, since it may well claim to be his palmary argument. I shall give it in his own words.

" Finally, is Mr. Faber aware of the consequences, " that result from his new system? The prophet " Daniel clearly foretells, that the kingdom of Christ " should *never be destroyed nor delivered up to ano-* " *ther:* it was to *stand for ever.* Jesus Christ also " expressly promised to his Church, that he would " *be with it to the end of the world,* and that *the* " *gates of hell should never prevail against it.* But, " according to Mr. Faber's system, he has not kept " his word: the kingdom of Jesus Christ, from the " year 606, became an antichristian kingdom; he, " whom the great body of Christians, in England, in " France, in Spain, in Germany, in Holland, and in " other kingdoms, acknowledged as their lawful and " supreme pastor under Christ, was no better than " Antichrist; all the holy and zealous missionaries, " who by their preaching converted our pagan an- " cestors, the Saxons, the Franks, the Goths, were " no better than ministers of Satan in propagating " an idolatrous religion. Mr. Faber may as well " say, that there has been, since that period, no true " Christianity in the world; but that, in its place, " an antichristian apostasy has prevailed throughout " all nations. Of all wild opinions there is none " that appears more antichristian than this, or more " opposite to the plain words of Scripture *."

* Key. p. 307, 308.

Digitized by Google

1. Before I proceed to discuss this argument, it may not be improper to notice two very singular errors into which my respectable opponent has fallen.

(1.) He styles my system *a new system;* just as he had before denominated my principle, that the 1260 days are equivalent to 1260 natural years, *a novel exposition.*

Now, whatever degree of novelty my work may possess in *other* respects, I am certainly proposing no *new* system, nor am I hazarding any *novel* exposition, when I contend that the Papacy is the little horn of Daniel's Roman beast, and that the 1260 prophetic days are equivalent to 1260 natural years. This *new* system, and this *novel* exposition, were in existence long before the birth either of Mr. Rutter or myself: yet has he expressed himself in such a manner, that a lay-member of his own communion, who of course would not be conversant with the writings of protestant divines, must almost inevitably suppose, that I am the *very first* person who has adduced these strange and hitherto-unheard-of interpretations. Why does Mr. Rutter term those parts of my work, with which *alone* he concerns himself, *a new system* and *a novel exposition:* and, to prevent a Romanizing reader from supposing that he uses the words *new* and *novel* only contradistinctively to those *ancient* interpretations which the fathers hazarded *confessedly* before the accomplishment of the prophecies in question, why does he speciallay ask; *Is* M^r^ FABER *aware of the consequences that result from*

Digitized by Google

from HIS *new system* namely *the new system of* M^r^ FABER, that is to say, *a system so peculiarly* HIS OWN *that no other person ever dreamed of excogitating it?*

(2.) Again: he represents me, as denominating the Papacy *an antichristian kingdom*, and as describing the Pope to be *no better than Antichrist*. Yet, strange to say, in the course of the very same note, he accurately cites me as observing, that *Mr. Whitaker has exceeded his commission in branding the Papacy with the title of Antichrist*.

I undoubtedly made this remark on Mr. Whitaker, and I see no reason for retracting it; because I assuredly do not believe the Papacy to be the great Antichrist so accurately described by St. John in his first and second Epistles: and I need scarcely observe, that he is the only inspired writer who uses the term. But, if Mr. Rutter knows so well, that I do *not* suppose the Pope to be Antichrist (a *real* protestant novelty, peculiar, I believe, to Bp. Horsley and myself): why does he, by way of strengthening his argument, represent me, as denominating the Papacy *an antichristian kingdom*, and as deeming the Pope *no better than Antichrist?* If it will afford him any satisfaction, I can assure him, that I deem the Pope MUCH *better than Antichrist;* because I have no doubt, that *many* of the excellent of the earth, who were in communion with the Romish see while living, are now resting from their labours in heaven: whereas, if there be any truth in the Gospel, *no* adherent of Antichrist, whose awfully

Digitized by Google

characteristic badge is A DENIAL OF THE FATHER AND THE SON, can possibly and in the very reason of things partake of salvation.

2. And now for Mr. Rutter's palmary argument: a weighty theme, no doubt, because it professes to set me in direct opposition to our blessed Lord. Yet, grave as may be the allegation which it involves, a single glance will discover, that it can have no weight save with a Romanist, who devoutly fancies his own *peculiar* Church to be EXCLUSIVELY the *catholic* Church of Christ. Logical mood and figure sometimes have their use in detecting a paralogism. Let us throw the present argument into a syllogism, and then observe its cogency.

Daniel foretells, that the kingdom of Christ *shall never be destroyed or given up to another*, but that it *shall stand for ever:* and Christ expressly promises to his Church, that he *will be with it to the end of the world*, and that *the gates of hell shall never prevail against it*—The Church of Rome is that kingdom of Christ foretold by Daniel, and that Church to which the promises of Christ had EXCLUSIVE respect—Therefore (what can possibly be plainer?), if the Church of Rome became an apostate or idolatrous Church, and if the Pope be the head of that idolatrous apostasy; the prophecy of Daniel, and the promise of Christ, have alike failed.

(1.) Such, when regularly marshalled, is the argument, which is effectually to demolish me, by proving, that "of all wild opinions there is none that appears "more

Digitized by Google

" more antichristian than my own or more opposite " to the plain words of Scripture."

Doubtless it will do its business root and branch, provided only we will concede, that the Romish Church is EXCLUSIVELY the Catholic Church, as its members delight to call it; that the Romish Church is SOLELY that Church, which Daniel described as *everlasting*, and to which Christ made the promise of *eternal subsistence:* but, as this is the very matter in debate between the Protestants and the Papists, the argument of Mr. Rutter, however convincing it may be to the *latter*, can only appear to the *former* as built upon a complete begging of the question. We Protestants venture to deny (and we conceive ourselves to have *simple matter of fact* on our side), that the Romish Church is EXCLUSIVELY the Catholic Church: for we suppose, that the appellation *Catholic*, so zealously claimed by the Papists as *specially* their own, and often so foolishly (as it were) conceded to them by unthinking or ignorant Protestants, belongs not EXCLUSIVELY to *any* particular national Church; but (as the liturgy of one sound *branch* of the *Universal* Church well expresses the matter) that it describes *the* WHOLE *state of Christ's Church militant here on earth.* Hence we contend, that the Romanists are no more *Catholics*, in any *exclusive* or *peculiar* sense of the word, than the Greeks, or the Armenians, or the Syrians, or the Ethiopians, or the insular English, or the continental Lutherans and Calvinists, or the transatlantic Americans: and we should be just as ready to censure an

Digitized by Google

an *exclusive* assumption of the title by any single communion of those various branches of the Church Universal; as we are to censure it, *when thus exclusive*, in the case of the mere Western or Latin Church in communion with the provincial bishop or patriarch of Rome. On these grounds, though we believe this *particular* provincial Church to have lamentably apostatised from the sincerity of the Gospel, though we conceive it to have been prefigured by the little horn which was to spring up SYNCHRONICALLY with the ten Gothic kingdoms of the dismembered Roman Empire, and though we can discern no reason for supposing that the promise of Christ was made to the Romish Church any more than to each of the seven Asiatic Churches in the Apocalypse: still we find no difficulty in discerning, that this same divine promise, which was made not to this or to that *provincial* Church but to the CATHOLIC Church of Christ viewed collectively, has been most faithfully and accurately fulfilled.

To say nothing of the concurrent lines of the Greek, the Syrian, the Armenian, and the Ethiopic, Churches; we are not deterred, either by the absurd and unwarrantable assumption of the title *Catholic* on the part of the mere *provincial* Latin Church, or by the cry of *heresy* which during the whole period of the 1260 prophetic days she has not failed to raise against those pious witnesses who throughout the limits of the Roman Empire have prophesied in sackcloth against her unscriptural innovations: by neither of these are we deterred from observing the faithfulness,

Digitized by Google

faithfulness, with which Christ has performed his promise, that, however widely *real* heresy might prevail (as in the days of the anti-arian champion Athanasius), or however deeply a corrupt and persecuting system might have rooted itself (as during the lapse of the fated three times and a half); he would still be with his catholic Church to the end of the world, and the gates of hell should never prevail against it. Mr. Rutter says much respecting the necessity of the Church being always *visible**. I do not think it worth

* Key. p. 409—415. Mr. Rutter argues, that the Protestant Church (meaning, I presume, *the collective body of the Protestant Churches*) cannot be the true Church, because it was not in being before the year 1500, and because it has never yet converted any infidel kings and nations to the faith of Christ: and so confident is he on this point, that he sees not how the most learned protestant can give any satisfactory answer to his argument. Key. p. 424.

I am willing to hope, that it requires no great profundity of learning to answer the stale question, *Where was the Protestant Church before Luther?* In return, I would ask Mr. Rutter, *Where was the German Church before Boniface?* He will readily answer, that *it is a continuation of the Catholic Church.* And I, in like manner, will just as readily answer, that *the collective Protestant Church is a continuation of the faithful persecuted Waldensic Church in the wilderness.*

But Mr. Rutter triumphs in the circumstance, that the collective Protestant Church, which began indeed to exist *upon a larger scale than before* and to be distinguished *by that particular name* only since the beginning of the sixteenth century, has made none of those national and regal conversions which form the glory of the Romish Church.

A most notable discovery in good truth! The collective Protestant Church, which in the beginning of the *sixteenth* century continued

Digitized by Google

worth my while to argue the point with him; though our Lord tells us, that "the kingdom of God cometh "not with observation," but that "it is within us*:" because the very persecution, of the Waldensic Churches *before* the Reformation, and of the Protestants *after* it, sufficiently proves the *visible* existence of that distressed Church in the wilderness of Popish error and heresy; which the inspired prophet has delineated with so much accuracy, and which he represents as subsisting in a low and depressed state during the whole period of the 1260 days†.

This

continued the line of the old Waldensic and Bohemian Churches, did not convert the Saxons, the Goths, and the Huns, who embraced Christianity during the *fifth* and the *sixth* and the *seventh* centuries: therefore it cannot be a true Church. Nothing can be clearer: but I am afraid, this invincible argument will prove rather more than Mr. Rutter may wish. The German Church, which in the *eighth* century continued the line of the more ancient Roman Church, did not convert the Ephesians and the Galatians, who embraced Christianity in the *first* century: therefore, on the same ground, *it* plainly cannot be a true Church. I am not aware, that the missionary labours of the Romanists SINCE the Reformation have been at all more exemplary or more successful, than those of the Protestants.

* Luke xvii. 20, 21.

† Rev. xii. 6, 14. xvii. 3. If the reader wishes to see the line of sound evangelical witnesses deduced through all the hitherto-elapsed period of the papal apostasy, he would do well to consult Bp. Newton's excellent Dissert. on Rev. xi. and Dr. Allix on the ancient Churches of Piedmont.

It has been a prevailing humour among the Romanists, from which even the candid and liberal Mr. Butler is not exempt, to charge the pious Waldenses with the Manichèan heresy. Yet the

Digitized by Google

This affords an abundantly sufficient answer to Mr. Rutter's assertion, that, in maintaining Popery to be the predicted great apostasy from the Gospel, "Mr. Faber may as well say, that there has been, "since that period (namely the year 606), no true "Christianity in the world; but that, in its place, "an antichristian apostasy has prevailed throughout "all nations." Is Mr. Rutter however quite accurate in describing the theological system of Rome, whether it be or be not an apostasy, as prevailing throughout ALL nations; that is, of course, ALL nations professing Christianity? History, I fear, will hardly bear him out in so round an allegation. The theatre of papal greatness has ever been the western Roman Empire: and, notwithstanding the claim of *exclusive Catholicism*, those churches, which lie beyond the limits of that empire, and which were founded many centuries before the dawning of the Reformation, discovered not, that their salvation

the Dominican Reinerius, who presided as Inquisitor-General in the year 1254, confesses, that these pretended Manichèans lived justly before men, and *believed all things* RIGHTLY *concerning God and all the articles which are contained in the creed.* He adds, that this abundantly *visible* Church, for there was scarce a country in which it did not exist, was so ancient, that some traced it even up to the time of the apostles. As for their imaginary Manicheism, Mezeray tells us, that their sentiments were much the same as those of the modern Calvinists. It is worthy of note, that they applied certain of the apocalyptic prophecies to the Papacy in the very manner which Mr. Rutter has been pleased to call *novel*. Reiner. cont. Hær. c. iv. p. 54. Mezer. Abregé Chronol. p. 657. Thuan. Hist. lib. vi. sect. 16. cited by Bp. Newton.

was

Digitized by Google

was implicated in submission to the limited patriarch of the provincial Latin Church. It is easy indeed to style the Christians of the Greek Patriarchate *heretics* and *schismatics*, as Bp. Walmesley does with a superfluity of vulgar insolence; for nothing is cheaper than foul language: but, why the Greeks are schismatics for not submitting to the Latin Patriarch, rather than the Latins are schismatics for not submitting to the Greek Patriarch, it would puzzle the most acute casuist to determine. So far as the Emperor Justinian had any right to settle such matters, he constituted the four great Patriarchs equal in authority, no appeal lying from one to the other of them: the Romish Patriarch had nothing adjudged to him beyond the empty right of precedency, just as the English Metropolitan of Canterbury takes place of the English Metropolitan of York*. Accordingly, about seventy years afterwards, so little was the modern Romish claim of *exclusive catholicism* thought of Pope Gregory the first, that he expresses himself in the following very remarkable terms: "I speak it confidently, that, whosoever calleth "himself UNIVERSAL BISHOP, or even desireth to "be so called, in the pride of his heart he is the "forerunner of Antichrist†." This well merited

* Justin. Novell. Tit. xiv. constit. cxxxi. cap. 2. Tit. iv. lib. xxix.

† "Ego fidenter dico, quod quisquis se UNIVERSALEM "SACERDOTEM vocat, vel vocari desiderat, in elatione sua Anti-"christum præcurrit." Greg. Oper. lib. vi. epist. 30. One might almost imagine, that Bp. Walmesley and Mr. Rutter had never heard of such a person as Pope Gregory.

censure.

Digitized by Google

censure of unseemly sacerdotal arrogance was levelled against the Patriarch of Constantinople, who then preferred the very same claim to *universal episcopacy* that the Patriarchs of Rome have since so pertinaciously done: and we have here, standing upon record, the sentence, pronounced from the chair of St. Peter itself, against such unchristian insolence *.

(2.) Mr.

* Greg. Oper. lib. iv. epist. 34. Bp. Walmesley and Mr. Rutter would have done well to weigh the words of Pope Gregory, ere they committed themselves so unaccountably on this topic. But let us hear their remarks:

I. "The Catholic Church," says Bp. Walmesley, by which he means the Romish Church as usual, "is always *uniform* and "*unanimous* in her doctrine. Her faith is always *the same.* "She received it from her divine Founder, and she preserves "the sacred depositum *inviolable. No jarring opinions, no* "*innovations,* are allowed on that head. When a dogmatical "point is to be determined, she speaks but once; and her de-"cree is irrevocable." Gen. Hist. p. 224.

It is plain from this curious passage, that our general historian, when he talked about *the necessary centre of union being established in one person* and about *the schism of the Greeks because they refused to acknowledge the Pope in his quality of supreme head of the Catholic Church* (Gen. Hist. p. 451, 452.) either knew as little concerning the *irrevocable* decision of Pope Gregory, as he did respecting certain more recent matters; or, if he *did* know all these particulars, that he has dishonestly suppressed them, as pearls (to adopt Mr. Rutter's language in speaking of the Romish laity) unfit to be cast before swine.

Gregory pronounced it highly unchristian for ANY person to style himself *universal bishop.* Yet, notwithstanding this irrevocable determination of a dogmatical point in a Church which speaks but once, the Roman Proteus *now* pronounces it a sure badge

Digitized by Google

(2.) Mr. Rutter however would puzzle me by putting the knotty case, whether those pious and holy missionaries,

badge of heresy and schism to *deny* the universal presidency of the Pope.

One of those infallible councils, which the bishop views with such complacency, determined the bread and wine in the Eucharist to REPRESENT, not to BE, the body and blood of Christ (Council. Constan. vol. iii. p. 359.): and, accordingly, when Radbert first started the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, it was strenuously opposed, as an unscriptural novelty, by Rabanus Maurus archbishop of Mentz, Bertram of Corbie, Johannes Scotus, and many other bishops and learned men of that age (Raban. Maur. lib. de poenit. c. 33. Instit. Cleric. lib. i. c. 31. De Univer. lib. v. c. 11. Usser. de Christ. Eccles. success. cap. ii. sect. 16, 17, 19. cited by Bp. Newton.) But *now* the pretended Catholic Church, *always* uniform and unanimous in her doctrine, *always* free from jarring opinions and innovations (as our general historian assures us), pronounces every man a heretic who rejects the dogma of *Transubstantiation*: and Mr. Rutter, by a critical process in which he even surpasses himself, has actually discovered that the sacrifice of Christ's literal body and blood in the Eucharist is foretold by Malachi. Key. p. 394—397.

To descend however to more modern times, and to omit the council at Francfort in the time of Charlemagne which alike condemned the second council of Nice and the worship of images (Spanhem. Hist. Christ. sect. viii. c. 6, 9.), did Bp. Walmesley, while complacently glozing about *no jarring opinions, no innovations, the Church always uniform and unanimous in her doctrine*, and the like; did the bishop, while thus sailing over the glassy surface of the unruffled catholic ocean, never perchance hear of such persons as the Jesuits and the Jansenists; did he never, while collecting materials for his *general history of the Christian Church*, happen to stumble upon such a book as *the Provincial Letters of Pascal*? However this may be,

Digitized by Google

missionaries, who converted our Gothic forefathers, were no better than ministers of Satan.

To

be, whispers have certainly reached the ears of us profane heretics, that the profound solitude of the Romish Church is not *always* peace.

II. From the bishop let us descend with meet gradation to the presbyter. "What St. Jerome says of heretics," remarks Mr. Rutter, "is equally applicable to schismatics, who separate "themselves from the see of Peter, the centre of catholic "unity." Key. p. 248.

This *centre of catholic unity* sounds well to *the ear;* but there *have* been instances, in which it would not a little puzzle *the eye* of a plain way-faring man. Unless malicious history most foully belies the Catholic Church of Rome, the mystic ring of St. Peter did once exhibit the strange geometrical figure of a *perfect* circle with *two*, nay even with *three*, centres. Now, if we may believe Mr. Rutter, *all* are schismatics and heretics, whence of course they will infallibly be damned, who separate themselves from the centre of catholic unity. What then are they to do, in order to salvation, when catholic unity presents a perplexing choice, first of *two*, and then of *three*, centres? Who shall guide their devious and belated steps through the vast profound; lest haply they sink,

> Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
> Nor good dry land?

Gregory XI died at Rome in the year 1378. Upon his demise, the Italian cardinals chose a Pope, who took the name of *Urban* VI, and who fixed his seat in the city of Rome: but the French cardinals chose another, who took the name of *Clement* VII, and who fixed his seat at Avignon. All Christendom was divided between these *two* centres of catholic unity: and the great SCHISM (portentous word!), as that honest and very learned Romanist Mr. Rutter fairly calls it, now commenced. Rome and the principal states of Italy, Germany, Portugal, England,

Digitized by Google

To this a ready answer is afforded by assuring him, that I do not believe his Church to be the predicted *Antichrist*

England, the Low Countries, and the Kingdoms of the North, adhered to the prior election of Urban: France, Savoy, Sicily, Cyprus, Arragon, Castile, Navarre, and Scotland, enlisted under the holy banner of Clement. From the banks of the Tiber and the Rhone, the hostile pontiffs mutually anathematized each other as an antichrist; and mutually, with bell and book and candle, excommunicated and turned over to Satan each other's adherents and followers:

Arcades ambo,
Et cantare pares, et respondere parati.

Wearied at length with a scene not very similar to that exhibited by the glowing pencil of Bp. Walmesley, the council of Pisa deposed *both* Popes; thus practically declaring, that *each* was a spurious vicar of St. Peter, and consequently that the apostolic circle had existed some 31 years without *any* centre of unity *at all*. In order to give it what it had thus unhappily lacked for full three decades, the council proceeded to choose Alexander V; and his vacant seat was soon filled by a similar election of John XXIII, whom the historian denominates *the most profligate of mankind*. But, instead of extinguishing the schism, this step did but make confusion ten-fold worse confounded. Neither Clement nor Urban were inclined to descend from their pontifical thrones: the mystic circle of St. Peter presented to the orthodox censurers of heresy and schism *three* centres of catholic unity: and the triple-crowned Babylonic female wondered to find herself triple-headed.

ΤΡΙΣΣΟΚΑΡΗΝΟΝ ἰδεῖν, ὁλόον τέρας ὕτε δαητόν,
Ταρταροπαις Ἑκατη.

It is superfluous to follow the disgusting detail any further: I only wish Mr. Rutter to explain, how it behoved a conscientious catholic to act, when such an ample variety of centres was offered

Digitized by Google

Antichrist of St. John. Hence I am quite at liberty to concede, that much good might be done by various truly pious men; who preached to the pagans the grand leading truths of Christianity, though unhappily loaded and disfigured by a vast bundle of unscriptural novelties. Nor is this all: with a happy inconsistency which I rejoice to observe in many parts of Mr. Rutter's own pious though prejudiced work, I have always noticed, so far as my knowledge extends, that really good men of the Romish communion, when they enter upon a spiritual and practical application of Scripture either for their own edification or for that of others, sink the strange peculiarities which deform their speculative creed; and, like the veriest Protestant that was ever nursed in the lap of heresy itself, omitting saints and relics and images and indulgences and works meritorious or supererogatory, "forsake (with our own admirable Hooker) all things wherein they have put any "trust or confidence, no staff to lean upon, no ease, "no rest, no comfort, but only in Jesus Christ*."

In

offered to his choice, lest peradventure, to the manifest danger of his immortal soul, he should "separate himself from the see "of Peter, the centre of catholic unity."

* While I pass over, as wholly beneath criticism, Bp. Walmesley's paltry and virulent misrepresentations of the apostolic doctrine of *justification*, I give with pleasure the following sound passage as a specimen of Mr. Rutter's happy inconsistency with his artificial creed.

"A soul, truly sensible of the important favour which she "has received from God in her conversion, never loses the re-

"membrance

Digitized by Google

In short, I can discover no material difference, between the inward spiritual exercises of that holy and judicious Protestant, and those of various excellent members of the Romish Church which have come within the scope of my own observation: but then I have always perceived in such cases, that in language, in devotedness, in genuine spirituality, and in the professed grounds of dependence for justification and sanctification, the approximation has still been on the side of Romanism, not on the side of Protestantism; those good men, to whom I allude and among whom I would fain include my present worthy opponent (not, I hope, to be my opponent *always*), assimilate themselves unconsciously and as it were involuntarily to the creed of Hooker, not Hooker to *their* creed.

" membrance of the deplorable state in which his divine mercy " found her. Every thing recals to her mind her former dark- " ness and iniquity: at all times, she deems herself poor and " miserable, and absolutely undeserving of the least grace and " favour. Conscious, that of herself she possesses no claim to " God's gifts, to his word, to his truth, or to his consolations; " she is content to glean (as it were) some ears of corn left by " accident: and these she gathers up with a holy avidity. " The least favour or gift on the part of the Almighty over- " whelms her with joy: a single word of comfort penetrates " and melts her heart. She humbles and perfectly annihilates " herself in the presence of Jesus Christ, in proportion as she " experiences the effects of his goodness and marked attention " towards her. This profound humility and lively gratitude " raise her gradually to the high dignity of spouse of him, whom " she deemed herself unworthy of serving even in the lowest " capacity." Key. p. 91, 92.

Under

Digitized by Google

Under such circumstances, I am as little disposed, as Mr. Rutter can be, to misdeem ALL the missionaries of the Romish Church ministers of Satan. Those, who really went forth in the spirit of their divine Master, will, I doubt not, be owned by him, whatever disadvantages they may have laboured under: but, as for the Saxon conversions effected by the dragooning system of Charlemagne or the Polish conversions brought about by those military apostles the Teutonic cavaliers, common sense requires, that I should deem the unhappy subjects of them as much children of Satan as ever they were, notwithstanding their constrained baptism and their reluctant profession of nominal Christianity; and I am sure, that a man like Mr. Rutter, to many parts of whose work serious Protestants will very readily subscribe, thinks, if he would but own it, on this particular subject like myself. It is one thing to *compel* men to enter into the pale of the visible Church; and quite another thing to *win* them to a spiritual reception of the blessed truths of the Gospel. As for many of the conversions, which Mr. Rutter adduces to the honour and glory of the Romish Church, I make no more account of them, than our Saviour did of the proselyting labours of the old Pharisees *.

(3.) In

* If Mr. Rutter thinks, that any proof is afforded of the soundness of his Church, or that it has acquired the least degree of honour, by the mode of converting the aboriginal Americans, which was recommended by *the most eminent divines* and ecclesiastical lawyers of the day, and which was duly practised by

Digitized by Google

(3.) In conclusion to my remarks on Mr. Rutter's palmary argument, I may add, that, even if I allow it

the merciless Spaniards: I can only express my astonishment at the boundless power which prejudice can obtain over an otherwise well-disposed mind.

"Ferdinand," says Dr. Robertson, "erected two governments on the continent. The former was given to Ojeda; "the latter, to Nicuessa. In order to give their title to those "countries some appearance of validity, several of *the most "eminent* DIVINES and lawyers in Spain were employed to prescribe the mode in which they should take possession of "them. There is not in the history of mankind any thing "more singular or extravagant, than the form which they devised for the purpose. They instructed those invaders, as "soon as they landed on the continent, to declare to the natives the principal articles of the Christian faith; to acquaint "them, in particular, with the supreme jurisdiction of the "Pope over all the kingdoms of the world; to inform them of "the grant, which this holy pontiff had made of their country "to the King of Spain; and to require them to embrace the "doctrines of that religion which the Spaniards made known "to them and to submit to the sovereign whose authority they "proclaimed. *If the natives refused to comply with this requisition, the terms of which must have been utterly incomprehensible to uninstructed Indians: then Ojeda and Nicuessa were "authorized to attack them with fire and sword; to reduce them, "their wives, and children, to a state of servitude; and to compel "them by force to recognize the jurisdiction of the church and the "authority of the monarch, to which they would not voluntarily "subject themselves.*" History of Amer. book iii. p. 242, 243.

Nor is this any ill-natured misrepresentation of a protestant writer: Dr. Robertson both cites Herrera as his authority (Herrer. dec. 1. lib. vii. c. 15.), and gives at large in a note verbatim the identical form which was employed on that occasion.

Digitized by Google

it all the force which he could wish; he does not seem to be aware, how dangerous a weapon it is, and how apt to do mischief by an unlucky recoil.

If

sion. Neither yet was the circumstance in question a single insulated matter, forthwith reprobated and disowned by those mirrors of catholic orthodoxy, the proselyting Spaniards: so far from it, "the form employed on this occasion," namely the form (Mr. Rutter will please to recollect) prescribed by THE MOST EMINENT DIVINES in Spain, "served as a model to the "Spaniards in *all* their subsequent conquests in America."

To anticipate the effects produced on the minds of the natives by the labours of these holy missionaries, who (if we may credit Mr. Rutter) have decidedly proved by their ultimate success the orthodoxy of the SOLE catholic Church of Rome, it requires not the gift of prophecy. These effects however stand recorded in authentic history: their voucher is that illustrious Romanist las Casas, the Wilberforce of Spain.

"When Hatuey was fastened to the stake, a Franciscan friar, "labouring to convert him, promised him immediate admittance "into the joys of heaven, if he would embrace the Christian "faith. *Are there any Spaniards*, said he after some pause, "*in that region of bliss which you describe? Yes*, replied the "monk, *but only such as are worthy and good—The best of "them*, returned the indignant cazique, *have neither worth nor "goodness: I will not go to a place where I may meet with one "of that accursed race.*" Robertson's Hist. of Amer. book iii. p. 248, 249.

If there be any justice in heaven, the murdered Hatuey's intense hatred of Christianity will surely be imputed, in the great day of retribution, to the infernal councils, which were given (we are told) by THE MOST EMINENT DIVINES in Spain. I am happy however to remark, that these counsels, though vindicated in Hispaniola by the Franciscan monks, were vehemently censured and opposed, at least as far as *the slavery* of the natives was concerned, by the Dominican fathers and the noble-

Digitized by Google

If *my* exposition (as he contends) will *indeed* make void the promise of Christ; *his own*, which he expresses in the words of St. Jerome, will do the very same. "From the time," says this father as cited with approbation by Mr. Rutter, "when Antichrist "shall obtain the sovereignty of THE WHOLE WORLD "and shall INTERDICT THE WORSHIP OF GOD, to "the time of his destruction, shall be three years "and a half." Now, if, in the expectation of Mr. Rutter, Antichristianism is to be dominant over THE WHOLE WORLD and COMPLETELY TO PUT AN END TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD; it matters not an iota, so far as the breach of Christ's promise is concerned, whether the monster's reign be only 1260 natural days or 1260 natural years: the promise, according to Mr. Rutter's mode of stating the argument, will be broken just as much in the one case as in the other.

Doubtless he will say, that, in the midst of the wide-spreading moral pestilence, God will still have a remnant however small, which shall survive their potent enemy.

So he will say: but then, in saying this, he will only say the very same that I myself do. It is *my* doctrine quite as much as *his*, that God has a faith-

minded though inconsistent las Casas. How Bp. Walmesley would have settled the matter between these contending catholics, I presume not to determine. Their discrepancies do not reflect that flattering portrait of catholic "UNANIMITY" and perfect freedom from all "jarring opinions," which the bishop has thought fit to exhibit. Gen. Hist. p. 224.

ful

Digitized by Google

ful remnant of sincere worshippers throughout the whole period of the 1260 days; however we may differ in our ideas, both respecting the length of the period, and respecting the character of the apocalyptic witnesses: and the existence of such sincere worshippers throughout the entire duration of the dark ages is a point, which we Protestants conceive to be most fully established by the unexceptionable testimony of authentic history.

In fact, Mr. Rutter, I presume, will allow, that Christ is the most satisfactory interpreter of the nature and extent of his own promise. He foretells indeed *the perpetuity* of his Catholic Church, whereever dispersed and however distressed; but he does *not* foretell its *universally triumphant and general prevalence*, throughout *every* age of its duration alike. On the contrary, his emphatic question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith "in the world?" speaks volumes. It teaches us, that, ere the grand consummation of all things, the Church shall be reduced within such narrow limits, that it might well escape the notice of those, whose attention was solely placed on a gaudy and painted and meretricious pageant.

Digitized by Google

DISSERTATION V.

Respecting various points at issue between the Romanists and the Protestants, which bear upon the interpretation of prophecy.

BESIDES the proper mode of computing the 1260 days, there are various points at issue between the Romanists and the Protestants, which more or less bear upon the interpretation of prophecy. Some of the most important of these shall now be discussed at large.

I. By way of invalidating the general drift of protestant exposition, Mr. Rutter, as his brethren have often done before him, industriously notices the discrepancies of commentators; and would thence draw an argument, that, since they differ so much among themselves, they mutually destroy the effect of all attacks upon the Romish Church which are made through the medium of prophecy. Thus he adduces the objections, which I myself have urged to the interpretations of Zouch, Kett, Galloway, and Whitaker: thus also, with much better ground for exultation, he observes, that Grotius and Hammond will

Digitized by Google

not at all allow *the man of sin* to be the Papacy; though other less candid Protestants are abundantly ready to make the application *.

1. This objection will doubtless appear very plausible to a Romish laic, who is not conversant with the writings of protestant expositors: but it owes the whole of its plausibility to the suppressed mode, in which it is stated.

The *real* fact is, that, with the exception of Grotius and Hammond and one or two who have followed them, *there is* NO DISCREPANCY *among protestant expositors* WITH REGARD TO THE GREAT OUTLINES *of prophetic interpretation.* From the Reformation down to the present day, nay even during the period which preceded the Reformation, with the above-stated exception of a very few insulated individuals; *those, who protest against the corrupt innovations of Popery, are* UNANIMOUS *in pronouncing the little Roman horn of Daniel's fourth beast, the apocalyptic harlot and false prophet, and the apostate man of sin foretold by St. Paul, to be the Papacy viewed as presiding over the great apostasy.* Let them be right, or let them be wrong, in this opinion, they are at all events (with some trifling exceptions) UNANIMOUS in maintaining it †.

I need

* Key. p. 305, 306.

† The testimony of those, who lived *before* the Reformation, is peculiarly valuable and curious. Much of this has been collected by Bp. Newton in his excellent deduction of the line of the witnesses through the entire period of the dark ages.

Gerbert, Abp. of Rheims in the year 991, spoke of the reigning

Digitized by Google

I need not croud my page with a long list of names to prove this perfectly well known point; the fact,

ing Pope John XV in the following remarkable terms. "What "do you conceive this man, sitting on a lofty throne, glittering "in purple clothing and in gold; what, I say, do you conceive "him to be? If he is destitute of charity and is puffed up by "knowledge alone, he is Antichrist *sitting in the temple of God* "*and shewing himself that he is God*:" in other words he is St. Paul's man of sin.

In like manner, Fluentius, Bp. of Florence, taught publicly, that Antichrist was born and come into the world: for which he was severely reprimanded by the Pope in the year 1105, and strictly forbidden to preach any such doctrine.

So again St. Bernard himself, however devoted to the Romish Church in other respects, inveighed loudly against the corruption of the clergy and the pride and tyranny of the Popes; saying, that they were ministers of Christ and yet served Antichrist, that nothing remained but that the man of sin should be revealed, and that the beast in the Apocalypse occupied St. Peter's chair. These expressions sufficiently shew, that Bernard had a shrewd suspicion as to *the locality* of the man of sin, though his prejudices withheld him from perceiving that he was *already* revealed.

Still more explicit was the famous Abbot Joachim of Calabria. Expounding the Apocalypse at Messina to our King Richard I while going to the holy land, he asserted, that Antichrist was already born in the city of Rome, that he would be advanced to the apostolic chair, and would be *exalted above all that is called God or is worshipped;* the well known predicted characteristic of the man of sin.

These witnesses were in the very bosom of the Romish Church: yet are the testimonies of open dissidents, those to whom the character of the apocalyptic witnesses *specially* belongs, scarcely more explicit.

The Waldenses, as their opinions are cited from an ancient manuscript

Digitized by Google

fact, on which Mr. Rutter founds his objection, is, when *fairly* stated, no other than this: *protestant expositors, from generation to generation* (I use the word *protestant* in its literal and largest chronological sense), *have been* UNANIMOUS *in* THE GRAND OUTLINE *of their interpretation; they have* DIFFERED *only as to the management of certain* SUBORDINATE PARTICULARS *in the detail.*

More recent expositors indeed have, with good reason, expected to discern the lineaments of those

manuscript by the centuriators of Magdeburg, taught, that "the invocating and worshipping of dead saints is idolatry," and that "the Church of Rome is the whore of Babylon." They likewise maintained, according to Thuanus, that, as the entire Church of Rome was the Babylonic harlot, the presbyteral order of that Church was the mark of the great beast mentioned in the Apocalypse.

So again: the disciples of Almeric, who were condemned by the second council of Paris in the year 1209, affirmed, that the Pope was Antichrist, that Rome was Babylon, and that the prelates were the members and ministers of Antichrist.

Thus likewise in England Sir John Oldcastle, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of Henry V, asserted before the Abp. of Canterbury, that the Pope was Antichrist and the head of that body, that the bishops were the members, and that the monks were the hinder parts of the antichristian society. See the authorities for these particulars given at large by Bp. Newton. Dissert. xxiv. vol. iii. p. 147—175.

So much for the uniform testimony of the witnesses during the whole period of the 1260 days: yet, if the Romish laity will believe Mr. Rutter, the object of modern protestant commentators is rather the establishment of a system in opposition to what he styles the Catholic Church, than the investigation of truth. Key. p. 306.

awful

Digitized by Google

awful transactions which have occurred during the last twenty eight years; and some of them, with myself, are inclined to believe, that our predecessors erred in identifying the Papacy with the Antichrist of St. John's Epistles: but what is there in this more than might have been reasonably anticipated? As the current of time rolls on, and as the prophetic volume is gradually unrolled, every later commentator, however he may yield to his predecessors in learning and talents, must, *from the very nature of things*, even though some of those predecessors be the panegerized fathers themselves, have considerable advantages over them. While *the time of the end* approaches; "many shall run to and fro, and "knowledge shall be INCREASED*." But what then? Is this predicted increase of knowledge, or are certain subordinate variations in detail, to be brought forward as a proof, that protestant exposition is a mere Babel of contending and dissonant glosses?

2. If such be Mr. Rutter's mode of conducting an argument, what will become of the highly lauded *General History* of Bp. Walmesley?

Does he agree in all points with Cornelius a Lapide and others of the same school? I am inclined to think, that Mr. Rutter will find such to be by no means the case. Hence, according to *his* most extraordinary principles of reasoning, the Romanists (to apply his own words *mutatis mutandis*), "by

* Dan. xii. 4.

"refuting

Digitized by Google

" refuting one another, may be said to have saved " Protestants the trouble of doing it *." For myself however, I should be ashamed to employ so flimsy and inconclusive an argument against either Cornelius or the bishop. Could I do nothing better than talk vaguely, to those who have never really studied the subject, about " the various discordant and con- " tradictory systems of Romanists themselves †;" I would even give up the question at once, as altogether hopeless and desperate.

3. But this is only the least part of the mischief which results from the present strange, though favourite, argument of the Papists.

I tremble for the fate of Mr. Rutter, should it ever be his lot to embark in controversy with a Jewish Rabbi respecting Jacob's prophecy of *the Sceptre and the Lawgiver* or respecting Daniel's prophecy of *the Seventy Weeks.* He briefly touches upon both these predictions ‡; and he well knows, that Christian commentators of *all* denominations are UNANIMOUS in applying them to *Jesus of Nazareth:* but I will not pay him so bad a compliment as to suppose that he does not *likewise* know, that these very commentators DIFFER considerably in *the subordinate detail* of exposition. The argument therefore, employed by Mr. Rutter against *protestant* interpretations of Daniel and the Apocalypse, whatever force it may have, will be no less cogent, when employed by a Jew against *Christian* interpretations of

* Key. p. 305. † Key. p. 305. ‡ Key. p. 407, 301, 302.

the

Digitized by Google

the two predictions relative to *Judah's Sceptre* and *Messiah's Seventy Weeks.* " Mutato nomine, de te " fabula narratur," will be the obvious exclamation of a learned Rabbi, as he cheerfully avails himself of the objection which a member of an infallible Church has unwittingly put into his hands: and I fear, that Mr. Rutter's syllogism, which may salve his credit at home by demonstrating that a Catholic *quoad* a Catholic *must* be a sound expositor of prophecy and that a Protestant *quoad* a Protestant *cannot* be a sound expositor of prophecy, will do little more than excite the profane laughter of the malicious Hebrew.

" Scarce any two of you Christian interpreters are " in the same story," he will say: " each new writer " has some fault to find with the commentaries of " his predecessors. What Mr. Rutter says of his " *protestant* antagonist in regard to the application " of certain prophecies to the Romish Church, I may " fairly take up in our controversy with *Christians* " in general. *That this pillar of the Nazarene* " *faith rests on a sandy foundation, is proved from* " *the various discordant and contradictory systems* " *of Christians themselves; who, by refuting one* " *another, may be said to have saved us Jews the* " *trouble of doing it* *. In short, *the object of most* " *Christian commentators on this subject appears to* " *be rather the establishment of a system in opposi-* " *tion to our only orthodox Levitical Church, than*

* Key. p. 305.

" *the*

Digitized by Google

" *the investigation of truth: and hence they may be*
" *said, not to follow prophecy, but to lead it to their*
" *own preconceived notions of exposition**.

Does not Mr. Rutter perceive, how invaluable his argument will be to a Jewish Rabbi? The two cases are exactly parallel; not one egg more perfectly resembles another: and, how Mr. Rutter can use his weapon against *protestant* interpretation without putting a sword into the hands of the Jew against our *common Christianity*, I am at a loss to discover.

Behold the two cases arranged side by side; and then point out, wherein they differ.

Christian expositors are UNANIMOUS *in the* GRAND OUTLINE *of the two predictions relative to the Sceptre and the Seventy Weeks: but they* DIFFER *as to the management of* CERTAIN SUBORDINATE PARTICULARS *in the detail.*

Here we have the first case: and the second is its absolute double.

Protestant expositors are UNANIMOUS *in the* GRAND OUTLINES *of the predictions relative to the Roman little horn, the man of sin, and the apocalyptic harlot and false prophet: but they* DIFFER *as to the management of* CERTAIN SUBORDINATE PARTICULARS *in the detail.*

Now, if Mr. Rutter's argument will demonstrate ALL PROTESTANT EXPOSITION to be erroneous, in the second case: assuredly the very same argument,

* Key, p. 306.

when

Digitized by Google

when picked up by a Jew, will just as satisfactorily demonstrate ALL CHRISTIAN EXPOSITION to be erroneous, in the first case.

4. Had Mr. Rutter, in short, fairly stated the *real* fact; had he fully explained to the Romish laity, for whose instruction his Key is specially intended, *how* protestant expositors differ from each other: NO argument could have been constructed upon it, and the labour of this reply might have been spared.

II. One of those points, on which the opponents of the Romish Church in all ages have been peculiarly unanimous, is the identity of that Church and the Babylonic female described in the Apocalypse.

I greatly dislike all vulgar terms of abuse: I shall therefore only say, on the subject of her title, that, in the judgment both of Papists and of Protestants, she is denominated *a harlot*, in the usual vein of scriptural metaphor, solely on account of her idolatrous apostasy. Thus far both parties are agreed: they are likewise agreed in yet another point of vital importance; the female is universally acknowledged to symbolize *Rome viewed as presiding over the Roman Empire* *. But here they begin very widely to

* Bellarmin. de Rom. Pontif. lib. iii. c. 13. Walmesley's Gen. Hist. p. 112—117. Rutter's Key. p. 358. The Bp. of Meaux's objection against the *protestant* application of this hieroglyphic, on the ground that the woman is styled *a harlot* and not *an adulteress*, is fully answered by Bp. Hurd. See Introd. to the study of the Proph. serm. xi. Symbolical decorum and consistency required the *former* title rather than the *latter*. Since the woman is mystically denominated *Babylon*, and

Digitized by Google

to differ. Papal expositors maintain, that the woman represents *idolatrously-pagan Rome secularly presiding over the Roman Empire:* Protestant expositors, on the contrary, suppose themselves to have proved, that she represents *idolatrously-Christian Rome ecclesiastically presiding over the same territory.* That *Rome* in *some* sense is intended, may well be deemed indisputable from the very particular and accurate phraseology of St. John *. Hence, from the mutual agreement and disagreement of the contending parties, we may deduce the following sufficiently obvious syllogism.

THE APOCALYPTIC HARLOT IS ROME. BUT, IF THE APOCALYPTIC HARLOT BE ROME, SHE MUST INEVITABLY BE EITHER ROME PAGAN OR ROME PAPAL. THEREFORE, IF IT CAN BE DEMON-

and since the *literal* Babylon was not (like Judah or Samaria) the ecclesiastical spouse of Christ; *the keeping* of the picture would plainly have been violated, if Babylon had been described by a term to *her* inapposite. In other words, had the apostle styled his figurative Babylon *an adulteress;* he would have fallen into the same species of incongruity as Shakespeare has done, when he introduces into a drama, which purports to describe the *Athenian* court of *Duke* Theseus, *Gothic* manners and *Gothic* superstitions. That is to say, it were much the same, as if some grotesque limner, who would compliment Louis XIV by painting him as the Macedonian Alexander, should, by way of making the resemblance more complete, have exhibited the son of Philip in the full court dress of Versailles. As the apostle termed his hieroglyphic *Babylon;* he bound himself, by that very circumstance, to use no appellation which would be incongruous to the literal capital of the East.

* See Rev. xvii. 9, 15, 18.

STRATED,

Digitized by Google

STRATED, THAT SHE IS NOT THE ONE OF THESE, SHE MUST NEEDS BE THE OTHER.

As it is quite superfluous to go over the well-known protestant exposition; I shall rather attend to that, which has been offered by the Romanists: and, since, according to Mr. Rutter and the Abbè Feller, Bp. Walmesley is the presiding oracle of the day, I think it only a fit compliment specially to take *him* in hand.

The bishop then teaches us, that the woman is Rome pagan; that her fornication is her idolatry; that the bloody persecutions, with which she is charged, are the persecutions of the primitive Christians by the pagan emperors; that the beast, which she rides, is the Roman Empire; that the ten horns of the beast are the ten kingdoms, into which the Empire was divided by the Goths; that their giving their strength and power to the beast means the serving of the Gothic warriors in the Roman armies as auxiliaries, during the decline of the Empire; that their subjugation by the Lamb is their conversion to Christianity; and that their hatred of the harlot, expressed, by their making her desolate and naked, by eating her flesh, and by burning her with fire, denotes the plundering and sacking of Rome first by the Vandals and afterwards by Totila. Such, according to Bp. Walmesley, was the fate of Rome pagan as foretold by the apocalyptic prophet: but here we must carefully note an important discrepancy between the type and the antitype, which cannot be better stated than in the learned prelate's own words.

"Thus

Digitized by Google

" Thus fell ancient Rome like Babylon: but with " this difference, that Babylon was *never* to rise " again; whereas Rome, when the anger of God " was satisfied, was designed to emerge from her " ashes. And, though not allowed to recover her " former temporal dominion and splendor and " riches, nor to rise in her outward appearance " scarce above the condition of a village when com- " pared to her former extent and multitude of " people; yet, in her depressed state, she is pri- " vileged with a higher dignity of another kind, of " being not only a Christian city, but appointed the " head and centre of spiritual dominion *."

Nothing will be more satisfactory, nothing will run off more smoothly, than the bishop's exposition; provided only we Protestants will be complaisant enough to shut our Bible and to avert our eyes from the page of that arch-heretic history.

1. The making of the harlot desolate, the eating of her flesh, and the burning of her with fire, on the part of the ten horns; plainly denote, if we may credit our General Historian, the plundering and sacking of Rome PAGAN first by the Vandals and afterwards by Totila.

With respect to this interpretation, I should be glad to learn, *when* Rome PAGAN, since the first propagation of Christianity, ever experienced such treatment at the hands of *any one* of the northern nations.

* Gen. Hist. p. 111—135.

Digitized by Google

Unless my memory altogether fail me, Christianity became the dominant religion of the Empire in the time of Constantine: and, though imperial Rome still fondly adhered to the classical idolatry of former days; yet, in the reign of the great Theodosius, at the close of the fourth century, the Senate publicly decreed the abolition of Paganism. Henceforth then Rome *ceased* to be PAGAN. Consequently, if ROME PAGAN, the apocalyptic harlot of Bp. Walmesley and the Romanists, were ever plundered and sacked by all or by any one of the ten horns; this grand event must plainly have occurred *before* the age of Theodosius: for, *after* that age, Rome *ceased* to be PAGAN Rome.

Now, most unfortunately for the papal scheme of exposition, Radigast, and Alaric, and Attila, and Genseric, and Totila, the two last of whom *alone* ever sacked the capital, all flourished, not while Rome was PAGAN, but after she had become CHRISTIAN. In short, by a most whimsical mistake, Bp. Walmesley demonstrates *the burning of the Babylonic harlot or* ROME PAGAN *through the agency of the ten horns,* by clearly shewing from history, that ROME CHRISTIAN *was pillaged and sacked by Genseric and Totila.*

The sum therefore of the whole is this: the apocalyptic harlot is to be burned with fire by the ten horns, which sprang out of the divided Roman Empire; but no such calamity ever befel Rome pagan; therefore Rome pagan cannot be the apocalyptic harlot.

2. Nor

Digitized by Google

2. Nor is the Bible less destructive of Bp. Walmesley's system than profane history.

To the enraptured eyes indeed of this devoted aspirant, the *autopton agalma* of the Catholic Mysteries, the beatific vision of papal Rome springing up in renovated and chastened beauty from the ashes of that accursed harlot pagan Rome, presents itself in full and beamy magnificence: but Scripture is wholly silent upon what the bishop beholds so clearly. The fall of the mystic Babylon is celebrated in terms, which seem to be studiously chosen in order that no hope or expectation might be entertained of her resurrection to empire. "Babylon "the great is fallen, is fallen; and is become the ha- "bitation of demons, and the hold of every foul "spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful "bird *." Such, like that of the literal Babylon, was to be the fate of the mystical Babylon after its overthrow predicted by St. John.

How far this prophecy has been accomplished, even if history permitted us to allow that *pagan* Rome was ever burned at all by the northern warriors, Bp. Walmesley and Mr. Rutter can best determine: for *they* best know, who have been the inhabitants of Rome since the days of Genseric and Totila. The bishop indeed, like the prudent hero of Ithaca, looking carefully round him on all sides †, limits the gambols of the satyrs and the unclean

* Rev. xviii. 2.

† Παντοσε παπταινων, as Homer hath it.

Digitized by Google

birds to some forty days, which followed the burning, not of Rome *pagan*, but of Rome *Christian*, by Totila *. St. John however says not a syllable about any such limitation. His imagery is plainly borrowed from that of the ancient prophets, when they foretell the desolate condition of the literal Babylon: and, as the desolation of *the type* has continued down even to the present time, an expositor may well be deemed to take no small liberty with his author who limits the desolation of the supposed *antitype* to forty days.

In fact, so far is the apostle from giving the least countenance to this *necessary* gloss of the bishop, that he forbids us to entertain the smallest hope of *any* restoration on the part of that Babylon, respecting which *he* is speaking. "A mighty angel took "up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into "the sea, saying; Thus with violence shall that "great city Babylon be thrown down, and SHALL "BE FOUND NO MORE AT ALL †." Now *ancient* Rome (we will not say *pagan* Rome) *has* been found again, after its sacking by Genseric and Totila; Bp. Walmesley himself being judge, who exults in the fact. Therefore *ancient* Rome, as contradistinguished from *papal* Rome, cannot be the Babylon of the Apocalypse.

We may now return, by way of winding up the argument, to the original syllogism, with which we

* Gen. Hist. p. 127.
† Rev. xviii. 21.

first

Digitized by Google

first set out; varying it only from the hypothetical, to the positive, form.

THE APOCALYPTIC BABYLONIAN HARLOT, BY THE CONSENT BOTH OF PAPISTS AND OF PROTESTANTS, IS ROME. BUT, IF SHE BE ROME, SHE MUST INEVITABLY BE EITHER ROME PAGAN OR ROME PAPAL. IT HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED HOWEVER, THAT SHE CANNOT BE THE FORMER. THEREFORE SHE MUST BE THE LATTER.

III. We Protestants deem no man infallible, save a person who is actually inspired. Now, since I have not the slightest suspicion, that I am myself gifted with inspiration; I of course deem myself fallible. Hence, whenever I saw reason to believe that I had been mistaken in the exposition of prophecy, I took the earliest opportunity of acknowledging my error: and most profanely should I conceive myself to tamper with God's holy word, if, through the inordinate pride of self-consequence, I had set out with a determination never to retract what I had once advanced. Ill were that man fitted to be an interpreter of the sacred oracles; little could he expect the blessing of the Almighty upon his labours: if, in the vanity of his high speculations, he postponed the sincerity of divine truth to the imagined dignity of such a worm as himself.

Mr. Rutter however appears to think differently on the subject, possibly from his habits of attributing scarcely less than infallibility to St. Jerome and the early fathers: yet, to a Protestant, it is hard to say, whether his opinions or his reasoning will seem the most

Digitized by Google

most extraordinary. Among my various high crimes and misdemeanors, he objects to me, that I have actually been graceless enough sometimes to confess myself mistaken. Whence, with sufficient plainness, he would deduce the conclusion: that, since I have honestly confessed myself mistaken on *some* points and have thence made the necessary corrections; THEREFORE I must be mistaken upon *all* points, even though I have encountered upon such points nothing like a confutation. This being the case, he must further argue, if he would be consistent; that, provided only I had obstinately refused ever to confess myself in error, my work would have stood higher in the opinion of all judicious persons than it does at present *.

As Mr. Rutter seems to have taken up some very odd notions respecting the qualifications of an expositor; and since he appears to have formed a sort of *beau idéel* of an interpreter who is to possess the wonderful faculty of never being mistaken, without which faculty he is altogether unworthy of attention: I shall take this opportunity of exhibiting that view of the matter, which is most consonant both with Scripture and with reason.

1. A perfect expositor, and a perfect commonweal, are alike to be found only in the dreams of an Utopian speculatist. Hence, notwithstanding Bp. Walmesley has so clearly demonstrated the apocalyptic Babylon to be *pagan* Rome by shewing from

* Key. p. 306.

history

Digitized by Google

history that *Christian* Rome was sacked by Genseric and Totila; I should not think myself warranted to reject in the lump *without further examination* all the rest of his work, even if he were now alive and would honestly confess his mistake. It is probable enough, that, as I proceeded to discuss his other interpretations, I might not be led to esteem the error in question a mere wart on a generally beautiful body: but still I should not think myself justified in condemning any separate exposition, without first giving it a fair examination; because it is quite possible, that the bishop might be very right on some points, though very wrong on others.

Such is the measure, which I would freely mete to any Romish interpreter; though Mr. Rutter seems little inclined to mete it to me. The opinion, in short, that *no* expositor, who ventures to take a range so wide as that afforded by the writings of Daniel and St. John, can hope to produce an *absolutely faultless* work, certainly appears most agreeable to right reason. Even Bp. Walmesley, we see, *may* err: and, though Mr. Rutter in his concluding profession makes the same acknowledgment respecting *himself;* sorry should I be on that account to pronounce his *Key to the Old Testament* a wild chaos of blunders, even if some of his positions might seem less satisfactory to my protestant apprehension which can discern nothing in a wood save trees *.

* *Errare, ut homo, possum;* says Mr. Rutter very sensibly and properly at the end of his book.

2. Per-

Digitized by Google

2. Perhaps however in the alleged *yet future* apocalyptic witnesses, Enoch and Elijah, Mr. Rutter may hope to see realized his not unlovely vision of *a perfect expositor;* whose writings shall require no correction, and whose authoritative glosses shall call for no retractation.

If such be his hope, I fear that we have but little warrant for it from Scripture.

St. John seems plainly to intimate, that the words of his prophecy are to be expounded *simply by him that readeth diligently*, without any such extraordinary assistance from above as will confer upon him the privilege of *infallibility* *: and Daniel is yet more explicit, as to *the mode* in which God's oracles will be elucidated while we are rapidly approaching the close of the great prophetic calendar; "Shut up "the words, and seal the book, unto the time of "the end: many shall run to and fro, and know- "ledge shall be increased †."

I collect from these words, *themselves* a remarkable prediction, the very reverse from what Mr. Rutter appears to have collected.

The prophet intimates, that, for a considerable period before what he calls *the time of the end*, the more mysterious of his predictions, as contradistinguished from those abundantly plain ones which no one could misapprehend, would be as a sealed book, illegible and unintelligible to the most acute intellect: but that, as this *time of the end* should ap-

* Rev. i. 3. † Dan. xii. 4.

proach

Digitized by Google

proach (a phrase, by which he apparently points out the expiration of the three times and a half); light should begin rapidly to break in from the blazing torch of history, and many should set themselves anxiously to compare events with the words of the long closed oracles. Yet, in the pursuit of truth, some erroneous opinions might be advanced by each one of *the many;* though her cause, through their united labours, would be gradually and certainly promoted. By the collision of intellect ever active and restless, and by the lapse of all-explaining time, sound interpretations would gather strength and would be more and more firmly established, while individual errors would successively be confuted and exploded. Thus, from day to day, would the sacred oracles be better understood, till the whole of them was fully developed.

But then the mighty work would be accomplished by no *single* expositor, however great might be his natural powers. The comment of each, like every other production of fallible man, would be a mixture of truth and error: and, as the vast wheel of time rolled on, stamping truth with the impress of genuineness, but grinding error to an impalpable dust; *a sincere whole* would be slowly collected from the varied labours of hundreds. No ONE gifted expositor is to start up *incapable of error,* the delusive phantasm of Mr. Rutter's too vivid imagination: but, in the sober and rational language of the prophet himself, " MANY shall run to and fro," sifting and observing and inquiring and arguing and confuting

Digitized by Google

futing and establishing, " and knowledge shall" thus " be" gradually " INCREASED;" not *spring up at once* in the maturity of its full stature like the fabled Minerva from the head of Jupiter, but grow like a tree or a blade of grass *with slow though certain increase.*

3. Such I apprehend to be the plain import of this prediction of Daniel, relative to *the mode* in which his more mysterious prophecies would be unfolded: and, since God departs not gratuitously from uniformity of system, we may be sure that the same prediction equally applies to *the mode* in which the Apocalypse is destined to be explained.

In this manner, accordingly, Sir Isaac Newton seems to have understood it*: and in this same manner, I should conceive, it must also be understood by every modest and sober-minded man, who has at all turned his thoughts to the subject.

But Mr. Rutter, with strange inconsistency and with an utter disregard both to Scripture and to reason, very nearly inverts the expository telescope. With *him*, St. Jerome and the fathers, who flourished during the period when (as Daniel assures us) the book was sealed and the words were shut up, are of all men the most authoritative interpreters; and any

* " Amongst the interpreters of the last age," says this truly great man, " there is scarce one of note, who hath not made " some discovery worth knowledge: and thence I seem to " gather," arguing plainly enough from this very declaration of Daniel, " that God is about opening these mysteries." Observ. on the Apoc. p. 253.

departure,

Digitized by Google

departure, from their *inevitably* defective comments, is to be deemed " a novel and arbitrary and ground-" less exposition *:" while again, though the prophet has plainly told us that *such would be the case;* my censuring certain parts of Mede and Newton and Whitaker and Kett and many others, my candid acknowledgment of my own errors which I am just as little disposed to spare as the errors of my neighbours, and the discrepancies on various points which may easily be found in the writings of protestant interpreters, are triumphantly adduced by him as proofs, that *none* of our works are deserving of attention, but that they are *universally* and *in all respects* faulty and erroneous.

The grand moral therefore of Mr. Rutter's whole argument is this.

Daniel and St. John were doubtless inspired writers, and their prophecies are meant to be understood, But, because many run to and fro in order

* " In this interpretation," says Mr. Rutter, " the ancient " fathers agree with us; and none of them understand, with " Mr. Faber" (it were marvel if they did, when the accomplishment of the prophecy had not then determined a point necessarily dubious *a priori*), " this number of 1260 days to " mean 1260 years. Yet, unless we allow this *novel and arbi-" trary and groundless exposition*, the whole system of our pro-" testant brethren is utterly destroyed." Key. p. 307. I should be glad to know, how Mr. Rutter can *disallow* it; if he confess with Bp. Walmesley, that the ten horns of the Roman Empire are the ten original Gothic Kingdoms. The two positions stand or fall together: but of this I have already said enough.

to

Digitized by Google

to ascertain their import; knowledge therefore clearly *cannot* be increased, since those many have not agreed upon *every minute particular*. Their discrepance in such *particulars* proves them to be *universally* wrong: and the open acknowledgment of some, that they have been *occasionally* mistaken, demonstrates past all contradiction that they have *never* been in the right. Let us then steadily adhere to Jerome and the fathers, who were so admirably qualified to be authoritative expositors, by the great advantage which they enjoyed of living *before* the accomplishment of the prophecies discussed by them: nor let us quit this safe ground, until an expositor shall arise, who will never have occasion to mar his fair fame, by ignominiously confessing himself mistaken, and by adopting a different interpretation from what he originally advanced.

Such, so far as I can understand its cogency, is the sum and substance of Mr. Rutter's argument and objection.

IV. In opposition however to the protestant application of certain passages in Daniel and St. John, Mr. Rutter, naturally anxious for the credit of his Church, contends, that, if the rapid propagation of Christianity by the apostles and their early disciples be a proof of its divine original; the propagation of Christianity, by subsequent Romish missionaries among the Saxons and the Franks and the Goths, is equally a proof of the orthodoxy of those missionaries. Whence it will follow, that the Church of Rome,

Digitized by Google

Rome, with which they were in communion, was not an apostate Church *.

With respect to the basis of this argument, notwithstanding what St. Austin and others may say on the subject, I can never allow, that the first propagation of Christianity does *in itself* do more than evince *the probability* of its truth †. *Further* than this I cannot consent to press the matter, because I hold it very dangerous and fallacious to make *mere success* a proof of *divinity*.

Nothing can afford a better exemplification both of the danger and of the fallaciousness of such a mode of reasoning, than the present argument of Mr. Rutter. He alleges *the conversion of the northern nations*, as a proof of *the orthodoxy of the Romish missionaries*. Now, if this argument prove any thing, it will be apt to prove much more than either a genuine Romanist or a sound Protestant can allow. *The success of papal missionaries among the pagans demonstrates the orthodoxy of those missionaries*, says Mr. Rutter. *The success of protestant*

* Key. p. 304.

† The remark of Gamaliel, as recorded in Acts v. 38, 39, has often been adduced, not very wisely, as *the voice of inspiration inculcating the identical point here brought forward by Mr. Rutter for an argument*. But, for the truth of this mere private remark of a Jewish Rabbi which in fact has been practically confuted by the spread of Mohammedism, nothing can be more idle and more mischievous than to make the Holy Spirit of God responsible. We might just as well maintain it to be an inspired truth, that *Christ had a devil*, because this blasphemy of the Pharisees is recorded in the sacred page.

mission-

Digitized by Google

missionaries among the pagans of Malabar and Greenland and South-Africa and North-America equally demonstrates the orthodoxy of those missionaries, replies the Protestant. *Does it so?* exclaims the devout Mussulman: *What then will you both say to the amazing triumphs of the prophet of the faithful?*

I am far from wishing to intimate, that the Gospel, with whatever alloy promulgated, is not a real blessing when compared with the thick moral darkness of Paganism; and, on this principle, I, who esteem myself a true Catholic though unable to discover in the Bible all that the Romish Church claims to discover, can heartily subscribe to the declaration of the protestant Ludolf, as cited with just praise by Mr. Butler, that I wish all success to the papal missions in countries to which the Gospel cannot be otherwise conveyed: but, in saying this, I cannot discern, that I either admit the conclusiveness of Mr. Rutter's argument, or that I at all pledge myself to the approbation of Popery *as a system* *. *A Church*

* "Quod ad conversionem ethnicorum attinet, missiones Romanorum, quantum in me est, omni ope consilioque promovere soleo: neque invidiæ aut obtrectationi locum do; guarus, Evangelii predicationem, a quocunque demum fiat, non sine fructu aut efficacia manere." Ludolf. Epist. ad Leibnitz. cited by Mr. Butler.

Yet, while I concur in the principle avowed by Ludolf, I can see no reason, why on that account we should the less either search after truth or detect and expose error. Mr. Butler, in the learned and valuable work whence the preceding passage is taken,

Digitized by Google

Church may be radically corrupt; and, as such, may form a meet subject for prophetic interpretation: but

taken, remarks, that no conversions either to Romanism or to Protestantism were ever made, by discovering the former in the name of the beast, or by detecting the latter in the apocalyptic locusts. Revol. of Germ. p. 158.

What he says may be true enough: but are we to desist from the study of prophecy, because our necessary application of it may bear hard upon certain communities? On this principle we must plainly never press the Jews with those predictions, which point out Jesus as the Messiah, and which describe their own wretched condition both spiritual and temporal.

In the same good temper however (for the *temper*, which dictated the last remark was good, whatever may be thought of its *justice*), he speaks with approbation of those plans which have been entered into for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation between "the Roman-Catholics" and the Protestants. Ibid. p. 136—139.

The obvious preliminary to any such healing plan must be the freely conceding to us the title of *Protestant-Catholics;* or, in other words, the full and explicit acknowledgment that we are *Catholics* quite as much as the members of the Church of Rome. We term not our brethren of that Church *Romanists* or *Papists* by way of reproach, any more than we feel it a disgrace to ourselves to be denominated *Protestants*. Such appellations we use in speaking of them, only to protest against the unwarrantable sense in which they would *exclusively* style themselves *Catholics;* a name, which, in *that* sense, we can never concede to them. Let them call us *Protestant-Catholics*, and we hold ourselves in full readiness to call them *Roman-Catholics;* just as we should speak of *Greek-Catholics*, *Syrian-Catholics*, and the like. But, so long as that most offensive and unscriptural and irrational claim of *exclusive Catholicism* be unblushingly put forth as it is by Mr. Rutter, and insolently advanced as it is by the late Bp. Walmesley; every negotiation must necessarily be broken off

even

Digitized by Google

but this hinders not, that it may contain many excellent *individuals*, members of the true vine, though labouring under much delusion; whom I hope to meet in heaven, though the strange bigotry of their sect may doom me to hell. I thank my God, I have not so learned Christ, as dogmatically to anathematize, after the manner of Bp. Walmesley, all who hold not in every particular with my own provincial branch of the Catholic Church.

V. But, unless we concede to Mr. Rutter, that the only true Church of Christ is that great society of Christians, which, under the name of *the Catholic Church*, has come down from the apostles by a regular succession of pastors; he is unable to discover any Church, which answers to Daniel's description of *standing for ever*. For is it, he asks with some degree of triumph, the sect of Luther, who in the

even *in limine*. We at least of the episcopal and apostolical Church of England (and I more than suspect, that I here speak also the sentiments of our Lutheran and Presbyteral brethren) can never treat with the Church of Rome on any other footing than that of the most complete equality. As a bishop, we English episcopalians fully recognize the Pope, though we believe him to have departed from the purity of the faith: but then, in point of spiritual authority as derived in regular succession from the apostolic college, we maintain the perfect parity of our own bishops. As for mere precedence without preëminence in power, it is not worth a dispute: yet we cannot help thinking, that, if the antiquity of a see ought to give precedence, the bishop of Jerusalem in all general councils ought to take the chair. Nay, were we to allow the primacy of St. Peter, then Antioch, on every just principle, ought to take precedence of Rome.

year

Digitized by Google

year 1517 commenced the protestant schism? Or is it the yet more recent sect of the Calvinists or the Methodists? Or is it the insulated established Church of England, which cannot claim a higher origin than the reign of the eighth Henry? Confident in the strength of his cause, he then requests his separated brethren impartially to consider, whether the *everlasting* kingdom of Christ, foretold by Daniel, can refer to any new modern sects in opposition to the one holy catholic and apostolic Church *.

1. I need scarcely remark, that we have here again the same glaring paralogism, which I have already had occasion to notice.

Mr. Rutter *assumes*, that the mere provincial Latin Church, which the voice of history assures us was confined to the Patriarchate of the West, is EXCLUSIVELY that Catholic Church of Christ, which (Daniel foretells) shall be *everlasting*. This assumption being once granted, all the rest no doubt follows of course. But Mr. Rutter either forgets himself, or imagines his reader will forget, that this is the very point in debate. Before Protestants jump to a conclusion, they are apt to demand something more convincing than a *petitio principii*. We fully believe all that Mr. Rutter has said about the perpetuity of Christ's Catholic Church; and we are not so absurd as to identify it, by which of course I mean to *identify it* EXCLUSIVELY, either with the Lu-

* Key. p. 302, 303.

Digitized by Google

therans or the Calvinists or the Methodists or the Presbyteral Church of Scotland or the established Episcopal Church of England: but as yet we have seen *no proof*, that the provincial Church of Rome is a whit more the Catholic Church of Christ in any EXCLUSIVE sense of the word *Catholic*, than any *single* denomination or national Church of protestants, or than the Greeks or the Armenians or the Syrians or the Ethiopians. On the contrary, we deem the whole COLLECTIVELY to be the everlasting Catholic Church of Christ, always however excluding those palpably heretical sects which deny the very fundamentals of the Gospel: and, in so doing, we can discern nothing contradictory in the supposition, that this branch and that branch may corrupt itself by superstitious innovations, or that this branch and that branch may by foreign violence be severed from the parent-stock; which parent-stock we conceive to be, not the Church of Rome, nor any other particular Church, but (agreeably to his own declaration) Christ himself*. Both our Lord's charges to the seven Churches of Asia, and the concurrent voice of attesting history, demonstrate our supposition to be right. Christ's promise of perpetuity was not made to any *special* Church, such as Ephesus or Smyrna or Sardis or Jerusalem or Antioch or Rome or Greece or England, but to the Church *general*. Consequently, the promise *would* no more be invalidated

* John xv. 1—6. From this passage we see, that *a branch* may be cast forth and be withered, while yet the parent-stock will not on that account fail to bear *some* fruitful branches.

by

Digitized by Google

by the removal of the Roman Angel's candlestick out of its place, than it *has been* invalidated by the accomplished threat of removing the Ephesian Angel's candlestick. Where are now the once flourishing Churches of the lesser Asia and of the northern Africa? Each, like the Church of Rome, was formerly a branch of the Catholic Church, whose stem and root is Christ. But are we to say, that the trunk is hewn down, and that *all* its ramifications are laid prostrate, because *some* of its branches have suffered excision? Or are we, with equal absurdity and impiety, to decorate any *single* branch with a title; which, as its very purport shews, can only belong to the *whole* vine collectively, to the *universal* Church viewed as including both Christ the head and likewise all the members of Christ?

Such however is the vicious circle of reasoning, round which the Romanists perpetually revolve.

They first ASSUME *their mere provincial Church to be* EXCLUSIVELY *the Catholic Church;* an error in political economy the very same, as *to denominate the single branch of a tree both all its branches and the trunk to boot* would be in natural philosophy. Next they establish the point, by decreeing, in their imaginary capacity of *the* ONLY *Catholics*, that all, who disclaim the provincial authority of the Roman Patriarch, are heretics and schismatics. This summary process leaves of course only two grand divisions; the Catholic Church on the one side, and a mixed body of schismatical heretics on the other. Matters being thus satisfactorily arranged, every

Digitized by Google

promise of our Lord to his Universal Church is distorted to belong EXCLUSIVELY to the provincial Romish Church by virtue of its pretended EXCLUSIVE Catholicism: and all, that has been said or may be said relative to heretics and schismatics, is industriously applied to those, who see not why the Bishop of Rome must needs be *their* bishop also.

The Romanists may disguise the matter as they please: but, when sifted to the bottom, the whole argument rest upon the mere *gratuitous assumption*, the illogical *petitio principii*, that *their particular provincial Church is* EXCLUSIVELY *the Universal Church of Christ.*

I have designedly been the more large on this subject, because so many unthinking Protestants concede to them as their peculium the title of *Catholics;* not considering, that, by such a concession, they are in effect stigmatizing themselves as heretics and schismatics. In the *legitimate* sense of the word indeed, I will readily allow the Papists to be *Catholics;* because, however corrupt, I believe them, as soundly holding Christ the head, to be members of *the Catholic Church:* but then they are Catholics *no more*, than any *other* members of the same Church Universal; and, thus to denominate them in any *special* or *exclusive* sense, is to confine most incongruously the descriptive name of a *genus* to a mere subordinate *species.*

2. On these perfectly intelligible grounds, when Mr. Rutter more triumphantly than wisely asks *whether the Catholic Church is the insulated established Church*

Digitized by Google

Church of England; I, as an ecclesiastic of that Church and therefore mainly concerned in *her* vindication, readily answer *No:* just as I should tell him, that his leg was not his entire body, that the county of Kent was not the whole island of Britain, that the kingdom of France was not the European continent, and (last though not least) that the Latin or Romish Church was not the Universal Church. But, when in the same breath he asserts, that the established Church of England cannot claim a higher origin than the reign of Henry VIII, and consequently that so manifest a novelty cannot be a sound Church; I must request his permission to discuss both these alleged positions.

Now, even if Mr. Rutter were accurate in his assertion that the Church of England is not older than the reign of Henry VIII, I see not what he would gain by it in the way of argument. Is it in *his* judgment impossible, that a national Church should be a true branch of the Christian vine, unless it have subsisted from the very time of the Apostles? Does the mystic vine, from age to age, never put forth new branches? Is a branch to be rejected, merely because it was the produce of a later season than that which has brought forth others? Or, for some occult reason which I pretend not to develop, is the reign of our boisterous King Henry the ecclesiastical *ultima Thule*, beyond which no faithful Church can be discovered by the spiritual mariners of St. Peter's ship?

But Mr. Rutter is *not* accurate in his assertion.

As

Digitized by Google

As I have already with much pleasure remarked, he appears to be a very worthy man: but he certainly has the misfortune to labour under a most extraordinary confusion of ideas. Let us however once more hear his assertion. *The insular established Church of England cannot claim a higher origin than the reign of the eighth Henry.* How so? Were the English then first converted to Christianity? *Nothing of the sort,* replies Mr. Rutter: *but they then renounced the supremacy of the Romish see; and afterwards, in the reigns of Edward and Elisabeth, they rejected various doctrines and practices, which that see maintained and sanctioned.* What then? *Why it clearly follows, that, in consequence of this renunciation and rejection, the insular established Church of England cannot claim a higher origin than the reign of Henry VIII.*

It is difficult to persuade oneself that Mr. Rutter is in good sober earnest; and yet I verily believe, that such is indeed the case. But let us see, how this curious mode of reasoning will hold in other parallel instances.

A man, after passing much of his life in evil courses, becomes a reformed character at the age of forty. Most persons would say, that the man in question had been in existence forty years before he mended his manners. But Mr. Rutter will assure them, that they are quite mistaken; for that, to his certain knowledge, no such individual had existed previous to the alleged reformation.

So again: if the gravity of my subject will permit me

Digitized by Google

me to employ an old and apposite, though somewhat homely, illustration; a collier, after the murky labours of the week in dirt and darkness, carefully washes his face on the morning of the sabbath. Persons in general would say, that the man's face had certainly been in existence previous to its ablution, though the due performance of that rite had no doubt considerably improved it. But, if Mr. Rutter be true to his principles, he will assure them, that they are once more totally in error; for they may depend upon it, notwithstanding any deceitful appearances to the contrary, the man had no face at all before it was washed.

In like manner, Mr. Rutter will prove, far more satisfactorily than Mr. Bryant ever could do, that the ten years war of Troy is a self-convicted fable. The town might indeed be sacked by a marauding party of Grecks; but the long *preceding* war must needs be a palpable figment, for the very best possible reason in the world; the Hellenic army had no existence previous to that memorable scouring, which Homer, with a laudable regard for chronology, has so carefully recorded *.

But to be serious: what would a Jew think of our catholic advocate, if he were gravely to assure him, that the established Levitical Church of Judah cannot claim a higher origin than the reign of Josiah, and consequently that it has no sort of connection with the true Church of the Hebrews as modelled

* Ὁι δ' ἅμ' ἐποιμαίνοντο, καὶ οὐς ἅλα λυμαν' ἀθανθοι.

by

Digitized by Google

by the instrumentality of Moses? Yet Mr. Rutter *might* just as properly make such an assertion respecting the Church of Judah, because it was purged from pagan demonolatry in the reign of Josiah; as he *does* make it respecting the Church of England, because it was purged from popish demonolatry in the course of the sixteenth century.

As *a national Church*, the Church of England, so far from being unable to claim a higher origin than the reign of our eighth Henry, had existed for centuries: not indeed in the quality of *a reformed Church* I admit, any more than the Levitical Church of Judah had existed as *a reformed Church* in the reigns which immediately preceded that of Josiah; but certainly as much in the quality of *a national established Church*, as the Levitical Church of Judah had existed in the days of her idolatrous apostasy. In short, the national Church of England, by her happy and truly scriptural reformation from error (and it is passing hard to form any distinct idea of *the reformation of a non-entity*), while common sense may shew that she could not thereby *cease* to be the national Church of England, acquired the additional and venerable character of an important link in that predicted chain of faithful witnesses, who should prophesy in sackcloth against the tyrannical heresy of the Romish little horn during the whole period of the 1260 days: against the tyrannical heresy (I say) of that identical horn; which, according to Bp. Walmesley's very just interpretation of the ten larger horns associated with the well-known decision of the fathers

fathers that the little horn was to spring up *synchronically* with the ten horns, *must* (unless we reject both the bishop and the fathers) have started into political existence *as a dominant power* in the course of the fifth or sixth century *.

Before I conclude, it may not be amiss to remind Mr. Rutter; though I hold it a matter of no great consequence, unless he prove that the mere plantation of one Church by another gives the older Church a perpetual and inalienable right of dominance over the younger: yet it may not be amiss to remind him, that our British island of saints (as he calls it) was not in the first instance indebted to the Romish Church for its conversion. Whatever may be

* I suppose the saints to have been given by the secular power into its hand, in the year 606; where, consequently, I am inclined to place the commencement of the 1260 days: but, whether I be right or wrong in my conjecture on that particular point, *this* at least is perfectly clear; that the saints could not have been given into the hand of the little horn *previous* to the existence of that horn, and therefore that *the naked existence* of the horn must have commenced *before* the 1260 days had begun to evolve. Accordingly, the fathers, as we have seen, and as every sensible person *must* do who reads the prophecy with unsystematizing eyes, pronounced, that the little horn would rise *synchronically* with the ten horns: and Bp. Walmesley, as we have also seen, and as every sensible person *must* do who reads the history of those times, completes the protestant argument by declaring, that the ten horns are the ten Gothic kingdoms which sprang up during the fifth and sixth centuries. Need I again remark, that from these premises it will inevitably follow, that the little horn *must* have risen to power in the fifth or sixth century also?

thought

Digitized by Google

thought of its evangelization by St. Paul, it assuredly neither received the Gospel from Rome, nor did it owe to Rome any spiritual obedience. Accordingly, long after the Saxons had been converted from paganism by Augustine and his monks, the old British Churches strenuously resisted the Roman bishop's most absurd claim to universal supremacy; and, when first they heard it advanced, were lost in amazement, as well they might be, at its heroic impudence *.

VI. Pious

* Bed. Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. c. 2, 3, 4. lib. iii. c. 25. lib. v. c. 16. Spelman. Concil. vol. i. p. 104, 329. cited by Henry.

A similar scene was exhibited in more modern times, when the Romish archbishop of the upstart see of Goa demanded, from the astonished bishops and clergy of the ancient and venerable Indo-Syrian Church, instant submission to a remote and unheard of Italian priest; *from* whom they had derived no benefit, and *to* whom they could not possibly owe any allegiance. This primitive and sequestered Church, a Church with a spiritual pedigree quite long enough (one might think) to satisfy Mr. Rutter himself that it had been a branch of the vine many centuries before the *ne plus ultra* of our Henry VIII, read a strong practical reprimand to that pretended catholic Church; which, if we are to believe Bp. Walmesley, has known neither change nor shadow of turning.

"When the Portuguese arrived, they were agreeably surprized "to find upwards of a hundred Christian Churches on the coast "of Malabar. But, when they became acquainted with the "purity and simplicity of their worship, they were offended. "*These Churches*, said the Portuguese, *belong to the Pope*— "*Who is the Pope?* said the natives, *We never heard of him.* "The European priests were yet more alarmed" (here let Mr. Rutter turn to his Key. p. 411.), "when they found that these "Hindoo

VI. Pious as may be the strain in which Mr. Rutter delights to plunge into the not unedifying mysteries

" Hindoo Christians maintained the order and discipline of a " regular Church under episcopal jurisdiction: and that, for " 1300 years past, they had enjoyed a succession of bishops ap- " pointed by the Patriarch of Antioch," the episcopal *senior* of the Roman Patriarch. " *We*, said they, *are of the true faith*, " *whatever you from the West may be: for we come from the* " *place, where the followers of Christ were first called Christians.* " When the power of the Portuguese became sufficient for " their purpose, they invaded these tranquil Churches, seized " some of the clergy, and devoted them to the death of here- " tics. Then the inhabitants heard for the first time, that " there was a place called *the Inquisition*, and that its fires had " been lately lighted at Goa near their own land. But the " Portuguese, finding that the people were resolute in defend- " ing their ancient faith, began to try more conciliatory mea- " sures. They seized the Syrian bishop Mar Joseph, and sent " him prisoner to Lisbon: and then convened a synod at one of " the Syrian churches called *Diamper*, near Cochin; at which " the Romish archbishop Menezes presided. At this compul- " sory synod, 150 of the Syrian clergy appeared. They were " accused of the following practices and opinions: *That they* " *had married wives; that they owned but two sacraments, Bap-* " *tism and the Lord's Supper; that they neither invoked saints,* " *nor worshipped images, nor believed in purgatory; and that* " *they had no other orders or names of dignity in the Church,* " *than Bishop, Priest, and Deacon.* These tenets," which have a strange and most unaccountable resemblance to those of a certain Church that had no existence (if we are to believe Mr. Rutter) before the reign of the English Henry VIII; " these tenets they were called upon to abjure, or to suffer " suspension from all church-benefices. It was also decreed, " that all the Syrian books on ecclesiastical subjects, which " could be found, should be burned; *in order*, said the inqui- " sitors,

Digitized by Google

mysteries of Origenism or Hutchinsonianism, I cannot but think him a little unfortunate in his allegorical spiritualization of the two Hebrew kingdoms.

Agreeably to the arrangement which I have recently noted, Judah represents the Catholic Church, which as usual must of course be identified with the Church of Rome: whence, by a plain consequence, the revolted kingdom of the ten tribes must inevitably typify all societies divided from that Church, whether heretics or schismatics or both; all in short, to adopt the words of Mr. Rutter who steps forward to prompt the less explicit Jerome, *who separate themselves from the see of Peter the centre of catholic unity**.

1. We Protestants, whether justly or unjustly, have been apt to charge the Romanists, not with *re-*

"sitors, that no pretended apostolical monuments may re-
"main." Buchanan's Christ. Research. in Asia. p. 200—202.

I need not remark, that a more infamous and scandalous and nefarious transaction can scarcely be produced even out of the reign of our own blood-defiled Queen Mary. But yet it is neither more nor less than the inevitable result, in the way of cause and effect, of *the pretended exclusive Catholicism of Rome* and of *the absolute need of universal submission to* (what Mr. Rutter calls) *the centre of catholic unity*. All, according to this writer, who separate themselves from the see of Peter, are schismatics and heretics: and poor Bp. Walmesley bewails their fate in terms ludicrously pathetic. Key. p. 248. Gen. Hist. p. 228, 229. I should be glad to learn, when it was, that the Christians of Malabar separated themselves from a Church, to which they had never been joined, and of which they had never so much as heard.

* Key. p. 248, 319—322.

linquishing

Digitized by Google

linquishing the worship of the true God or with *denying* the doctrine of an intercessory Messiah, but with *superadding* the idolatrous veneration of canonized mortals and with *darkening* the throne of the Almighty by a host of imaginary mediators. Such has been our practice: and we conceived ourselves to prove the point in question by large citations from the authorized prayers and documents of the Romish Church herself.

Matters being in this state, Mr. Rutter comes forward and assures us, that the Hebrew kingdom of Judah is a manifest type of the Church of Rome. Had the assertion been made by a Protestant, we might have shrewdly suspected that a little party-spirit was at the bottom: but, since it proceeds from a clergyman who of course is well acquainted with the peculiar tenets of his own communion, we must needs conclude that he has been struck with certain points of resemblance between the kingdom of Judah and the Church of Rome which doubtless exist, whether we admit or reject the idea that the one is a designed type of the other.

Now the most cursory reader of the history of Judah, as detailed by the inspired writers, cannot but observe the extraordinary propensity of its members to the peculiar idolatrous system of the Gentiles. Checked as this propensity might occasionally be through the zeal of individual reformers, the infatuated Jews resolutely persisted in their unhallowed practices, until at length in his just retributive wrath God led them away captive to Babylon.

To

Digitized by Google

To discover then the resemblance between the type and the antitype, for so we are authorized by Mr. Rutter to denominate the kingdom of Judah and the Church of Rome, we have only to inquire into the peculiar nature of that idolatry to which the Jews were so vehemently addicted.

Here I need scarcely insist on the well known fact, that the Baalim or Siddim or Hero-gods of the Gentiles were deified mortals; who had once flourished upon earth, whose pretended tombs were shewn in various regions, and who were worshipped with funereal sacrifices which the Psalmist accurately styles *the offerings of the dead**. On this fact I need scarcely insist, for pagan antiquity is full of it. Hesiod and Cicero declares it in the most ample manner: and, what is more immediately to our present purpose (though in fact the theology of the Gentiles both was and is substantially the same in every quarter of the globe), Sanchoniatho, in the valuable fragment preserved and translated by Philo, no less positively asserts it in the case of the Phenician or Canaanitish superstition; that identical superstition, to which the Jews preëminently apostatised†.

The Hebrews then of the kingdom of Judah, those evident types (according to Mr. Rutter) of the Romanists or (as he thinks fit to style them) the Catho-

* Psalm cvi. 28.

† Hesiod. Oper. et Dier. lib. i. ver. 120—125. Cicer. Tusc. Disp. lib. i. c. 12, 13. Euseb. Præp. Evan. lib. i. c. 10. See likewise August. de Civ. Dei. lib. viii. c. 5. and my Orig. of Pagan Idol. passim.

lics,

Digitized by Google

lics, were seduced into the idolatrous worship of certain canonized mortals both male and female. But, while they were thus seduced, they still never thought of *relinquishing* the worship of Jehovah or of *abandoning* their belief in the promised Messiah. On the contrary, by a strange amalgamation, *they blended the two together*. They worshipped the true God, and they believed in the promised Messiah, on the one hand: but then, on the other hand, they idolatrously venerated a whole host of canonized mortals, and vainly imagined that through them they should obtain great and abundant blessings *.

Such is the type: turn we next to what Mr. Rutter pronounces to be its antitype, even the Church of Rome, "the see of Peter, the centre of catholic "unity." As face answers to face in a glass, so does the Romish Church answer to the kingdom of Judah. Its members adore the one true God; and, like ourselves, believe in the Messiah as the appointed intercessor between God and man: but then, like the Jews of old, they associate, with this sincere worship and with this sound belief, the fantastic veneration of a whole army of canonized mortals male and female; to whom as potent mediators and as present demi-gods they address their prayers, before whose shrines they devoutly burn incense, and to whose wonder-working relics and images they bend the knee and bow the head.

* See this point excellently discussed by Bp. Warburton. Div. Legat. b. v. sect. 2. § III. vol. v. p. 48—65.

2. This

Digitized by Google

2. This being the naked matter of fact both as to the Jews and as to the Romanists, it is readily conceded, that, whether Mr. Rutter be *quite* accurate in his idea or not, at least he did not advance it without having very plausible and very considerable grounds: but it may be doubted, whether he has been equally felicitous in determining the Hebrew kingdom of the ten tribes to be a type of all heretical schismatics from the see of Peter, that undoubted centre of catholic unity.

However addicted the kingdom of Judah may have been to apostate idolatry, the kingdom of the ten tribes was yet more insanely devoted to it. Now, Mr. Rutter himself being judge, bad as we protestant heretics may be in other respects, we at any rate have no very violent propensity to the worship of canonized mortals or to the construction of holy images. The Greek Church indeed is not quite so free from these bad habits as might be wished: but impartial criticism *must* allow, that the *demonolatrous* and *iconolatrous* Israelites exhibit but a very faint resemblance to the *antidemonolatrous* and *iconoclastic* children of the Reformation. In short, the former can only be made a type of the latter by a process in theology somewhat akin to that far-famed process in etymology, by which the Latin word *Lucus* is most ingeniously derived *a* NON *lucendo*.

Nor must I omit another point, by which (I fear) the catholic orthodoxy of Mr. Rutter may be brought into no small jeopardy at the court of Rome. The kingdom of the ten tribes, though separated from that of

Digitized by Google

of Judah, never ceased to be under the Theocracy. Still were they the people of God: still did their princes receive their viceregal commissions from the Supreme King of the whole Hebrew people: still were they warned and instructed by the prophets of the Most High: still, even in the worst of times, were there found among them six thousand blameless worshippers, who had never bent the knee to Baal: and still, according to the sure word of prophecy, are they reserved to be brought back and united to their brethren of Judah*. But, if I do not wholly misapprehend

* Mr. Rutter carries his Origenistic humour of spiritualizing the Old Testament so far, that he denies the future restoration of the Jews, and contends that every prophecy which looks that way is to be understood solely of their conversion to Christianity. In advancing this theory, I suspect that he would fain direct a side-blow at *myself* with whose writings he appears to be very well acquainted: for he says, "In vain do *certain authors* attribute to the Jewish nation, at the time of its recal, "the magnificent promises made to Judah and Jerusalem." Key. p. 374.

I. This gentleman is so very little in the habit of paying any attention to that *homogeneity* of language, which all good writers will carefully preserve; that he probably, since he speaks with so much confidence on the subject, has never studied under this aspect those two remarkable prophecies of Isaiah and of Christ, which (unless every rule of composition be violated) are finally decisive on the subject.

1. Isaiah, predicting that *yet future* restoration both of Judah and of Israel which is subsequent to the *now past* restoration of Judah from Babylon, declares, that, in order to accomplish that great event, "the Lord will set his hand AGAIN THE SECOND "TIME;" or, as the original Hebrew even yet more strongly

 expresses

Digitized by Google

apprehend the tenets of the Romish doctors, we luckless heretics are *not* the people of God: we have

no

expresses it, "the Lord will ADD his hand yet THE SECOND "TIME to recover the remnant of his people," both Judah and Israel, from the various lands of their complete dispersion. Isaiah xi. 11—16.

Now we all know, that the FIRST restoration of Judah was not from Egypt, and Elam, and the islands of the sea or the maritime regions of Europe, but solely from Babylonia: but Isaiah here foretells yet a SECOND restoration of Judah, plainly calling it *the* SECOND in contradistinction to *the* FIRST; a restoration from every region of the habitable globe. In what manner then are we understand him? Unless by a sort of spiritualizing legerdemain we are at liberty to turn the prophecies into a mere nose of wax, nothing can be plainer, than that the TWO restorations of Judah, which are here alluded to *without the least specified moral difference in their respective characters*, must be interpreted *homogeneously*: that is to say, since they are both noticed *in the very same passage*, if the *one* be a literal restoration, the *other* must be a literal restoration; and, conversely, if the *one* be a spiritual restoration, the *other* must be a spiritual restoration also. For what should we think of an historian, who declared in a single sentence, that a twice-deposed king was *twice restored to his throne*: when all the while, if the matter came to be inquired into, it should turn out, that he was but *once* restored *literally*; and that the writer (meaning to be pleasant) designed to intimate by his *second* restoration, nothing more than that in his retirement he gained the Stoical kingdom of philosophy?

Si dives, qui sapiens est,
Et sutor bonus, et solus formosus, et est REX.

Yet in this strange manner must we make Isaiah write; if we contend, with Mr. Rutter, that the *only* future restoration of Judah will be of a spiritual nature. Events have proved the

FIRST

Digitized by Google

no lot or portion in his Son: we are in *no* better predicament, so far as our hopes of salvation are concerned,

FIRST restoration of Judah to be *literal:* homogeneity therefore requires, that his SECOND restoration should be *literal* also.

2. Our Lord's prophecy lays us under the very same necessity of literal interpretation. He declared, that the Jews should be led away captive *into all nations*, doubtless the *Ashur* and *Elam* and *Pathros* and *Cush* and *isles of the sea* set forth by Isaiah as the wide stage of Judah's then future dispersion; and that Jerusalem should be trodden down of the Gentiles: UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Luke xxi. 24.

Now, upon the necessary principle of *homogeneity*, since the Jews were *literally* led away captive, and since Jerusalem has been *literally* trodden down of the Gentiles; WHENEVER the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, the Jews must *literally* be brought back from captivity, and Jerusalem must *literally* cease to be trodden down: otherwise, the prophecy will not receive a more satisfactory accomplishment than one of the old Delphic oracles. For, if the Jews are to be dispersed, and if Jerusalem is to be trodden down by foreign feet, UNTIL the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled: then *the due accomplishment of the prophecy*, unless we would expose it to the scorn of infidels and atheists, plainly requires; that, WHEN the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, the dispersion of the Jews will cease, and Jerusalem will revert to its old masters.

II. The mystery however of Mr. Rutter's dislike to the idea of a *literal* restoration is developed in the course of the very passage, which testifies his aversion to the more scriptural sentiments of "certain authors" on that question.

1. According to Mr. Rutter, "the reign of 1000 years fore-
"told in the Apocalypse is that, which Jesus Christ is now
"exercising upon the earth since his ascension; and particu-
"larly since, by the overthrow of idolatry, he has displayed his

Digitized by Google

cerned, than the unconverted pagans: we are *cast out*, as withered branches, from the only true ecclesiastical

"power throughout the world in the person of so many sove-
"reign princes professing Christianity." Key. p. 374.

I have no intention of entering upon the obscure point of HOW *Christ will exercise his millennial sovereiguty:* I have only to notice the sufficiently obvious reason, why Mr. Rutter wishes to view him as ALREADY seated on his millennial throne.

If the period of the 1260 days, as Protestants contend, as the whole texture of the Apocalypse requires, and as history (applied by Bp. Walmesley himself) demonstrates, must be viewed as occupying the intermediate period of what are emphatically called *the dark ages:* then it is abundantly manifest, that the *same* period cannot be *also* occupied by the thousand years; for *the triumphant reign of Christ upon earth*, and *the triumphant reign of the beast upon earth*, can by no management be made coincident. But the predicted 1260 days, in the judgment of a Romanist, ill describe that glorious period, when the misnamed Catholic Church rode triumphant on the shoulders of that very empire which they themselves allow to be symbolized by the ten-horned beast, and when the pretended Vicar of Christ trod upon the servile necks of prostrate monarchs. Hence, by an undaunted dislocation of the apocalyptic chronology, the *yet future* 1000 years are declared to have commenced many ages ago, and the *almost expired* 1260 days are pronounced to be still future.

Yet is it clear as the light, that the 1260 days *expire*, BEFORE the 1000 years even *commence*. For the 1260 days constitute the period allotted to the tyranny of the Roman beast, while acting under the influence of the false prophet or the harlot or the little horn; all of which are demonstrated to be *the same*, by the circumstance of their all playing *the same part* during *the same time* within *the same empire:* but the Roman beast and false prophet are destroyed *immediately before* the commencement of the 1000 years; and *synchronically* with their destruction

Digitized by Google

siastical vine: we have *altogether ceased* to belong to the flock of Christ. This, if I mistake not, is the true

tion the 1260 days must evidently expire, for the beast cannot practise and prosper after he has been cast into the fiery lake: therefore the 1260 days must needs *expire*, before the 1000 years have even *commenced*. Compare Rev. xiii. 5. with xvii. 11. xix. 20. and xx. 1—6.

On Mr. Rutter's own principle therefore, that the 1260 days are *future*, the 1000 years must still more be future: and, if so, I should be glad to know in what part of the strictly chronological Apocalypse those halcyon days are described, which the world has so long known under the mild and paternal dominion of the Papacy.

2. Bp. Walmesley is in the same story; and, in good sooth, with most abundant emolument.

Christ, we are told, when the Roman Empire was converted to his religion, "expelled Satan from the face of the earth, "and confined him in the infernal dungeon (Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3.); "where he is to remain for an appointed period of time (namely "1000 years), after the expiration of which he will be released "for a short while. His employment will then be to reëstab-"lish idolatry and to persecute the Christian religion. Anti-"christ will be his great instrument for these purposes." Gen. Hist. p. 395.

Quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus. Satan was *confined to his infernal den*, we learn from Bp. Walmesley, when the Roman Empire was converted to Christianity: and St. John assures us, that the mighty angel not only *chained him* and *shut him up*, but likewise *set his seal* upon the door of his prison-house, that he should *deceive the nations no more* during the lapse of the 1000 years. Yet, if we may believe the learned prelate, who seems to have been *a secretis* to the "great "Sultan," as the poet styles him: that active fiend, in despite of every angelic precaution, contrived to make his escape from the bottomless pit, even *during the lapse* of the 1000 years (for

the

true standard of Romish orthodoxy: but, in the management of his types and antitypes, Mr. Rutter stands

the bishop tells us, that they are *not yet* expired); when he grievously *deceived the nations*, though Michael had shut him up *expressly* that he might NOT deceive them, by the agency of certain mischievous protestant locusts, and *that* too for the space of three whole centuries sans intermission. A fallen star, we find, one Martin Luther to wit, *opened the door of the infernal pit*, and *let the devil loose*, in the midst of those very 1000 years during which Michael had *chained him* and *shut him up* and *sealed him fast*. Compare Gen. Hist. p. 170, 171. with Gen. Hist. p. 395. How Luther obtained the key from the less vigilant Michael, which yet the symbolical fallen star is described as possessing, the good bishop unluckily forgets to tell us.

3. I might additionally remark on this notable application of the 1000 years, were it worth my while to insist upon the point, that I marvel much, how the Romanists, who so greatly plume themselves upon understanding *in their strictest literal sense* the 1260 days, contrive to elongate their supposed millennium to the *yet future* revelation of Antichrist.

Mr. Rutter makes the 1000 years commence with Christ's ascension: the bishop, more modest in his demands, is content to reckon them from the conversion of the Roman Empire. Perhaps the year 313, which witnessed the famous edict of Constantine, may be thought a satisfactory date for their commencement. If so, they ought to have expired in the year 1313: but these consistent writers, who think such foul scorn of the Protestants for esteeming the 1260 prophetic days *exactly* 1260 literal years, though Bp. Walmesley himself makes ten prophetic months to be *exactly* 300 literal years; these truly consistent writers scruple not to lay the millennium on their new Procrustean bed of tension, if haply they may thus stretch it out to *any* given length.

Would we see a real specimen of the *quidlibet ex quolibet*, we have

Digitized by Google

stands trembling on the dizzy verge of palpable heresy; for, if the ten tribes be a type of heretics and schismatics, then these same heretics and schismatics must plainly stand in the same relation to God and his Christ that the ten tribes did: in other words, heretics and schismatics must still be collectively the people of God. Happily however for Mr. Rutter, his case is not desperate. With an exemplary prostration of intellect before the tribunal, not of God or of God speaking through Scripture, but of a somewhat indeterminate body of mere erring mortals like himself, he subjoins to his work, like a prudent general, the following exculpatory clause as the final profession of the author. "Whatsoever I have "written or may write, I subject ALL to the judg- "ment and correction of the Catholic Church. As "a man, I may err: through the grace of God, I "would not be a heretic."

3. After this review of Mr. Rutter's supposed types and antitypes, the reader may perhaps feel some curiosity to know, how they are managed by that gentleman so as to avoid the awkward conclusions which a protestant will be apt to draw from them. In so natural a feeling, it is only right, that he should be indulged.

Judah, he remarks, is certainly a type of the Catholic Church; which, as usual, he confounds with the Romish Church. If then Judah be a type of the

have it to perfection in Mr. Rutter's *typical idolatry of Judah and Israel* and in *the locusts and the millennium* of Bp. Walmesley.

Romish

Digitized by Google

Romish Church, what is that particular misconduct of the Romish Church which is typified by the Hero-worship or Demonolatry of Judah; for such, mingled indeed with Sabianism, was the special idolatry of that apostatising kingdom? The reader, I fear, will think that I am imposing upon his credulity, when I inform him, that Mr. Rutter gravely declares *the idolatry of Judah* to typify, first *certain undefined infidelities* (for he tells us not what he means by these *infidelities*) *of the western Christians before the Reformation*, and secondly *their alarming lapse after the Reformation into the false and erroneous doctrines of Luther and Calvin.*

In a similar manner, the kingdom of the ten tribes is no less clearly a type of all separatists from the Church of Rome. Such being the case, what is the particular sin of these separatists which is shadowed out by the idolatry of the ten tribes? Mr. Rutter informs us (with the same prudent indefiniteness of terms as before), that the sin alluded to consists of *the infidelities and prevarications of the Greek schismatics.* But where, meanwhile are the protestant heretics of the West: for he elsewhere assures us, that *they* are symbolized by the ten tribes no less than the Greeks? These, we have seen, are *already* disposed of as the antitypical idolaters of the Roman Judah. As for the knotty point, how these same heretical Protestants can be at once represented by the idolaters *both* of Judah and *also* of the ten tribes, Mr. Rutter is not careful to answer us *.

* Key. p. 107—110.

4. Are

Digitized by Google

4. Are not then Israel and Jerusalem, it may be asked, a type of the Christian Church: for are we not necessarily led to this opinion by the uniform and apparently studied phraseology of the sacred writers*?

On the authority of those writers I reply, that they are undoubtedly a type of the Christian Church Catholic in the legitimate sense of the word *Catholic:* and I add, that this very circumstance makes a single word to be effectively an ample prophecy.

(1.) In despite of the most unequivocal declarations of Holy Writ, and equally in despite of the plainest dictates of common sense, the ancient Levitical Church of God soon corrupted itself and went a whoring after the canonized human-gods of the Gentiles.

But this monstrous superstition by no means obliterated the worship of Jehovah, or led to any mistrust of the authenticity of his word. So far from it, Jehovah was still the acknowledged God of Israel, and the sacred volume of Scripture was still carefully and reverentially preserved.

Meanwhile, in the midst of error and corruption and darkness, there never were wanting a faithful few; who protested against the reigning abominations, who prophesied in sackcloth against the madness of the people, and who in spirit and in truth worshipped God alone.

* Gal. iv. 26. Rev. iii, 12. xxi. 2, 10. Gal. vi. 16. Heb. xii. 22—24.

(2.) This

Digitized by Google

(2.) This was the condition of the Hebrew Commonwealth from its first establishment in Palestine to its deportation into Assyria and Babylonia: and strictly analogous to it has been the condition of the Catholic Christian Church, as foretold by prophecy, and as attested by history.

St. Paul predicted a great apostasy from the Christian faith; and the nature of this apostasy he sets forth with abundant plainness. To omit other matters less pertinent to my present subject, one preëminent characteristic of it is *the giving heed to doctrines concerning demons*, or *the introduction of a superstition relative to canonized mortals* *: for such, as we are expressly informed by Hesiod, is the meaning of the word *demon* †. Nor is this a mere protestant gloss, invented to serve a turn in controversy: for thus is the prediction rightly interpreted by one of those very fathers, to whose authority Mr. Rutter professes so fully to defer. Epiphanius, justly concluding that the apostle used the term *demon* in its well known pagan sense (for he had been engaged in reprobating a paganizing heresy which at that time was very rife ‡), remarks, that the import of the prophecy was, that *there should hereafter be worshippers of dead men among apostate Christians, even as there formerly were such among the apostate*

* 1 Tim. iv. 1.

† Hesiod. Oper. et Dier. lib. i. ver. 121.

‡ 1 Tim. i. 4, 20. See below Dissert. vi. sect. 2. § I.

Israelites.

Digitized by Google

Israelites *. This brief prediction of St. Paul is drawn out at full length by St. John in the Apocalypse: and, among various other particulars, he fails not expressly to declare, that they of the apostasy should be characterised by the worship of demons or canonized mortals and of idols or images of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood †.

Such is the language of prophecy: and it is perfectly corroborated by that of history. Like the Israelites of old, the rapidly degenerating Christians fell away from the divine simplicity of the Gospel: and, without renouncing the worship of God through Christ, vainly addressed a secondary worship to a new host of Demons or Baalim. To these canonized mortals they scrupled not to address their prayers: while, to complete the resemblance, they multiplied their graven images in every quarter of the land, and shewed the tombs of these inferior divinities just as the ancient pagans shewed the tombs of the hero-gods ‡.

Meanwhile such abominations did not pass without merited reprehension. A faithful few, even throughout the darkest ages, protested against these wretched superstitious mummeries; and proclaimed

* Εσονται γαρ, φησι, νεκροις λατρευοντες, ὡς και εν τω Ισραηλ εσιβασθησαν. Epiph. adv. Hær. 78. sect. 22. It is worthy of observation, that this father then goes on to apply the prophecy to the worshippers of the virgin Mary, who were beginning about that time to shew themselves.

† Rev. ix. 20.

‡ See Mede's Works, b. iii. c. 3, 4, 5.

with

Digitized by Google

with a loud voice, "Fear God, and give glory to "him." The nature both of their testimony and of the paganizing corruptions which they denounced is clearly marked out in the prediction, which specially treats of their ministry. While the figurative temple is confined to the sincere worshippers of God or to the small portion of spiritual believers who constitute the persecuted Church in the wilderness, the wider limits of the outer court and of the holy city are given to a new race of Gentiles; who, like their pagan predecessors, are devoted to the idolatrous veneration of canonized mortals and of images that represented those mortals *.

Against the crude superstition, introduced by the persons whom St. John mystically terms *Gentiles*, the two prophets, as a light in the midst of surrounding darkness, are described as manfully bearing their testimony. The character of these two figurative prophets is manifestly borrowed, as all acknowledge, from that of Enoch and Elijah: consequently, the office of the mystical prophets must be substantially the same as that of the literal ones. Now, of the literal prophets, Enoch preached against the corruptions of the Patriarchal Church; and Elijah, against the idolatries of the Levitical Church. Hence it is evident, that the two mystic prophets must be understood as preaching against the similar corruptions and idolatries of the Christian Church: that is to say, against the corruptions and idolatries of those

* Rev. ix. 20. xi. 1, 2, 3.

Gentiles

Gentiles in practice, who occupy all the outer court of the figurative temple and the entire area of the holy city, leaving only the narrow limits of the temple itself to the sincere worshippers of God. But the idolatry of these practical Gentiles, who occupy nearly the whole of the mystic Jerusalem or of the visible Catholic Church, is described both by St. Paul and by St. John, as consisting in the worship of demons or canonized dead men and of idols or images framed out of various materials. The preaching therefore of the two prophets must doubtless be directed against this specific form of idolatry, which is represented as prevailing throughout the entire holy city save the edifice of the temple alone. Nor is the time less carefully noted, than the circumstantial detail. The painful ministry of the ever persecuted prophets extends through the whole period of those identical 1260 days, which are ascribed to the Roman little horn as the allotted duration of its tyranny. But the Roman little horn, as the fathers well remark, springs up *synchronically* with the ten large horns of the Roman beast: and those ten large horns, as Bp. Walmesley observes very justly from history, are the ten Gothic sovereignties, which sprang up within the limits of the Roman Empire in the course of the fifth and sixth centuries. The little horn therefore must have sprung up about the same time: and, since the 1260 days plainly commence not very long after its rise, they can scarcely have commenced later than some time in the seventh century. This being the case, the two witnesses must then

Digitized by Google

then have begun to prophesy against the demonolatry of the Christian Gentiles: and, as the *event* demonstrates that the 1260 days are not *literal* days, they can only be the same number of *prophetic* days or *literal* years. But, if the two witnesses began to prophesy against the prevailing demonolatry not later than some time in the seventh century, and if the event have proved the 1260 days to be 1260 years: then they must have been prophesying against this demonolatry during the whole of what are called *the middle ages*, and in fact they must be still engaged in the same necessary labour. Thus does the prophecy, when viewed by the joint light which has been thrown upon it by the fathers and Bp. Walmesley and the event, determine us to seek for the sackcloth ministry of the witnesses and for the synchronical tyranny of the little horn in the course of that long period which stretches between the seventh and the nineteenth centuries of the Christian era, including a larger or a smaller portion of each of those centuries according to the *precise* point whence the 1260 years are to be computed.

This is the prediction: and we need only read the history of the middle ages to see how accurately it has been accomplished. Mr. Rutter asks, where we are to find the true Church, and how Christ's promise of its perpetuity has been fulfilled, if the great body of Christians throughout what is generally denominated *Christendom*, who acknowledge the Pope to be their head, are to be viewed as apostates from the faith? The prophecy, we see, furnishes an answer

Digitized by Google

swer to his question. Just as a few Sethites only remained faithful to their God, during the antediluvian prophesying of Enoch; and just as there were six thousand men in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, during the postdiluvian prophesying of Elijah: so, during the prophesying of the two mystic witnesses, the spiritual Church of Christ was confined to the narrow precincts of the allegorical temple, while all the outer court and all the holy city were given up to a race of gentilizing Christians, whose characteristic and special badge was *the worship of demon-gods and of idols*. Where, I would ask Mr. Rutter, was the faithful Patriarchal Church during the ministry of Enoch; where, the faithful Levitical Church during the ministry of Elijah: for, by the history of these prophets, we must evidently interpret the predicted history of their antitypes the two apocalyptic prophets? Must we seek the former among the apostate sons of God, who mingled themselves with the Cainites and learned their ways: or must we seek it among those few stedfast sons of God, who adhered first to Enoch and afterwards to Noah *? In a similar manner, must we seek the latter among the apostate millions, who joined the worship of the dead Baalim to the worship of the living Jehovah: or must we seek it among those six thousand Abdiels, who refused to bow the knee to Baal? As well might Mr. Rutter say, that the word of the Lord was made void, because there was a very

* Gen. vi. 4.

general

Digitized by Google

general apostasy throughout the Levitical Church, or because the Patriarchal Church was once confined to a single family; as that Protestants make void the promise of Christ, when they assert that the Catholic Church largely fell away from the faith once delivered to the saints. So far from *making it void*, they in reality *establish* it: for they shew from history, that nothing has happened, beyond what the spirit of prophecy, which is the spirit of Christ, had taught the world to expect. St. Paul deemed it no contradiction to the promise of his Lord, when he declared, that the day of Christ should not come, except an apostasy first take place and that man of sin be revealed the son of perdition: nor did St. John suppose himself to advance *a wild antichristian opinion* (as Mr. Rutter calls it), when he announced, that, with the sole exception of the figurative temple, *all* the holy city should be trampled down by a race of paganizing Christians, who might be easily known and distinguished by their senseless worship of deified dead men (as Epiphanius rightly understands the *demons* of catholic mythology) and by their sottish adoration of graven or molten images *.

Such

* Mr. Rutter, in despite of those prophecies which foretell a great demonolatrous apostasy in the Church, would persuade us, that the Romanists are absolutely incapable of falling into error.

"With a view of justifying their separation from the Catholic Church," says he, "it is usual with Protestants, as it was "formerly with the Donatists, to represent the parent Church "as corrupted and drowned in abominable idolatry. Hence, "what

Digitized by Google

Such are the results of that peculiar phraseology, by which the inspired writers of the New Testament teach

" what is said by the prophets against Judah and Jerusalem, " they apply to the Catholic Church with the utmost rigour. " But let us hear how St. Austin answered the Donatists, when " they urged the same arguments as Protestants do at present. " *The Scripture*, says he, *often reprehends the wicked that are in* " *the Church, as if all were such, and none at all remained good.* " *Wherefore, either out of ignorance or malice, these men collect* " *those texts which relate to the destruction of the Jews or were* " *designed only against the wicked (who, in this life, will always* " *be mixed with the good) and turn them against the Church of* " *God, that it may seem, in some manner, to have failed by a* " *general defection. But let them never produce any more such* " *passages, if they intend to give me a proper answer.* Lib. de " Unit. Eccles. c. 13. Certain it is, if we believe the Scripture " and the Creed, that the catholic and the orthodox Church " of Christ neither has nor ever will apostatise from the faith: " since she is always *one, holy and apostolical;* always the *com-* " *munion of saints*, the *pillar and support of truth*, against which " *the gates of hell shall never prevail*, and which Christ pro- " mised to be *with at all times even to the end of the world.*" Key. p. 270.

I am at a loss, whether most to admire the appositeness of Mr. Rutter's citation relative to the Donatists, or the ingenious mode in which he claims for the *exclusive* benefit of the Romish Church a promise made by Christ to his Church *collectively*.

1. The Donatists, with true sectarian unreasonableness, declared the Church of Africa to have fallen from the dignity and privileges of a true Church; because Cæcilianus the bishop of Carthage, and Felix of Aptungus who had consecrated him, were charged with certain offences. Hence they authoritatively pronounced all the Churches, which held communion with that Church, to be corrupt and polluted: and maintained, that the sacred rites and institutions were void of all virtue and

Digitized by Google

teach us to esteem Israel and Jerusalem a type of the Catholic Church.

VII. If

efficacy among those Christians, who were not precisely of their own sentiments.

Such were the notions, which Austin of Hippo so justly and so scripturally reprobated: for our Lord himself had taught us to expect, that, to the very end of the world, there would never cease to be tares among the wheat. But what has all this to do against the protestant allegation of *a specific naked fact*, that of *demonolatry*, not against *this* or *that individual Romanist*, but against *the entire Church of Rome herself*?

Austin very properly answers the Donatists by saying, that the Catholic Church will always contain a mixture of good and bad, and that we are not to separate ourselves from her on the insufficient ground that some of her members are wicked; a doctrine, fully recognized by our own English Church in her 26th Article. But is Mr Rutter prepared to employ this argument against *the definite allegation* of the Protestants? If so, he must throw it into the following shape, or it will evidently render no service to his cause.

"You protestants charge the Romish Church with idolatry, "and profess to separate yourselves from her communion on "that specific ground. But *the Scripture often reprehends the* "WICKED *in the Church, as if* ALL *were such, and* NONE *re-* "*mained good.* We may have *individual* idolaters among us, "we freely confess: but, since our *Church* has ever reprobated "such impiety, the wickedness of *individuals* will not excuse "your separation from *the Church herself.*"

This is the argument of St. Austin, when applied *mutatis mutandis* to the case in hand: and, if it be of the least service to Mr. Rutter, he is heartily welcome to it. I should have thought however, that he would have been more in point, had he repelled by direct proof the allegation of *a naked fact* against his *whole Church*, which allegation must be either true or false; instead of travelling out of the record after a citation from the bishop

Digitized by Google

VII. If the Bible be against any set of men, those men are very apt to be against the Bible. Hence, while Mr. Rutter thinks that "we cannot do better "than follow the golden rule of St. Vincent of Le- "rius, which is, *To apply the sense of the Catholic "Church to the Scriptures, as a rule to a line, and "as a clue to conduct us in this labyrinth of opi-*

bishop of Hippo, which bears not in the slightest degree upon the present question. For will Mr. Rutter pretend to say, that the allegation of the Donatists and the allegation of the Protestants bear even the most remote affinity to each other, either in regard to *the matters alleged* or in regard to *the extent of the accusation?* Why, in short, did he quote St. Austin without fairly stating to the Romish laity the real ground of his argument against the Donatists? Such management may indeed evince *the wisdom of the serpent:* whether it displays much of *the harmlessness of the dove*, except no doubt in *controversial harmlessness*, is quite another matter.

2. As for his claiming, on behalf of the *Romish* Church *exclusively*, those promises which Christ made to his *Universal* Church, it is nothing more than the old dish of *Catholicism* served up with fresh seasoning.

The truth will always be held with fidelity in some part or other of the *Universal* Church: but the Romish Church has no more a promise of perpetuity or of freedom from heresy, than the Church of Constantinople or any other *particular* Church. If she have, let it be produced; and we have done: but the merest tyro in logic can never allow the Romanist to adduce certain promises to the *Universal* Church, and then apply them to his own *particular* Church on the paradoxical ground that this *particular* is the intended *Universal.* Yet does this gross *petitio principii* run through all the reasonings, if reasonings they can be called, of the Popish doctors. One is absolutely weary of exposing it: at every turn we meet this unblushing and indefatigable *Ecce iterum Crispinus.*

 "*nions:*"

Digitized by Google

" *nions:*" he laments, that " this catholic principle, " so consonant to reason and common sense, should " be rejected by Protestants; who contend, that the " Bible ALONE, without note or comment, is the " SOLE rule of faith *."

It is no easy matter to satisfy those, who seem determined to misapprehend and to misrepresent: yet, since Mr. Rutter has thought fit to attack the principle in which all sound Protestants glory, I shall take this opportunity of giving what I conceive to be the true meaning of it.

1. We Protestants are not such enemies to " rea- " son and common sense," as to maintain, that *the Bible needs not an expositor*, and that *the Scriptures* " *without note or comment*" *may be just as well understood by this man as by that man:* we design not to advance any such glaring absurdity, when we maintain that *the revealed word of God is the* SOLE *rule of faith.* But we venture to protest against *any mere human interpretation* being put upon THE SAME FOOTING OF AUTHORITY, as *the word of God itself.*

Now the golden rule of St. Vincent seems to us plainly to involve this presumptuous absurdity. For what does it modestly require of us? Not only to receive *the Bible*, but with it also to receive *whatsoever sense a collective body of men in power may think fit to put upon its contents.*

St. Vincent and Mr. Rutter talk magnificently of

* Preface to Key. p. xi.

the

Digitized by Google

the sense of the Catholic Church: but what *is* this Catholic Church, to which they delegate the functions of an infallible expositor? They will scarcely say, that they mean *the Church as comprizing* EVERY *individual, lettered and unlettered:* they must therefore mean, either *the general body of the Priesthood,* or *the Pope viewed as its head.* Such being the case, *the sense of the Catholic Church,* as St. Vincent calls it, plainly resolves itself into *the sense of a certain man or of certain men who have obtained the government of the Catholic Church:* and his golden rule requires us to admit whatsoever sense this man or these men, who after all are mere fallible mortals like ourselves, may please to impose upon the contents of the Bible.

According to this hypothesis, that *searching of the Scriptures whether these things are so,* which the inspired writer of the Acts so highly commends in the Berèans, is palpably a lamentable waste of time and labour: for where is the use of searching the Scriptures, whether such and such things are *indeed* as we are assured they are; when, after all, we must have no judgment of our own, but must implicitly receive *the sense of the Catholic Church,* that is to say *the sense of one or more fallible individuals who have obtained power in that Church,* as the undoubted sense of Scripture? If we are to believe St. Vincent and Mr. Rutter, when Paul and Silas assured the Berèan Jews that *Jesus* was *the Christ* announced in their own Scriptures, they ought not to have searched them *whether these things are so;* a phrase, which undoubtedly

Digitized by Google

undoubtedly implies *a decision founded upon a discursive act of the intellect:* but they ought to have received the assurance without further inquiry, because it exhibited *the sense of the Catholic Church.* Yet St. Luke strangely differs from St. Vincent on this point, even though Paul and Silas were *inspired* and therefore truly *infallible* expositors. The Berèans are *still* praised for searching the Scriptures, *whether* those things were so; that is to say, they are praised *for taking nothing upon mere trust:* and yet St. Vincent has the modesty to propose what Mr. Rutter whimsically enough calls *a golden rule,* by which *the sense of the Catholic Church,* no matter whether well or ill founded, that is to say, *the sense of a knot of uninspired teachers,* is in all cases to be taken without further inquiry, as *the undoubted mind of Holy Scripture.*

Perhaps Mr. Rutter may say, that the cases are not parallel: for, in the case of the Berèans, the Gospel was then first offered to *the unconverted;* whereas, in the case of general decisions of the Catholic Church, those decisions are propounded to *the converted.*

I see not, what he would gain by such a shift, were he disposed to make it. For let me ask him, would he boldly propound to an *unconverted* Chinese or Hindoo to search the Scriptures, as to the orthodoxy of *demonolatry* and *image-worship* and *clerical celibacy* and *a belief in purgatory;* just as Paul and Silas left it to the Berèans to judge for themselves from the ancient prophecies, whether Jesus

Digitized by Google

Jesus were not indeed the Christ: and would he be content, like the apostles, to rest the issue upon *their* decision? If he would not, he virtually confesses, that those pretended catholic doctrines cannot be discovered in the Bible without the aid of a Romish pair of spectacles.

2. How then, it may be asked, do Protestants view the matter: and why do they employ a body of men to expound the Bible to the people, if they contend that the Bible *itself* is the SOLE rule of faith?

(1.) Nothing is more easy than to answer such a question: because nothing is more easy than to perceive the difference, between *authoritatively imposing an exposition as* INFALLIBLY *right*, and *using those helps with which we are amply provided to ascertain the real sense of Scripture.*

From defect of education or from inherent dulness of apprehension, many are incapable of following an argument or of understanding a critical discussion. To *them* no doubt, when with humble prayer we have used the best means in our power, we *must* propose many things dogmatically: but to those, who are as capable of judging as ourselves, we must propose them with an earnest exhortation, to search the Scriptures whether those things be so, and not to receive our statements on our bare word *alone*. Nay, in many cases, the same exhortation may be profitably addressed even to the most uninstructed, provided only they can read: and it always *ought* to be addressed to them, when it *can*. Meanwhile, common

Digitized by Google

common sense itself shews, that they, who specially devote themselves to a particular line of study, are likely to know more about it than those who do not. This preëminence in theological knowledge we Protestants ascribe to our Priesthood: but why do we ascribe it? Not because episcopal consecration or sacerdotal ordination operates as a charm; making a man at once "more wise, more just, more learned, "more every thing:" but simply because the subjects of those rites either have, or ought to have, *qualified* themselves to be teachers by fervent prayer and diligent study. Any well educated layman, if he think fit for his own private satisfaction to read as a divine, is in our opinion just as well qualified *to pronounce upon the mind of Scripture;* though, without a special and canonical designation to the holy work of the ministry, we Protestants (at least of the Anglican Church) hold him to be not warranted *in taking that work upon himself:* for, though a man out of office may be as well *qualified* to be an ambassador as the person who is honoured with the commission of his sovereign; that man, we apprehend, cannot lawfully assume *the function* of an ambassador unless the sovereign *give him authority.*

(2.) In short, when we say that *the Bible is the* SOLE *rule of faith,* we mean *theologically* just the same as an Englishman means *politically,* when he says that *the common law of his country is the* SOLE *rule of obligation.* But would any sober man infer from this, that the law required *no* exposition, or that

Digitized by Google

that one person was just as well qualified to lay it down as another? Or again, on the opposite hand, because he conceded all due authority to the learned in the law, would he think himself therefore bound to put *a mere commentary*, even if written by an ermined judge, upon the same footing as *the law itself?* Would he admit an exposition, on however high authority it might rest, which was plainly contradictory, or which palpably militated against common sense? Because *some* points are of less clear explication, does it therefore follow that *no* moral certainty can be attained?

Thou shalt not commit murder; says the law of the land. Now, if any body of men were to lay it down as the undoubted sense of the law, that it was illegal indeed *to shed blood,* but that it was perfectly justifiable *to confine a man until he was starved to death:* should we receive their comment, and forthwith deem all those lawyers heretical and schismatical who presumed to differ from them?

Thou shalt not worship the similitude of any thing, either celestial or terrestrial or aquatic; says the law of God. "True," replies an orthodox teacher of the Romish school, "nothing can be more impious and more abominable than idolatry; but, "provided only you call the statue of a saint *an* "*image* and not *an idol,* you may pray to it as long "and as often as you please: this is *the sense of the* "*Catholic Church;* and, according to the golden "rule of St. Vincent, *you must apply it to the Scrip-* "*tures, as a rule to a line, and as a clue to con-*

"*duct*

Digitized by Google

" *duct us in this labyrinth of opinions:* if however " you will not receive this catholic exposition of the " very obscure and ambiguous text before us, you " are a manifest heretic and schismatic."

To so luculent a gloss upon what we must all confess to be a *locus vexatissimus*, a gloss for which I *believe* (but I speak with due submission to the better informed Romanist) the Catholic Church is indebted to no less a personage than Pope Gregory II*: to this so luculent gloss we protestant interpreters can only reply, that, though we venture not to deem ourselves *infallible* expositors of Scripture, yet moral truth does sometimes approximate so closely to ma-

* " You accuse the Catholics of idolatry," says Pope Gregory to the mistaken Leo Isauricus; " and, by the accusation, you " betray your own impiety and ignorance. To this igno- " rance we are compelled to adapt the grossness of our style " and arguments.

What then are the formidable arguments, which are to cover the undiscerning iconoclast with confusion? Neither more nor less than these.

The pagans were undoubted idolaters; because they worshipped certain statues, which *the sense of the Catholic Church* denominates *idols:* but Gregory and his adherents were clearly *not* idolaters; because they only worshipped certain statues, which *the sense of the Catholic Church* denominates *images.* Gregor. Epist. apud Act. Concil. Nicen. vol. viii. p. 651—674. cited by Gibbon.

Whether the ingenious pontiff were absolutely *the inventor* of this irresistible argument, which must needs put every obstinate heretic to the blush, I cannot positively affirm: but he had certainly the merit of using it, with no small dexterity, against his imperial opponent.

thematical,

Digitized by Google

thematical, that we know not how to deem ourselves mistaken in supposing *a prohibition to worship* ANY *thing beside God*, a prohibition too which specially particularises *the bowing down before any species of statuary*; in supposing this identical prohibition to mean, that the statue of a saint or of the holy Virgin or of Jesus Christ, provided only it be called *an image* and not *an idol*, may be safely and even laudably worshipped *.

(3.) The

* The modern Papists, like Gregory of old, deny the accusation of idolatry. This they can only do on Gregory's plea, that to *worship an image* is quite a different thing from *worshipping an idol*: for the orthodoxy of *image-worship* was established by the council held under Pope Stephen III; and, as Bp. Walmesley assures us, "when a dogmatical point is to be determined, the Catholic Church speaks but ONCE, and her decree "is IRREVOCABLE." Gen. Hist. p. 224. The decision of that theopneust council ran, as follows.

"The holy images of Christ, the blessed Virgin, and other "saints, ARE WORTHY OF HONOUR AND WORSHIP."

Accordingly, that sound expositor of Scripture, James Naclantus bishop of Clugium, thus undertakes to elucidate St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

"Therefore it is not only to be confessed, that the faithful in "the Church do worship *before* an image (as some too cautious "souls may perhaps be inclined to speak), but THEY LIKEWISE "WORSHIP THE VERY IMAGE ITSELF WITHOUT ANY SCRUPLE "OR DOUBT AT ALL. Nay more: they worship the image "WITH THE VERY SAME KIND OF WORSHIP as its original pro-"totype. So that, if the prototype be worshipped with "LATRIA, or THAT PECULIAR AND SUPREME WORSHIP WITH "WHICH JEHOVAH IS ADORED; the image must also be wor-"shipped with LATRIA: if with *Dulia* or *Hyperdulia*, that is to "say

(3.) The Romanists, I know, will tell us, that they do not pray to *the image*, but to *the person whom it represents.*

This however does not mend the matter. Their demonolatrous predecessors of the pagan school, as we are expressly taught by themselves, did not absolutely pray to the block out of which the image of Jupiter was formed, but to the god represented by the image and supposed by a certain divine energy to animate it *: and we have yet to learn, even if the decalogue had not strictly forbidden prostration before ANY image, on what scriptural authority or on what sound Christian principles the Romanists invoke the saints and the virgin Mary †.

" say with *the less or more intense worship which is paid to the* " *saints or the Virgin;* then must the image also be worshipped " with *Dulia* or *Hyperdulia.*"

It seems, that some over squeamish persons even in the Romish Church were subject to qualms as to the orthodoxy of image-worship: but James Naclantus assures them, that they may safely swallow *the worship of the very images themselves without any scruple or doubt or roundabout explanation.*

* Such we learn to have been the case from Porphyry and Jamblichus and Hermes Trismegistus: so that Arnobius does not belie them, when he gives exactly the same account. See Mede's Apost. of the latter times. chap. v. p. 632. See also Æneid. lib. ii. ver. 171—174. from which the Romish miracle-mongers seem to have taken some hints for the benefit of the Virgin's statues. See Whit. on the Rev. p. 341.

† Can they justify their practice, I will not say by a direct quotation from Scripture, but even by a fair train of inductive reasoning from any single text? Yet have they cruelly persecuted hundreds to death because they would not bow down before senseless stocks and stones.

Our

Digitized by Google

Our modern Papists in England, ashamed (I suppose) of the gross idolatry of their fathers and their Spanish contemporaries, will say, that they only beg of the saints and the Virgin to *intercede* for them, just as we ask the intercessory prayers of any pious living man.

But this will not serve their turn; even if *they* could shew the same scriptural authority for asking the prayers of *the departed*, as *we* can shew for asking the prayers of *the living*. Supplications of a very different stamp are yet extant, in which the Virgin and the saints are directly and unreservedly invoked to give what *God alone* can bestow *. Do they

* I cite the two following, out of many similar prayers, to shew, that *intercession alone* is *not* that which the Romanists supplicate from their demon-gods.

" Comfort a sinner, and give not thine honour to a stranger or " the cruel; I pray thee, Queen of heaven. Have me excused " with Christ thy son, whose anger I dread; for against thee " only have I sinned. O virgin Mary, be not estranged from " me, thou who art full of heavenly grace. *Be the guardian of* " *my heart; impress me with the fear of God; bestow on me in-* " *tegrity of life; and give me honesty of manners: and grant,* " *that I may avoid sin and love what is righteous,* O virgin " sweetness."

To those, who should use this prayer, Pope Celestine granted three hundred days of pardon.

" We now beg you, patron, industrious preacher, holy Alban, " who art our true glory, *loose the crimes of thy servants* by thy " supplications." Coll. et Hymn. in usum Sar. Paris 1520. apud Burnet's Records. numb. 29.

Such blasphemy might be renounced by the modern Papists; but

Digitized by Google

they allow these prayers to be orthodox? What then becomes of the allegation, that their prayers to the Virgin and the saints are *merely intercessory*? Do they deny them to be orthodox? What then becomes of St. Vincent's golden rule and the infallible sense of the Catholic Church?

3. But it may be urged by a Romanist, that we Protestants of the Church of England are guilty of a manifest inconsistency: for, while we declare the Bible to be the SOLE rule of faith, we nevertheless require subscription to those mere human and confessedly fallible expositions of it, the Articles and the Homilies.

It will, I presume, be granted, that, if men congregate together for any given purpose, they must adopt by mutual agreement certain rules or laws by which to shape their sentiments and to regulate their conduct. Without such a compact, it is perfectly clear that they would constitute an absolute Babel: without such a compact, they could no more form an harmonious body politic, than the builders of the tower when their language was miraculously confounded.

On this obvious principle, if I mistake not, the Articles and Homilies of the English Church were framed and composed. She had thrown off the

but unfortunately, as Bp. Walmesley says, "the Catholic "Church speaks but *once*, and her decree is *irrevocable*." The strange dogma of *Infallibility* is as a mill-stone round the necks of the Romanists: it renders every acknowledgment of error, either in doctrine or in practice, impossible.

usurped

Digitized by Google

usurped authority of the Roman bishop: and she had openly declared of those in communion with him, that she had come out from among them that she might not be a partaker of their sins and that she might not receive of their plagues *. Under such circumstances, most strange and inconsistent would have been her conduct, had she not given a distinct exposition of her own religious sentiments; that so it might lucidly appear to the whole world, *wherein* and *on what grounds* she differed from those whom she had left. But this were of small emolument in the internal arrangement of her discipline, if she did not carefully learn from her ecclesiastical children, previous to her admitting them to minister in her communion, whether *their* views of revealed religion as deduced from the Bible were the same as *her own:* for, without such a precaution, every heresy, which had disturbed and corrupted the Catholic Church from the very days of the Apostles, might be confidently preached within her pale; various doctrines and opinions, not in themselves absolutely damnable and heretical, but which rest upon no sure and certain warrant of Holy Scripture, might be impertinently advanced and unwisely insisted upon by insulated individuals; and thus, while discord and confusion raged within her walls, she might well be exposed to the scorn and derision of her adversaries as a rude and indigested and turbulent chaos.

* Rev. xviii. 4.

Hence

Digitized by Google

Hence originated the necessity of demanding from her clergy a formal subscription to her own avowed sentiments, as expressed in her Articles and her Homilies and her Liturgy: her very existence as a body politic, just as the very existence of any other body politic, plainly and wholly depended upon it.

But what then? Does she profess to be *infallible* in her exposition of Scripture? Does she presumptuously anathematize all who differ from her in the least particular, as manifest and convicted heretics? Does she unchurch all Christian societies, which have been led to differ from her on some points whether of doctrine or of practice? Does she deny to those other Churches the same right of searching the Scriptures and of promulgating for their own members their respective confessions of faith and schemes of discipline, which she justly claims for herself?

Nothing of the sort. This is indeed the principle and practice of the pretended Catholic Church of Rome, but it is neither the principle nor the practice of the national Church of England; however, in the evil days of the arbitrary Stuarts, some bigoted and mistaken men may have thought fit to misrepresent her. She asserts, it is true, that the Church has authority in controversies of faith: but let us hear her explain her own assertion; and nothing can be more reasonable and modest. What then is this authority, which she claims for the Church? Is it an infallible authority, from which there lies no appeal? Is it a final authority, to which

we

Digitized by Google

we are required to subject all that we either *have* written or *may* write; such an authority in short, as that to which Mr. Rutter professes to bow with an unmanly sacrifice of every intellectual power? Quite the reverse. The authority in question is not made to rest upon certain vague traditions, which, like those of the old Pharisees, make void the Bible: but it is expressly declared to be limited and confined and hedged in by Holy Scripture. "It is not lawful "for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary "to God's word *written:* neither may it so expound "one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to "another." Accordingly, in strict agreement with this rational principle, which is evidently propounded by way of accounting for the conduct of the English Church in setting forth her Articles authoritatively *so far as her own members are concerned:* in strict agreement with this rational principle, while she rightly declares, that "Holy Scripture containeth "all things necessary to salvation," she further declares almost at the very commencement of her Articles, that "whatsoever is not read therein, nor "may be proved thereby, is not to be required of "any man, that it should be believed as an article "of the faith or be thought requisite or necessary "to salvation." Hence, still on the same principle, she rightly teaches, that "general councils both may "err, and sometimes have erred, even in things per-"taining unto God: wherefore things, ordained by "them as necessary to salvation, have neither

Digitized by Google

" strength nor authority, unless it may be declared " that they are taken out of Holy Scripture *."

Thus moderate are her views, as to the authority of the Church *in matters of doctrine;* she considers her decisions as binding only upon those, who remain in communion with her: nor are they less moderate, when she is allowed to speak for herself, in what regards *discipline and ecclesiastical polity.*

She evinces her preference of episcopacy indeed, by adopting it as the form of her own internal government, and those of her members, who have at all examined into the question, have no hesitation in expressing their full conviction, derived from the careful perusal of history, that episcopacy is the primitive and apostolic model: but, since it is doubtless *possible* that our Lord's apostles may have ordained many things for the sake of decency and order which were most suitable to the Church of their day, while yet they may not *so* have ordained them as to bind them upon all ages in the way of *divine* and *perpetual* obligation †; the English Church very wisely does not take upon herself to determine

* Art. vi, xx, xxi.

† This opinion, whether *accurate* or *inaccurate*, is maintained with no small learning and dexterity by Bp. Stillingfleet in his *Irenicum:* but he afterwards, I believe, retracted it. The epistles of Ignatius, which are received as *genuine*, oppose it most vehemently: but even *these* epistles are allowed to contain *some* spurious passages. The question therefore is, *which* passages are spurious, and *which* are authentic. Of this knotty point I will not undertake the decision.

the

Digitized by Google

the often agitated question, *whether episcopacy be absolutely essential to the very existence of a Church* *.

* The proof, that episcopacy is of apostolic institution, is no *necessary* proof, that it is *likewise* of divine origin and therefore of perpetual obligation. Yet these two *perfectly distinct* ideas have often been confounded together in argument, as if the proof of the one was *of course* the proof of the other also. It is easy to trace *the existence* of the episcopal order, as an order manifestly distinct both from the presbyterate and the diaconate, up to the very time of the apostles: but here we shall find that our *demonstration* begins to fail us. Episcopacy *may* indeed be of divine institution *in the same strict and unbending sense as the Levitical High-Priesthood:* but I know not, where we are to seek the *proof* of this opinion. It must strike even the most superficial observer, that the New Testament contains *no such minute and unambiguous account of the specially divine origination of the one*, as the Pentateuch does *of the other:* and, since the Gospel is thus silent, I see not what we can prove from ecclesiastical history beyond the naked fact, that episcopacy has certainly *existed* from the apostolic age itself. Following then the wise example of our own Church, I will not presume to speak *positively* on a matter, respecting which I feel myself to have *no sufficient ground* for thus speaking. But still, since episcopacy has been the ecclesiastical model in all ages and countries until the time of the reformation; those, who then rejected it, took a step of such extreme boldness that I should have shrunk from following them. The ancient Syrian Church of Malabar, secluded for many centuries from the rest of the Christian world, and deriving her line of succession from Antioch itself, affords an illustrious proof of at least the high and undoubted antiquity of bishops as a distinct order from presbyters. Though I trust and hope that I am no *outrageous* high-churchman, yet I feel it my privilege to minister in a Church, which I *know* to be constituted on the venerable model that was (to say the *very* least of it) *recommended* and *approved* by the apostles as the best and the most perfect.

Digitized by Google

Yet, while she refrains from *defining specifically* the channel through which sacerdotal authority *must needs* be derived; lest haply, by any unadvised rashness in determining what Scripture has left undetermined, she might unchurch many of her godly reformed sisters in Christ: she is careful not to leave the fold open to every presumptuous intruder; remembering the apostolic monition, that "no man "taketh this honour" of the priesthood "unto him-"self, but he that is" ultimately "called of God" through the medium of his sacerdotal predecessors *. Feeling assured therefore, that, at all events, *she herself* is in the right, when she directs that holy orders shall be transmitted by the hands of bishops whose line of succession can be traced up to the apostolic college itself; she takes not upon her to judge other churches, who either maintain the identity of the scriptural *episcopi* and *presbyteri*, or who believe that the order of bishops might have been appointed by the disciples of Christ though under no more *absolute obligation* of perpetuity than those *prophets* and *teachers* and *helps* and *governments* and *interpreters* who are yet all mentioned by St. Paul as no less instituted under a certain influence of God than *the apostles* themselves †. On this principle of charitable moderation, requiring that no one should assume the sacerdotal office without authority being given to him by his predecessors, and yet leaving those predecessors undefined as to their episcopal or

* Heb. v. 4. † 1 Cor. xii. 28—30.

presby-

presbyteral character, she will be found, I apprehend, to have put forth her twenty third Article.

" It is not lawful for any man to take upon him " the office of public preaching or ministering the " sacraments in the congregation, before he be law " fully called and sent to execute the same. And " those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, " which be chosen and called to this work by men " who have public authority given unto them in the " congregation to call and send ministers into the " Lord's vineyard *."

4. Since then the Church of England claims to speak authoritatively even on matters of faith to her own members, and yet since she expressly limits her authority to the written word of God: what is to be done, the Romanist may ask, if any one shall judge her decision to be contrary to Scripture?

In this case, as the grand protestant principle of " searching the Scriptures whether these things are " so" can never be abandoned, the Church of England freely concedes the right of quitting her communion to all those who deem its terms unscriptural. She esteems them indeed mistaken and prejudiced men; and those, who hold with her, are amazed that any one should fancy her doctrines contrary to the Bible: but she would fain part in Christian charity, if not in Christian fellowship; she has no

* See Bp. Burnet's very sensible and judicious and moderate exposition of this Article. I have followed his sense in my whole view of the matter, as being the most agreeable at once to Scripture and to reason.

more

Digitized by Google

more the wish, than the power, to persecute those who differ from her *. As for separation on such mere trifles, as, whether the priest shall wear a white gown or a black one, whether a child in baptism shall be signed with a cross or with a parallelogram, or whether the consecrated elements shall be received in a kneeling or in a sitting posture; while yet her doctrine is allowed to be pure and scriptural: she can only regret, that good men should have shewn themselves so unaccountably childish, as to deny to her a power *inherent in the very essence of a body politic*; "the power to decree rites or cere-" monies †."

* See the difference between the Levitical and Christian dispensations, in regard to religious coercion, admirably placed on its true foundation by Bp. Warburton. Div. Leg. book v. sect. 2.

† Art. xx. I am fully aware how often it has been said, that the blame-worthy persons are those, who arbitrarily impose such matters, not those who resist the imposition. But this does not apply in the present case. At the *original* settling of the English Church after the Reformation, attention might fairly have been paid to objections of this sort however palpably trifling in themselves: but the fact was, that the Savoy conference took place a whole century after our Church had been new modelled; and, when the full claims of the non-conformists were stated, it appeared that they demanded nothing short of the abrogation of our entire liturgy. Now, when once the harmless rites and ceremonies of a Church have been settled, no party of men has a right to demand their abolition merely to gratify their own humour, unless scriptural proof can be brought of their sinful illegality: and, if they separate in consequence, the guilt of the separation rests with themselves. This was the ground taken by the bishops, and surely a very reasonable one: for,

Digitized by Google

for, had the plea of the non-conformists been admitted, no future plea of a similar nature could have been refused; and thus the ceremonial of the Church would never have been the same two years together. If a few English resident in Scotland were to object to an union with the Presbyteral Church of that country on the ground that they could not conscientiously receive the sacrament in a sitting-posture; would not that Church justly deem it a most unreasonable thing, that she should be forthwith expected to alter her ritual unless its scriptural illegality could be clearly demonstrated. I need scarcely remark, that those, who desired to take occasion, might object to the Scottish form just as much as to the English form on the ground of its discrepance from that which was used at the first institution of the Lord's Supper. The apostles, as is evident from the reclining posture of St. John, received the bread and wine neither kneeling nor sitting, but recumbent upon couches.

DISSER-

Digitized by Google

DISSERTATION VI.

Respecting the scriptural use of the word Mystery.

SECTION I.

On the general use of the word Mystery in Holy Scripture.

TO introduce a new system of religion in direct opposition to the old theology of the Gentiles, without any allusion being made to that old theology, is a thing in itself almost impossible. The Greek Scriptures, in fact, abound with such references: whence, if I mistake not, the theology in question will at once be found, to throw much light upon various detached passages in the New Testament, to establish incidentally (though in the way of fair deduction) the catholic doctrine respecting the nature of our blessed Lord, and to illustrate in a very curious manner the entire machinery of the Apocalypse.

We are apt to pass over the word MYSTERY, as it frequently occurs in the New Testament, without attempt-

Digitized by Google

attempting to fix any very definite idea to it. Having completely Anglicized the term, and being accustomed to consider it as denoting in our language *something at once obscure and wonderful and incomprehensible;* we give ourselves no further trouble about the matter, but rest quite satisfied to read a purely technical Greek word with eyes perfectly English. Thus, when we hear of *the* MYSTERY *of godliness* for instance, we conclude, that some incomprehensible truth is spoken of, which we could never have known save through the medium of revelation. Now this may be very true to a certain extent: but, unless we be altogether sure that St. Paul used the word MYSTERY precisely in the same sense that we are wont to do in our common vernacular conversation, we evidently go away with but a very imperfect knowledge of what by thus employing it he meant to insinuate. Would we really ascertain the full import of such phraseology, we must divest ourselves of the character of modern Englishmen, and assume for a season that of ancient Greeks: we must read the declaration of the apostle, not as those who are descended from a long line of Saxon Christians, but as if we were recent Hellenic converts from the superstitious rites of old idolatry. The question therefore is, what idea the word MYSTERY would have conveyed to such converts.

As for the term itself, it was perfectly familiar to them long before they heard the sound of the Gospel: so familiar indeed, that it was employed to denote an ordinance, which was established among the pagans

in

Digitized by Google

in every quarter of the globe, and which constituted the very pith and marrow of their recondite theology. Hence, when the Gentiles perceived their great apostle using this well-known word, not merely as it were by accident in a single epistle to the first bishop of Ephesus, but perpetually and to all appearance industriously in nearly *all* his letters to the Hellenic churches; they would naturally conclude, that he employed it in direct reference to its familiar and popular use: they would conclude, that he *meant* to turn their attention to the Mysteries into which many of them had been initiated, and that he *designedly* alluded to the doctrines taught in those Mysteries as being of some service in illustrating the truths which he was commissioned to inculcate. In this supposition they would be the more confirmed by observing, how apt he was to indulge both in classical allusions and in classical quotations. As the Olympic games had, in more than one instance, furnished him with an apposite exemplification of the spiritual conflicts of a Christian; as an appropriate citation from a Greek poet had been dexterously adduced by him to direct the Athenians to the genuine worship of a hitherto unknown God; as an apophthegm from another Greek poet had been esteemed by him not unworthy of a place even in an inspired composition; and as a third Greek poet had been familiarly quoted by him to exhibit the character of a nation, in which his *own son after the common faith* was called episcopally to preside: as such was the ordinary practice of the lettered apostle;

it

Digitized by Google

it would seem nothing more than what might be obviously expected, that he should allude also to the ancient Mysteries if he found them of any service for the purpose either of ornament or illustration.

In this manner would *naturally* argue a converted Greek. Whether in the present case he would argue *conclusively* or not, an Englishman is no competent judge, unless he become acquainted with the purport of those Mysteries into which the more zealous pagans made a point of being duly initiated. Enough has come down to us to throw a clear light upon such a subject: and, as many of the early fathers were well acquainted with it, I see no reason, why the learned Hellenistic Benjamite Saul, himself a Roman citizen of a pagan Municipium, should be pronounced altogether ignorant of the *thing*, when he so perpetually (I had almost said *affectedly*) uses the *word*.

Let us then observe the nature and phraseology of those extraordinary Mysteries; which, with some slight variations, formed a constituent part of the ritual of Paganism, not merely among the Greeks, but throughout the whole gentile world: and, after this has been noted, we shall be prepared to judge, whether the writers of the New Testament, when they used the word MYSTERY, *designed* to allude to the ancient Orgies as affording them an apt medium of illustration or admonition.

I. We will begin with a brief account of the Mysteries themselves, so far as their purport can be gathered

Digitized by Google

thered from those notices which have come down to us *.

The doctrine, which they taught, and which they professed scenically to exhibit, may be briefly stated in the following manner.

1. He, whom the Pagans in every quarter of the globe venerated as their supreme deity, and whom they decorated with the title of *the great universal father*, was supposed from time to time to appear upon earth under the semblance of a man †. In this

* For the authorities, on which the following statement rests, see Origin of Pagan Idol. passim, but particularly book v. c. 3.

† This tenet is thus explicitly set forth by the Hindoos. "Whenever the deity condescends to be born of woman, the "person is one, but there are two natures. These two natures "often act independently of each other, and may exist at the "same time in different places." Asiat. Res. vol. vi. p. 479. "The great God; the omniscient, the great, the omniscient, "one; the greatest in the world; the great Lord, who goes "through all the worlds, incapable of decay, and without a "body, is born a moulded body of flesh and bones, made, "whilst himself was not made. His wisdom and power per-"vade all hearts: from his heart sprang the lotos-like world in "times of old. It was then in this, that appeared, when born, "the God of gods; the Lord of the lords of mankind, who "rules over all; the Lord of the world." Brahmanda Purana. apud Asiat. Res. vol. viii. p. 352. The same speculations prevailed in the west. Thus the emperor Julian maintained, that Esculapius was an emanation of the Supreme God worshipped in the Sun, who became incarnate upon earth in the body of a man. Cyril. cont. Julian. lib. vi. p. 200. And thus the descent of

Digitized by Google

this form he was thought to be born an infant: and, not unfrequently, the mother, who thus produced him, was esteemed a virgin *. While manifested to the world in each of his successive incarnations, he approved himself to be a general benefactor. He was the reformer and humanizer of a corrupt age: he was at once the lawgiver and the theological instructor of mankind: and by a beneficent conquest he extended his empire over the whole globe. But his virtue did not render him the less obnoxious to the malice of an inveterate enemy; who was sometimes imagined to be closely connected with an enor-

of Jupiter, and his appearance in a human form to the impious Lycaon, immediately before the deluge, is to all intents and purposes what the Hindoos call *an Incarnation* and *an Avatar*. Ovid. Metam. lib. i. ver. 212, 213. In like manner Osiris was thought to become incarnate, sometimes in the sacred bull Apis, and sometimes in the form of an infant. See Diod. Sic. Bibl. lib. i. p. 20. And still, even at the present day, it is believed by the Buddhists of Thibet, that their supreme divinity is successively born in the person of each Teeshoo Lama. I mean not to say, that the Gentiles *really* worshipped the true God. So far from it, I am persuaded that they did no such thing. But it is quite sufficient for my purpose to have shewn, that he, whom they *believed* to be the Supreme Being, whom *as such* they worshipped, and whom they *supposed* to be the creator of the universe, was thought by them to become incarnate on various occasions in a human body.

* The chief divinity, both in the east, and in the west, and even in the new world, under the several appellations of *Codom*, *Perseus*, *Ares*, *Fohi*, and *Mexitli*, was thought to be born of a virgin mother. See Orig. of Pagan Idol. book iv. c. 5. § XXVI.

mous

Digitized by Google

mous serpent, and who at other times was himself believed to have taken the form of that reptile. Seizing a favourable opportunity, his foe attacked and slew him: but death was unable to hold him long in subjection. After a stated period, which was occasionally determined to expire on the third day from that on which his murder was perpetrated, he was restored to life, and was liberated from those realms of darkness within which he had been confined. He now, in *his* turn, became the victor; and his dracontian enemy fell vanquished beneath his conquering arms. Having thus accomplished his mission upon earth, he ascended triumphantly to heaven; whence he successively reappears in new incarnations to perform again and again the same deeds in various corrupt worlds.

2. These speculations were scenically exhibited in the pageants of the Mysteries. The god was first bewailed as one dead, and was solemnly inclosed in his coffin. This represented his descent into Hades: and he was now supposed to be wrapped in the deep sleep of death, and to have vanished for a season from the eyes of mortals. Afterwards he was taken out of his coffin, and was exulted over as one restored to life. This represented his return from Hades: and he was now considered as one, who had awoke from the slumber of death, who had reappeared in the upper regions of light and gladness, and who had been happily found again by his deserted votaries.

3. His descent into Hades and his return from Hades

Digitized by Google

Hades was thought to be alike accomplished by passing through a mystic door or gate: and, as the ancients were accustomed to bury their dead in vast catacombs hewn out of the solid rock, this door was wont to be identified with the door which led to such repositories. Hence his death was viewed as a passage through the door by which the infernal regions were entered; and his revival, as a retrogressive passage either through the same or through a second door to the glorious light and liberty of open day. This being the case, he was eminently esteemed the god of the door; and was thought to hold, with sovereign sway, the keys of death and Hades.

4. In conjunction with the great father, the pagans venerated the great mother; and they deemed her, after a mysterious fashion, to be his consort. They sometimes depicted her, as riding upon a ferocious wild beast; and at other times they described her, as floating navicularly upon the surface of the mighty deep. The worship of these two personages was very commonly celebrated on the banks of a sacred lake: and, as the night was usually the chosen time of devotion, and as the Mysteries were professedly of a funereal nature representing the death and burial of the great father, this lake was considered as the infernal lake or as the lake of Hades.

5. The pagans, holding the doctrine of an endless succession of similar worlds, hold also the doctrine of an endless series of incarnations by which the great father was manifested for the improvement of erring mortals: and, since each of these exhibited him

Digitized by Google

him as being born upon earth, and since all who had lived in one world were held to be born again into another world, a system of eternal genealogies both of the god and of mankind and of the everlastingly reproduced universe itself formed a very prominent feature in the old theology of the gentiles. In allusion to such opinions, and in reference to the varied fortunes of the chief divinity of the Orgies, he is sometimes described as proclaiming himself in express terms to be the resurrection and the life.

6. But the Mysteries were not only employed to shadow out the story of the great father; they were used likewise for the purpose of exhibiting the mimic labours of his votaries. They, who were initiated, strove to represent in their own persons all that he had done and suffered: they professed, in this manner, to be made one with him: and, when they had undergone all that he had undergone, they then imagined themselves to become members of his body and to be absorbed as it were into his very essence. Agreeably to the calamities which their god had sustained, the aspirants commenced a painful march through a terrific darkness which represented the gloom of death and the grave. During this process, while many dreadful phantoms, the varied forms of the great father or his subordinate spirits, flitted before their eyes; they were shut up as prisoners in what was deemed a transcript of his coffin, and were said to pass under the same yoke as that which he had once sustained. Such was their allegorical death or sleep: but these multiplied horrors were not destined

Digitized by Google

tined to continue beyond a stated period. Suddenly, and when they least expected it, they emerged from the gloom of Tartarus into the ravishing light of Elysium. Bathed in a celestial lustre which streamed from a wondrous lambent flame, they moved free from all constraint, and beheld enraptured the glories presented to their eyes. They had passed through the narrow gate of Hades: they had been born again from the darkness of the grave into the pure light and life of open day: henceforth they became epoptæ, and professed to see things as they really were.

7. These rites and notions were the origin of much peculiar phraseology. As the initiated passed through a mystic door in their progress to light and liberty, and as that door was carefully closed by a proper officer against the intrusion of the profane; all who had passed it were styled *those within*, and all who were excluded were denominated *those without*: hence sprang the well-known distinction between *esoteric* or internal, and *exoteric* or external, doctrines; the latter of which might be communicated to the uninitiated, while the former were confined to the epoptæ alone. As the initiated were said to have died and to have been restored to a new life, they were viewed as *children of the resurrection*; while the profane, shut up in a thick darkness, were floundering in the miry clay of vice and ignorance and error. As the initiated were supposed to have their minds enlightened, and to experience a wonderful advancement in knowledge, by the process through

Digitized by Google

which they went; the Mysteries, which communicated such knowledge, were emphatically termed *Wisdom.* And, as the initiated were thought to be freed from every defect and every impurity; they were said to be made *perfect:* a term of such high import and so immediately connected with the Orgies, that the very word, which literally denotes *to be perfected,* is employed to denote *an initiating into the Mysteries;* while its derivatives, with strict consistency, are applied to the several persons and matters connected with those rites.

8. The aspirants frequently went through much more than mere fright in the course of their initiation. Their courage was tried both with fire, and with water, and with the sword. They underwent the most austere fasts, and submitted to the most painful bodily penances. Even their final exit into light and liberty was often attended with no small pain and difficulty. The rocky door or gate was occasionally made so narrow, that nothing but the most vehement striving and agonization could force their bodies through it. Yet, if they failed to accomplish the task, if they were unable to penetrate to the region of life and light, they were rejected as profane. Nor was the door alone narrow: the access to it was through a long and tortuous way or avenue, which was made so strait that the aspirant was compelled to crawl through it with no small pain upon his hands and knees.

9. In undergoing the process required of them, the aspirants were attended by an interpreting officer, who

Digitized by Google

who bore the name of *the hierophant.* This personage, from time to time, explained to them what they beheld; accompanied them through all the horrors of their mimic death; and, when he had conducted them to the illuminated region of Elysium, made them fully acquainted with all the recondite lore of the philosophical theology to which they had aspired.

10. It is no way necessary to my *present* purpose to inquire minutely whence these extraordinary speculations originated. They seem indeed to have sprung from traditions relative to the predicted seed of the woman, engrafted upon the successive histories of Adam and Noah; nor can there be any doubt, as it appears to me, that the gods of Paganism were in reality deified mortals astronomically worshipped in conjunction with the host of heaven: but this is of little moment, so far as we are *now* concerned with the opinions of the Gentiles. Though they adored as gods those who were no gods, and though they had changed the truth of the incorruptible God into a lye: still they taught and believed such things, as formed the subject of their Mysteries, respecting him whom they held, however erroneously, to be the supreme creative and moderative divinity of the universe. Their gods indeed were Demons, by which term they meant *hero-gods* who had once been incarnate and had played a part upon earth: but the chief of these Demons, who was thought to have descended from heaven, to have appeared in the likeness of mortal man, to have been born an infant

Digitized by Google

from the womb of a virgin, to have been murdered by an implacable serpentiform enemy, to have been inclosed in a coffin, to have risen from the dead on the third day, and to have at length triumphantly ascended to the realms of celestial splendor; the chief of these Demons, thus singularly characterized, was venerated by them (to adopt their own phraseology), as the sole self-originating king of the world unseen by men while he himself beholds all things, as having heaven for his throne and the earth for his footstool, as wrapt in clouds which render him invisible while he is the author of existence to the universe, as existing at the first when no other thing existed, as the great supreme first cause, as being that which is, as pervading and governing the whole world *. Misapplied as these attributes doubtless were to one, who by nature was no god; still, in themselves, they are plainly the attributes of the Supreme Being. The pagans therefore, in the celebration of their Mysteries, ascribed to him, whom *they* esteemed the Supreme Being, an incarnate birth from a virgin, a violent death at the hands of a bitter enemy, a resurrection on the third day, and an ascension to that heaven which he had quitted for the beneficent purpose of reforming a corrupt world. Such an ascription, no matter how it originated, is in itself *a naked fact;* established, as all other facts must be established, by the testimony of those who

* See Orph. Fragm. p. 357, 358. Gesn. and Asiat. Res. vol. i. p. 245.

were

Digitized by Google

were well acquainted with its existence: and this is quite sufficient for our present investigation *.

II. Of this description then was the doctrine taught, and the phraseology employed, in the ancient Mysteries. Hence, when a convert from the gentiles observed St. Paul for instance speaking of *a great* MYSTERY *of godliness*, he would naturally conclude that the apostle used the term in express reference to the Mysteries of the universal father: and of course every dogma, connected with those Mysteries, would thence immediately be brought to his recollection. We may now place ourselves in his situation: for, with the view which has been taken of the old Orgies, we shall be just as well prepared to judge, whether the word MYSTERY has been used by St. Paul and others of the inspired writers *accidentally* or *designedly*.

The obvious and natural method of ascertaining this point is to consider in their order the various passages wherein the term MYSTERY or plurally MYSTERIES occurs.

If upon inquiry we find, that the word is constantly used without the least perceptible allusion to the pagan Mysteries; we may then be sure, that it has been employed only *accidentally* or *generally*: that is to say, it has been employed much in the same manner as any modern English writer would employ it; to whom, as it was flowing from his pen,

* See this curious subject pursued at considerable length in my Orig. of Pagan Idol. book vi. c. 6.

the

Digitized by Google

the ancient Mysteries of the gentiles would never once occur. But, if on the contrary we find from the evident tenor of the context, that the word has been used with a palpable allusion to those extraordinary rites; and *that*, not in a solitary instance, but in every instance: then we may be morally sure, that the word in question has been employed *designedly* and *industriously*.

Our conclusion moreover will be greatly strengthened by another circumstance, should any such be discoverable.

If in certain passages we can discern a plain reference to the peculiarities of the Mysteries, where the word MYSTERY itself does *not* occur: we shall be yet more led to believe, that those rites *are* alluded to, where the word *does* occur.

But, if upon inquiry it should turn out that the Mysteries *are* alluded to; then they must be alluded to, as *affording an apt illustration* of the subject under discussion. If however they be alluded to for *this* purpose; then the allusion must plainly be to *the peculiar doctrines* which they inculcated, for in no other manner could they serve to *illustrate* any subject.

The persons, who use the term MYSTERY in the New Testament, are our Lord himself; his apostle Paul repeatedly, as writing in a more eminent manner to the gentiles; and his apostle John, not indeed so frequently as far as the mere letter is concerned, but with a perpetual context which renders his introduction of the word in a very high degree curious.

1. It

Digitized by Google

1. It may perhaps at the first appear not a little extraordinary, that our Lord, whose ministry was altogether confined to the Jews, should have thought proper to employ the word at all: for how should the children of Abraham understand an allusion to the pagan Mysteries, supposing any such allusion to be intended? When the gentiles were addressed, a reference to their own rites or customs might be natural enough: but with what propriety can we imagine, that a reference of this sort should be introduced into conversations with members of the house of Judah?

To understand the fitness of such an allusion, if indeed there be any such, we must consider the state of the Jews at the time of our Lord's ministry.

It has frequently been said, that, after the return from Babylon, this people scrupulously avoided all participation in the idolatrous rites of the gentiles. Now, even supposing the assertion to be true, we should not on that account have any proof of their *ignorance* of those rites: subjected as they had been to the Greeks, subject as they then were to the Romans, and conversing as they did from year to year with their brethren scattered as sojourners among the pagans when they resorted to Jerusalem at the times of the great festivals*; under such circumstances, they could scarcely be without some knowledge of their tendency and nature. But the

* See an enumeration of the various countries, through which the stranger Jews were dispersed, and in which dwelt the proselytes to their religion, in Acts ii. 5—11.

assertion

Digitized by Google

assertion is *not* true. Among the restored Jews indeed there was no public idolatry patronised by the government, as in the times antecedent to the captivity: but from the days of Antiochus Epiphanes to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, there was a numerous and powerful faction, which in every thing affected the Greek manners; and this Hellenising party were to a man idolaters *.

Hence the ethical philosophy of the Greeks was far from being unknown among the Jews: and hence our Lord, while delivering a purer system of morals, expressly refers to this philosophy, even when addressing a Hebrew audience. "Ye have "heard, that it hath been said, Thou shalt LOVE "thy neighbour, and HATE thine enemy: but I say "unto you, LOVE your enemies †." Christ reminds his hearers, *Ye have* HEARD this maxim: but whence, it may be asked, *had* they heard it? Certainly neither from the Law, nor yet from the Prophets: for the apophthegm occurs not in any part of the Old Testament. Still our Lord says, *Ye have* HEARD: and in good truth he reminded them of a maxim, which was perfectly familiar to them, though they had not received it from any of their own sacred writings. The maxim in question is built on that rule of contraries, which was so famous in the Aristotelian school. It taught, that, whatever was right in the case of one particular, the direct oppo-

* See Bp. Horsley's Hosea ii. 17. note m.
† Matt. v. 43, 44.

site

Digitized by Google

site was right in the case of the opposite particular. Thus, by such a rule which was made the basis of the Aristotelian ethics, it was argued, that, if it be right to LOVE our FRIENDS, it must also be right to HATE our ENEMIES. This plausible mode of reasoning fell in too well with Jewish prejudices, not to be readily adopted. But Christ, while he authoritatively sets it aside, proves by the very turn of his language how generally it had been admitted. The school however, whence it was received, was that of Aristotle, not that of Moses *.

With the philosophy of the Greeks was imported also their theology: and the Hellenizing Jews were as much tainted with the latter, as they were perverted by the former.

We may now therefore perceive, that, if our Lord should think fit to allude to the Mysteries, in the same manner as he alludes to the philosophy, of the pagans; he would be very far from speaking a language unintelligible to a Hebrew audience. They, who had readily adopted from the gentiles that doctrine of the Metempsychosis which constitutes so prominent a feature in the ancient Mysteries, could scarcely be altogether ignorant of what was taught in the Mysteries themselves †.

* I am indebted for this illustration to Dr. Tatham's Chart and Scale of Truth. vol. i. p. 339—342.

† See John ix. 1, 2, 3. If the Jews supposed that the man might have been born blind on account of *his own* sins, those sins must evidently have been committed by him during a *prior* state of existence.

These

Digitized by Google

These remarks will prepare us to inquire, whether there is any ground for believing, that Christ may have been pleased, in the way of illustration, to allude to the ancient Orgies of the pagan world.

(1.) Our Lord has used the word MYSTERY in two different passages.

The first of them has been recorded alike by Matthew and Mark and Luke, though most fully by Mark: and it exhibits the term, associated with some expressions highly deserving our attention.

At the close of the parable of the sower, Christ exclaims, "He that hath ears to hear, let him HEAR:" and afterwards, when his immediate disciples asked him in private for an interpretation of it, he said to them, "Unto you it is given to know the MYSTERY "of the kingdom of God; but unto them, that are "WITHOUT, all things are done in parables *."

What we are to understand by *the* MYSTERY or (as the word is plurally expressed by Matthew and Luke) *the* MYSTERIES *of God's kingdom*, I stop not now to inquire: at present I have only to consider the allusion with which Christ may be supposed to have employed the term. Precisely then after the manner of an ancient hierophant, our Saviour professes to reveal certain matters to those who were initiated into the MYSTERIES of God's kingdom, while they who were not initiated into them were shut out from the knowledge of those matters. Precisely too after the manner of an hierophant, he styles the un-

* Matt. xiii. 9, 11. Mark iv. 9, 11. Luke viii. 8, 10.

initiated

Digitized by Google

initiated *them that are* WITHOUT. And, adopting the very formula of invitation to the aspirants which was wont to be used by that officer, he addresses all whom it might concern, " He that hath ears to hear, " let him HEAR *." Now, when the very word MYSTERY is employed by Christ, both with certain additional phraseology and in a striking peculiarity of manner which exactly assimilate themselves to the phraseology and manner of the pagan Mysteries, it is difficult not to believe that he designedly alluded to those Mysteries.

The other passage, in which our Lord uses the word MYSTERY, is that wherein his apparition to St. John is described: and here also it occurs in connection with the precise language and ideas of the ancient Orgies.

" The MYSTERY of the seven stars which thou " sawest in my right hand †."

Here we have, what is styled a MYSTERY, and what Christ after the manner of a presiding hierophant undertakes to explain to his apostle. In connection, he speaks of himself, as *being the* FIRST-BEGOTTEN *of the* DEAD; as LIVING *though he had been previously* DEAD; as *having the* KEYS *of* HADES *and of* DEATH; as OPENING *and no man* SHUTTETH, *and as* SHUTTING *and no man* OPENETH; as *setting before the church of Philadelphia an* OPEN DOOR;

* Φθεγξομαι οἰς θεμις εστι· θυρας δ' επιθεσθε βεβηλοις
Πασιν ὁμως· συ δ' ΑΚΟΥΕ, φαεσφορε εγγονε μηνης
Μωσαι'——Orph. Fragm. p. 357. Gesn.

† Rev. i. 20.

as

Digitized by Google

as *standing at the* DOOR, *and knocking*; and as *granting to him, that* OVERCOMETH in those various preparatory trials which were analogous to the severe discipline that proved the courage and constancy of the aspirants, *to sit with him on his throne, even as he himself also* OVERCAME *and sat down with his father in his throne* *.

The whole of this is the identical phraseology of the Mysteries, though admirably applicable to the character and office of the Messiah.

(2.) But there are also various texts, in which our Lord not obscurely uses the language of the Orgies to illustrate the nature of his own mission, though he does not so directly refer us to them by employing the precise word MYSTERY.

Thus we often find him alluding to the STRAIT DOOR and NARROW AVENUE of initiation, through which the aspirants with no small difficulty forced their bodies; exhibiting himself, as the MASTER OF THE HOUSE or the HIEROPHANT; and, in that character, even nearly using the very formula of the Mysteries, BEGONE YE PROFANE, LET THE DOORS BE SHUT †.

" Enter ye in at the STRAIT GATE: for wide is " the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to de- " struction, and many there be which go in thereat; " because STRAIT is the GATE and NARROW is the " way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that

* Rev. i. 5, 18. ii. 7, 8, 20, 21.

† Εκας, εκας, εστε βεβηλοι. Θυρας δ' επιθεσθε βεβηλοις πασιν ὁμυ. Orph. Fragm. p. 357. Gesner.

" find

Digitized by Google

" find it*—SEEK, and ye shall FIND; KNOCK, and " it shall be OPENED unto you†—STRIVE to enter " in at the STRAIT GATE: for many, I say unto you, " will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. " When once the MASTER OF THE HOUSE is risen " up, and hath SHUT TO THE DOOR; and ye begin " to stand WITHOUT and to knock at the DOOR, say- " ing, Lord, Lord, OPEN unto us: he shall answer " and say unto you, DEPART FROM ME, ALL YE " WORKERS OF INIQUITY‡."

Thus again, in all the beauty of contrast, after touching upon those heavenly Mysteries which were revealed to mere babes while they were hidden from the self-named wise and illuminated, he alludes to the heavy YOKE of bondage, which the aspirants were said to bear in the course of their initiation, and which an ancient hierophant describes as the HEAVY blue CHAIN originally endured by the just man that was preserved in a wonderful ship at the time of the deluge§.

" I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and " earth, because thou hast HID these things from the " WISE and PRUDENT, and hast REVEALED them " unto BABES. No man KNOWETH the Son, but " the Father: neither KNOWETH any man the Fa- " ther, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son

* Matt. vii. 13, 14. † Luke xi. 9.

‡ Luke xiii. 24, 25, 27.

§ " The heavy blue chain didst thou, O just man, endure." Taliesin's Preiddeu Annwn. apud Davies's Mythol. of the Brit. Druids. p. 515.

" will

Digitized by Google

" will REVEAL him. Come unto me, all ye that " LABOUR and are HEAVY LADEN, and I will give " you REST. Take my YOKE upon you, and LEARN " of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye " shall find REST unto your souls. For my YOKE " is EASY, and my burden is light *."

Thus likewise he both speaks of himself and his disciples, and is also spoken of by his apostle John, in language directly borrowed from the splendid illumination, which greeted the ravished eyes of the epopt; when, after he had groped his darkling uncertain way through many tortuous passages, he at length emerged from Tartarean gloom, and prepared to hear the solemn inaugural lecture of the hierophant: and thus he places the true light, which it was his special office to communicate, in direct opposition to the spurious light of a false and simulated wisdom.

" In him was life; and the life was the LIGHT of " men. And the LIGHT SHINETH IN DARKNESS; " and the DARKNESS comprehended it not. That " was the TRUE LIGHT, which LIGHTETH every man " that cometh into the world †—This is the con-

* Matt. xi. 25, 27—30.

† John i. 4, 5, 9. It is observable, that St. John here claims for our Lord the identical title of the TRUE LIGHT which the epoptæ bestowed upon the artificial illumination of the greater Mysteries. Η ΤΟ ΦΩΣ ΤΟ ΑΛΗΘΙΝΟΝ, says the apostle of his divine Master: εκεινος εστιν ὁ αληθως φανος και το ΑΛΗΘΙΝΟΝ ΦΩΣ, says Plato in allusion to the light of the Mysteries. Orig. cont. Cels. lib. vii. p. 352.

" demnation,

Digitized by Google

" demnation, that LIGHT is come into the world;
" and men loved DARKNESS rather than LIGHT,
" because their deeds were evil. For every one,
" that doeth evil, hateth the LIGHT, neither cometh
" to the LIGHT, lest his deeds should be reproved.
" But he, that doeth TRUTH, cometh to the LIGHT,
" that his deeds may be made MANIFEST that they
" are wrought of God *—Yet a little while is the
" LIGHT with you: walk, while ye have the LIGHT,
" lest DARKNESS come upon you: for he, that walk-
" eth in DARKNESS, knoweth not whither he goeth.
" While ye have LIGHT, believe in the LIGHT, that
" ye may be the CHILDREN OF LIGHT. I am come
" a LIGHT into the world, that whosoever believeth
" in me should not abide in DARKNESS †—I am the
" LIGHT of the world: he, that followeth me, shall
" not walk in DARKNESS, but shall have the LIGHT
" of life ‡—Ye are the LIGHT of the world. Let
" your LIGHT so SHINE before men, that they may
" see your good works and glorify your Father which
" is in heaven §—The children of this world are in
" their generation wiser than the CHILDREN OF
" LIGHT ‖—God is LIGHT, and in him is no DARK-
" NESS at all. If we say that we have fellowship
" with him, and walk in DARKNESS, we lye and do
" not the truth; but, if we walk in the LIGHT, as he
" is in the LIGHT, we have fellowship one with ano-

* John iii. 19—21. † John xii. 35, 36, 46.
‡ John viii. 12. § Matt. v. 14, 16.
‖ Luke xvi. 8.

" ther,

Digitized by Google

" ther, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleans-
" eth ús from all sin *."

Thus again he reclaims to himself, as specially his own, a title with which the pagans decorated the god whom they revered in the Mysteries; for the being, venerated by the Hindoos as the supreme divinity, is represented as saying, *I am* IMMORTALITY, *I am the* RESURRECTION †: thus, in the very phraseology of an ancient hierophant, he mentions the resurrection from the dead as a figurative birth into a new state of existence: and thus both St. John and St. Paul speak in an exactly similar strain of their divine Master, the latter of them applying to him a remarkable mystical prophecy of David which might not at first appear to have any concern with his resurrection.

" I am the RESURRECTION and the LIFE ‡—
" They, which shall be accounted worthy to obtain
" that world and the RESURRECTION FROM THE
" DEAD, are the children of God, being the CHIL-
" DREN OF THE RESURRECTION §—Jesus Christ,
" THE FIRST BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD ‖—God
" RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, as it is also writ-
" ten in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, THIS
" DAY HAVE I BEGOTTEN THEE ¶."

Thus, in short, he perpetually employs the expressions PERFECT and PERFECTING to denote, either

* 1 John i. 6, 7.
† Gita apud Moor's Hind. Panth. p. 211.
‡ John xi. 25.
§ Luke xx. 35, 36.
‖ Rev. i. 5.
¶ Acts xiii. 30, 34.

his

Digitized by Google

his own accomplishment of his mission, or the introduction of his disciples into the Mysteries of his spiritual kingdom: terms, which were used just in the same sense by the Pagans to describe both the labours of the great father himself and the initiation of his votaries into the sacred Orgies *.

" Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today " and tomorrow, and the THIRD DAY I shall be " PERFECTED †."

Here *days* are mystically put for *years:* and, as the great father in the Orgies was thought to *rise from the dead* or to *be initiatively perfected* on the *third day;* so Christ, referring by way of illustration to those rites, says, that he also shall be *perfected* or *initiated* on the *third day* by really springing from the tomb.

" Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt " LOVE thy NEIGHBOUR and HATE thine ENEMY: " but I say unto you, Love your enemies. Be PER- " FECT, even as your Father which is in heaven is " PERFECT ‡."

* The words used by our Lord are the adjective τελειος and the verb τελειοω. Among the pagan Greeks τα τελη denote *the Mysteries themselves;* τελεω signifies to *celebrate the Mysteries;* τελειοω, *to initiate a person into the Mysteries:* τελειωσις, *an initiation;* τελειωτης, *an initiator* or *a hierophant;* τελεστικος, *appertaining to the Mysteries;* τελεστηριον, *a place where persons are initiated;* τελλη, *the rite of initiation;* αβλιλης, *one recently initiated;* αμυητος, *one who has not been initiated* or *a profane person;* ιεροφαντης, *a hierophant.*

† Luke xiii. 32. ‡ Matt. v. 43, 44, 48.

Digitized by Google

In this passage, after referring to the famous pagan rule of contraries, our Lord naturally goes on to allude to the pagan Mysteries. With such reference, he charges his audience, instead of seeking that vain initiative perfection by which the aspirants professed to become assimilated to the initiative perfection of the great father; he charges his audience, rather to court a solid perfection, even that perfection which characterizes their Father which is in heaven.

" I in them, and thou in me, that they may be " made PERFECT IN ONE. O righteous Father, the " world hath not KNOWN thee; but I have DE- " CLARED unto these thy name *."

When the aspirant was initiated or perfected, he claimed to know the great father as an epopt and to be henceforth even identified with him: our Lord promises somewhat similar privileges, in a much higher sense, to those who should be perfected or initiated into his divine religion.

" Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be PERFECT, " go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor. " But, when the young man heard that saying, he " went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. " Then said Jesus unto his disciples, It is easier for " a camel to go through THE EYE OF A NEEDLE, " than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of " God †."

Our Lord, having by way of trial unsuccessfully

* John xvii. 23, 25, 26. † Matt. xix. 21, 22, 23, 24.

proposed

Digitized by Google

proposed to a rich man a very painful test of his unwillingness to be perfected or initiated into the Mysteries of Christianity, remarks, after his departure, that it is easier for a camel to force its body through the eye of a needle than for an opulent person to force himself through the narrow gate which leads to heaven. Much has been said by different commentators respecting this curious passage: but our Saviour's use of the mystical word PERFECT in its immediate context may perhaps lead us to the right understanding of it. We are not to imagine, that it sets forth any *impossibility* of a rich man's entering into the kingdom of God: it only intimates, that his admission would cost him as vehement an effort of self-denial, as a protrusion of the aspirant's body through a sacred orifice in a rock was attended with considerable pain and labour and difficulty. Such narrow rocky passages have been used for the purpose of initiation in every part of the world from Hindostan to Britain: and we find them alluded to by Isaiah in close connection with the idolatrous worship of the ancient Israelites *. Now there is some reason to suppose, that an orifice of this description, which

* "The idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go "into THE HOLES OF THE ROCKS and into the (Mithratic) "CAVES of the earth for fear of the Lord. In that day a man "shall cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold to the moles "and to the bats, to go into THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCKS." Isaiah ii. 18, 19, 20, 21. They shall vainly fly for refuge to those sacred caverns and orifices, which had once been so necessary for the due administration of their superstitious rites.

Digitized by Google

was *threaded* (as it were) by the aspirants who squeezed themselves through it, was occasionally denominated *the needle's eye* *. To one of these well known apertures in the rocky vicinity of Jerusalem, perhaps in the environs of the mount of Olives once desecrated to the Mysteries of the Phenician great father and mother †, I think it probable that Christ referred. His disciples naturally expressed their surprize at the mention of so large an animal as a camel passing through such an orifice: but he plainly intimates to them, that he spoke only proverbially and that his words were not to be taken in their strict literal import. "With men this is im-"possible: but with God all things are possible."

2. Authorized by the practice of his divine Master, and writing in a special manner to the gentiles, St. Paul seems to delight (as it were) in illustrating what he treats of by the same allusion, so perpetual are his references to the ancient pagan Mysteries. After what has been already said, little more will be necessary than simply to adduce the passages.

(1.) Let us first notice those, in which the word MYSTERY itself is used by him.

The uninitiated were said to be BLINDED with

* One of these orifices in our own country bears the name of *St. Winifred's needle.* The old pagan appellation seems to have been retained, though all property in the mystic orifice was made over to a Popish saint. Instances of such transfers are far from being uncommon. St. Wilfrid likewise has his needle in Ripon minster.

† See 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

vice

Digitized by Google

vice and error, while the initiated were styled EPOPTÆ and AUTOPTÆ or those who clearly DISCERNED things as they really were.

" For I would not, brethren, that ye should be " ignorant of this MYSTERY, lest ye should be wise " in your own conceits; that BLINDNESS in part is " happened to Israel *."

The doctrines taught in the Mysteries were kept SECRET from the profane, and REVEALED only to the initiated.

" Now to him that is of power to stablish you ac- " cording to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus " Christ, according to the REVELATION of the " MYSTERY, which was kept SECRET since the world " began, but now is made MANIFEST; to God only " WISE be glory through Jesus Christ for ever †— " My speech and my preaching was not with en- " ticing words of man's WISDOM, but in demonstra- " tion of the Spirit and of power; that your faith " should not stand in the WISDOM of men, but in " the power of God. Howbeit we speak WISDOM " among them that are PERFECT" (or initiated into the truths of the Gospel); " yet not the WISDOM of " the world" (not the pretended wisdom of the Orgies) " nor of the princes of this world that come to " nought. But we speak the WISDOM of God in a " MYSTERY, even the HIDDEN WISDOM which God " ordained before the world unto our glory; which " none of the princes of this world KNEW ‡—The

* Rom. xi. 25. † Rom. xvi. 25, 26, 27. ‡ 1 Corin. ii. 4—8.

" MYSTERY,

Digitized by Google

" MYSTERY, which hath been HID from ages and " from generations, but now is made MANIFEST to " his saints: to whom God would MAKE KNOWN " what is the riches of the GLORY of this MYSTERY " among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the " hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every " man and teaching every man in all WISDOM, that " we may present every man PERFECT in Christ " Jesus *."

The aspirants, during initiation, were shut up in the mystic cell; and were thence said to be PRISONERS. Afterwards the DOOR was set open to them: and they were instructed by the hierophant in what was eminently termed WISDOM.

" For this cause I Paul, the PRISONER of Jesus " Christ for you Gentiles: if ye have heard of the " dispensation of the grace of God which is given " me to you-ward: how that by REVELATION he " made known unto me the MYSTERY (as I wrote " afore in few words, whereby when ye read ye may " understand my knowledge in the MYSTERY of " Christ), which in other ages was not MADE KNOWN " unto the sons of men, as it is now REVEALED unto " the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that " the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the

* Coloss. i. 26, 27, 28. Bp. Warburton clearly saw, whence the phraseology of this last text was borrowed; and, if of this text, certainly of other parallel ones. " The term MYSTERY," says he, " was borrowed from those famous rites of Paganism " so named; and it is applied with admirable justness." Div. Leg. book v. sect. 6. p. 191. 8vo. edit.

" same

Digitized by Google

" same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ
" by the Gospel: whereof I was made a MINISTER
" (or ministering hierophant) according to the gift
" of the grace of God given unto me by the effec-
" tual working of his power. Unto me, who am
" less than the least of all saints, is this grace given,
" that I should preach among the Gentiles the un-
" searchable riches of Christ; and to make all men
" SEE (clearly see, as epoptæ), what is the fellow-
" ship of the MYSTERY, which from the beginning
" of the world hath been HID in God, who created
" all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now
" unto the principalities and powers in heavenly
" places might be KNOWN by the Church the mani-
" fold WISDOM of God *—Praying always for all
" saints, and for me, that utterance may be given
" unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to
" make KNOWN the MYSTERY of the Gospel: for
" which I am an ambassador IN BONDS †."

In the Orgies it was taught, that, at the close of every great mundane system, the universal father sank into a profound SLEEP: whence, at the commencement of another system, he awoke; and then every person reappeared who had already appeared, and every event reoccurred which had already occurred, without the least CHANGE whatsoever. To

* Ephes. iii. 1—10.

† Ephes. vi. 18, 19, 20. In these passages, the literal circumstance of the Apostle's being then a prisoner at Rome gave him an opportunity of alluding to the incarceration of the Mysteries.

this

Digitized by Google

" seen my face in the flesh: that their hearts might
" be comforted, being knit together in love, and
" unto all riches of the full assurance of understand-
" ing, to the acknowledgment of the MYSTERY of
" God, even of the Father and of Christ; in whom
" are HID all the treasures of WISDOM and KNOW-
" LEDGE. And this I say, lest any man should
" beguile you with enticing words" (Take heed, that ye Gentile Colossians be not seduced into any participation of those pagan Mysteries to which I allude, but rather adhere to those holy Mysteries which I reveal to you). " Beware, lest any man spoil you
" through PHILOSOPHY and VAIN DECEIT" (even the spurious philosophy and deceitful wisdom of the Orgies), " after the tradition of men" (that tradition, which deduced the Mysteries from the very commencement of the world, and which made the great father the first archimage or hierophant), " after the
" rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For
" IN HIM" (not in mere pretence, as is the case with the simulated divine incarnate great father of the Orgies, but in him really and properly) " DWELL-
" ETH ALL THE FULNESS OF THE GODHEAD
" BODILY *—Let a man so account of us, as of the
" ministers of Christ, and STEWARDS of the MYSTE-
" RIES of God. Judge nothing before the time,
" until the Lord come, who will both BRING TO
" LIGHT THE HIDDEN THINGS OF DARKNESS, and
" will MAKE MANIFEST the counsels of the hearts †

* Coloss. ii. 1—4, 8, 9. † 1 Corin. iv. 1, 5.

" —Though

" —Though I understand all MYSTERIES and all " KNOWLEDGE, and have not charity, I am nothing. " When that which is PERFECT is come, then that " which is in part shall be done away. When I " was a CHILD, I spake as a child, I understood as " a child, I thought as a child: but, when I became " a MAN" (when I had been perfectly initiated into the Mysteries of Christianity), " I put away childish " things. For now we see by means (as it were) " of a mirror IN AN ENIGMA, but then face to " face *."

It was the doctrine of the Mysteries, that the great father was WEDDED to the great mother; and that from this ineffable MARRIAGE were produced both the inferior gods, the whole race of men, and the entire universe.

" For this cause shall a man leave his father and " mother, and shall be joined unto his wife; and " they two shall be one flesh. This is a great " MYSTERY: but I speak concerning CHRIST and " THE CHURCH †."

The language used in celebrating the Mysteries was a TONGUE UNKNOWN to the Greeks: and various words, such as *Conx*, *Om*, and *Pax*, were introduced; with the import of which they were wholly unacquainted, though it is now found that those terms have been borrowed from the Sanscrit doubtless through the medium of the Indo-Scythic Pelasgi ‡.

* 1 Corin. xiii. 2, 10, 11, 12. † Ephes. v. 31, 32.

‡ Diod. Bibl. lib. v. p. 322. Jamb. de Myster. sect. vii. c. 4. Asiat. Res. vol. v. p. 300.

" He,

Digitized by Google

this doctrine St. Paul refers, while yet he enforces the very reverse as a part of the Mystery of Christianity.

"The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second "man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, "such are they also that are earthy: and, as is the "heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. "And, as we have borne the image of the earthy, "we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood "cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth "CORRUPTION (a world liable, as it is pretended, "to an everlasting vicissitude of corruption and re-"novation) inherit INCORRUPTION. Behold, I "shew you a MYSTERY: we shall not all SLEEP, "but we shall all be CHANGED*."

In the Orgies, the epopts were thought to be UNITED in an ineffable manner to the great father: and, after various transmigratory revolutions, their souls were supposed to be absorbed into his soul; whence, at the commencement or during the continuance of each new world, they reissued, entered into bodies prepared for them, and acted their former parts over again.

"Having made KNOWN unto us the MYSTERY of "his will, according to his good pleasure, which he "hath purposed in himself; that, in the dispensation "of the fulness of times, he might GATHER TOGE-"THER IN ONE all things IN CHRIST, both which

* 1 Cor. xv. 47—51.

"are

" are in heaven, and which are on earth, even IN " HIM. Wherefore I cease not to give thanks for " you, making mention of you in my prayers; that " the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of " GLORY, may give unto you the Spirit of WISDOM " and REVELATION, in the KNOWLEDGE of him; " the eyes of your understanding being ENLIGHT- " ENED *."

The aspirants, during the process of initiation, passed through a narrow DOOR, which excluded the profane. Hence the former were termed THOSE WITHIN; and the latter, THOSE WITHOUT. To this door the persons about to be initiated were conducted by the presiding hierophant, who acted as the STEWARD or DISPENSER of the MYSTERIES. All the treasures of WISDOM were now opened to them. They were fully initiated or made PERFECT. Yet, in the phraseology of the Orgies, while receiving the lessons of their instructor, they were said to be recently-born CHILDREN.

" Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with " thanksgiving; withal, praying also for us, that " God would OPEN unto us a DOOR of utterance to " speak the MYSTERY of Christ, for which also I am " IN BONDS: that I may MAKE IT MANIFEST, as I " ought to speak. Walk in WISDOM toward THEM " THAT ARE WITHOUT †—For I would that ye " knew what great conflict I have for you, and for " them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not

* Ephes. i. 9, 10, 16, 17, 18. † Coloss. iv. 2—5.

" seen

" He, that speaketh in an UNKNOWN TONGUE, " speaketh not unto men but unto God; for no man " understandeth him: howbeit in the spirit he " speaketh MYSTERIES*."

(2.) Let us next observe the passages, in which, though St. Paul does not use the precise word MYSTERY, he yet manifestly alludes to the thing.

The various terms, which he employs in these passages, and which have already been sufficiently discussed, are a DOOR, ADVERSARIES who attempt to shut that door, THOSE WITHIN, THOSE WITHOUT, PERFECT, SUFFERINGS by which the aspirants were made perfect or were initiated, the MARK or PRIZE at which they aimed as the reward of all their toils and trials, the SLEEP OF DEATH in which the great father was said to be wrapped previous to his AWAKING at his resurrection and coming forth to the LIGHT of open day, DARKNESS, and CHILDREN OF LIGHT.

" A great DOOR and effectual is OPENED unto " me, but there are many ADVERSARIES †—When " I came to Troas to preach Christ's Gospel, a " DOOR was opened unto me of the Lord ‡—What " have I to do to judge THEM THAT ARE WITHOUT? " Do not ye judge THEM THAT ARE WITHIN §?— " Walk

* 1 Corin. xiv. 2. † 1 Corin. xvi. 9.

‡ 2 Corin. ii. 12. This DOOR, as we have already seen, he elsewhere immediately connects with the MYSTERY of Christ. Coloss. iv. 3.

§ 1 Corin. v. 12. The context shews, that the former are the pagans or those who have *not* been initiated into the Mysteries

" Walk honestly toward THEM THAT ARE WITH-
" OUT *—That I may know him and the power of
" his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffer-
" ings, being MADE CONFORMABLE UNTO HIS
" DEATH" (as the epoptæ professed themselves to be to the sufferings and death of the great father); " if by any means I might attain unto THE RESUR-
" RECTION OF THE DEAD: not as though I had
" already attained, either were already PERFECT;
" but, forgetting those things which are behind and
" reaching forth unto those things which are before" (as the aspirants disregarded their past trials, when the illuminated Elysium burst forth upon them), " I press toward the MARK, for the PRIZE of the
" high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us
" therefore, as many as be PERFECT, be thus
" minded †—Though he were a Son, yet learned he
" obedience by the things which he SUFFERED: and,
" being made PERFECT" (or being himself initiated for an example to his disciples, as the great father was said to have been the first that was initiated into his own Mysteries), " he became the author of
" eternal salvation unto all them that obey him ‡—
" By one offering he hath PERFECTED for ever them
" that are sanctified §—Ye were sometimes DARK-

teries of the Gospel, and that the latter are the Christians or those who *have* been initiated into those Mysteries. The Apostle elsewhere uses the phrase *them that are without* in immediate connection with *the Mystery of Christ*, thus fully establishing the nature of his allusion. See Coloss. iv. 3, 5.

* 1 Thess. iv. 12. † Philip. iii. 10—15.
‡ Heb. v. 8, 9. § Heb. x. 14.

" NESS,

Digitized by Google

" NESS, but now are ye LIGHT in the Lord: walk " as CHILDREN OF LIGHT. And have no fellow- " ship with the unfruitful works of DARKNESS, but " rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to " speak of those things, which are done of them IN " SECRET" (it is impossible for me to particularize those shameless obscenities, which, as you Ephesians well know, disgrace the pagan Mysteries): " but all " things, that are reproved, are made manifest by " the LIGHT: for whatsoever doth make manifest is " LIGHT. Wherefore he saith, AWAKE THOU THAT " SLEEPEST, and ARISE FROM THE DEAD; and " Christ shall give thee LIGHT *—Ye are all the " CHILDREN OF LIGHT, and the CHILDREN OF " THE DAY: we are not of the NIGHT nor of DARK- " NESS. Therefore let us not SLEEP, as do others; " but let us watch and be sober. For God hath not " appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by " our Lord Jesus Christ; who died for us, that, " whether we WAKE or SLEEP, we should live toge- " ther with him †."

(3.) This studious use both of the word MYSTERY and of all the peculiar TERMS employed in the celebration of the pagan Mysteries might in itself be amply sufficient to convince us, that St. Paul, in illustration of his subject, designedly alludes to those extraordinary rites which were so familiar to his gen-

* Ephes. v. 8, 11, 12, 13, 14. Towards the close of the chapter, the Apostle, still carrying on the allusion, styles the marriage of Christ and the Church A GREAT MYSTERY.

† 1 Thessal. v. 5, 6, 9, 10.

tile

Digitized by Google

tile converts. But it is highly worthy of observation, that he does not leave us merely to conjecture that such was his purpose, but expressly tells us that this was actually the case. Having spoken of himself and other ministers of Christ as being STEWARDS or HIEROPHANTS of God's MYSTERIES, and having intimated in the immediate context that the Lord at his advent will BRING TO LIGHT THE HIDDEN THINGS OF DARKNESS; he goes on explicitly to inform the Corinthians, that he HAS IN A FIGURE TRANSFERRED THESE THINGS TO HIMSELF AND TO APOLLOS FOR THEIR SAKES *.

The word here used denotes, in the original, *the employing of a rhetorical figure to illustrate a subject by alluding to something which bears a close analogy to it.* Now the matter to be illustrated was the character sustained by Paul and Apollos in the Church of Christ: and the thing, by which the apostle with strict propriety chooses rhetorically to illustrate it to certain gentile converts, is the character sustained by the dispensers of the Mysteries. The whole, as he tells us, is *a figure.* But, if it *be* a figure, and if the character of the two evangelists be *thus* illustrated; if what St. Paul had just before said was to be transferred in a figure to himself and Apollos, and if the expression used by him was *stewards of the Mysteries of God:* then it is impossible not to conclude, that the thing rhetorically employed by him for the illustration of his subject was the Mysteries of the pagans.

* 1 Corin. iv. 1—6.

III. Since

Digitized by Google

III. Since it has thus seemed good to the Holy Spirit to employ, in the way of illustration, the ancient Mysteries of Paganism, we shall not much wonder to find, that several of the old fathers distinctly perceived the allusion and thence very naturally adopted it into their own writings.

It may not be amiss to close the present part of the discussion by adducing a few instances.

1. The standing exhortation of Julius Firmicus, throughout the whole of his treatise on the errors of Gentilism, is, to turn from the spurious Mysteries of idolatry to the genuine Mysteries (or, as he styles them, Secrets) of Christianity.

" Meddle not," says he, " with the cymbal-cups " of the pagan hierophants; but drink the immortal " cup presented to you by the Saviour *. Adopt " not the formula of the Mystæ, *Hail O bridegroom,* " *hail O new light:* but view in Christ the real " light, the true bridegroom †. Say not with the " initiated, *We have found him, let us rejoice toge-* " *ther:* but rather rejoice, when you have discovered " the true way of salvation ‡. Speak not of a god " born out of a rock: our stone is one, even Christ §. " Whatsoever is useful for the purposes of edifica- " tion, Divine WISDOM teaches us from the SECRETS " (or MYSTERIES) of God ‖. You, O most sacred " emperors, it invites to the SECRETS of a venerable

* Jul. Firm. de error. prof. rel. p. 38. See also p. 36.
† Ibid. p. 38.
‡ Ibid. p. 6.
§ Ibid. p. 40, 41, 42.
‖ Ibid. p. 58.

" Law.

Digitized by Google

" Law. Look then to heaven with a pure mind and " a devoted conscience; expect assistance from " God; implore the holy Deity of Christ; and, for " the safety both of yourselves and of the world, " offer up spiritual victims to a really salutiferous " Divinity *."

2. Similar language is used by Origen, when disputing against his antagonist Celsus.

" My opponent," says he, " may mention as often " as he pleases THE HIDDEN DOGMA, as he chooses " to style the MYSTERY of the resurrection: but so " universally known throughout the world are the " birth of Christ from a virgin, his crucifixion, and " his resurrection, that it is idle to apply the name " A HIDDEN DOGMA to a tenet, which has now been " so generally published as to be known and derided " even by unbelievers †."

How familiar indeed such language was to this father, is additionally evinced by his studious introduction of it when he speaks of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

" Thou, that hast come to Christ (the true high- " priest, who with his own blood has rendered God " propitious to thee and has reconciled thee to the " Father), stick not in the mere blood of the flesh: " but rather learn the blood of the Word; and hear " himself declaring to thee, *This is my blood which* " *shall be shed for you for the remission of sins.*

* Jul. Firm. de error. prof. rel. p. 64.

† Origen. adv. Cels. lib. i.

Digitized by Google

" HE, WHO HAS BEEN INITIATED INTO THE MYS-
" TERIES, knows both the flesh and the blood of the
" Word of God *."

3. The same phraseology is employed also by Lactantius. After giving a summary of the opinions which he held, he proceeds in the following manner.

" This is the doctrine of the holy prophets, which
" we Christians follow; this is our WISDOM: which
" the votaries of idolatry and the advocates of a
" vain philosophy deride, because we are not wont
" to defend it in public. God however commands
" us to preserve his SECRET, after a HIDDEN man-
" ner, and within our own conscience; not to con-
" tend against those truly PROFANE persons, who
" attack his religion for the sake of merely indulging
" themselves in mockery. For our MYSTERY ought
" to be HID and COVERED as faithfully as possible,
" most of all by us who bear the name of faith †."

4. Of a similar description again is the language used by Tertullian. The Christians of his day had been accused by their heathen persecutors of polluting, what were esteemed the Mysteries of their religion, by obscenity and infanticide. Doubtless the rite alluded to was the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; which was administered to none but the faithful, while mere catechumens or accidental intruders were directed to leave the church. Now

* Origen in Levit. Hom. ix.
† Lactant. Instit. lib. vii. § 26.

against

Digitized by Google

against this accusation Tertullian defends himself and his brethren in the following terms.

" If we always celebrate our higher rites in secret, " how came our practice to be publickly known? " Would the guilty impeach themselves? Certainly " not: since, even from the very formula, the fidelity " of silence is due to ALL MYSTERIES. Such is the " case with THE ORGIES OF SAMOTHRACE AND " ELEUSIS: how much more then with THOSE MYS- " TERIES, which, if betrayed, must needs provoke " both human and divine animadversion. But, " since it cannot be supposed that the guilty would " impeach themselves, THOSE WITHOUT must be " their accusers. Here I may fairly ask, how came " THOSE WITHOUT to be so well acquainted with " our proceedings? It is well known, that PIOUS " INITIATIONS ALWAYS EXCLUDE THE PRO- " FANE*."

5. But in a peculiarly eminent degree does Clement of Alexandria delight to indulge himself in allusions to the ancient Orgies.

" Whatsoever is blind and devoid of scriptural " intelligence, which the Saviour alone can bestow, " ought to stand WITHOUT the divine choir, just as " a PROFANE person is circumstanced in the cele- " bration of THE MYSTERIES. Wherefore THE " LAYING UP OF A SACRED DISCOURSE in the " ADYTUM of TRUTH, for the purpose of CONCEAL- " MENT, is that, which the Egyptians mean by

* Tertull. Apol. c. vii.

 " what

" what are called CELLS for initiation, and which " the Hebrews mean by being within the veil: for " none are allowed to enter into such places, except " those who have been previously CONSECRATED. " As for those, who rashly and impudently approach, " to them the MYSTERIES are not REVEALED *. " Among the pagans it has ever been thought unlaw- " ful to unfold the MYSTERIES to the PROFANE. " Hence arose the distinction between doctrines " ESOTERIC and doctrines EXOTERIC. Moreover " the philosophical inventors of the MYSTERIES ob- " scured their tenets with fables, that they might " not be manifest to all: and thus, concealing their " opinions, prevented the unlearned from penetrat- " ing into them. It was in allusion to such prac- " tices, that the divinely-inspired apostle wrote to " the Ephesians: By REVELATION HE MADE " KNOWN UNTO ME THE MYSTERY (as I wrote " afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye " may understand my knowledge in the MYSTERY " of Christ), which in other ages was NOT MADE " KNOWN unto the sons of men, as IT IS NOW RE- " VEALED unto the holy apostles and prophets by " the Spirit. There is likewise a certain KNOW- " LEDGE enjoyed by THE PERFECT, concerning " which he speaks when writing to the Colossians: " We cease not to pray for you, that ye might be " FILLED with the KNOWLEDGE of his will in all " WISDOM and spiritual understanding; that ye

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. p. 555.

" might

Digitized by Google

" might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,
" being fruitful in every good work and increasing
" in the KNOWLEDGE of God. And again he says:
" According to the dispensation of God, which is
" given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;
" even THE MYSTERY which hath been HID from
" ages and from generations, but now is MADE
" MANIFEST to his saints: to whom God would
" MAKE KNOWN what is the riches of the glory of
" this MYSTERY among the Gentiles. Wherefore
" there are other MYSTERIES, which were HIDDEN
" until the time of the apostles, and which have
" been HANDED DOWN by them as they RECEIVED
" from the Lord; that is to say, HIDDEN during the
" continuance of the old covenant, but now MANI-
" FESTED to the saints. Moreover an initiation is
" styled AN ILLUMINATION; because, as soon as
" the hierophant opens the cover of the sacred ark,
" those things become MANIFEST, which before
" were HIDDEN *. Hence says the apostle: I
" know, that, coming to you, I shall come in the
" fulness of the blessing of Christ. In this passage,
" he would speak of the fulness of Christ according
" to the REVELATION of the MYSTERY which had
" been HID from ages of eternity, but which was
" now MANIFESTED by the prophetic writings ac-
" cording to the command of the everlasting God,

* He alludes to the ark or boat or navicular coffin, within which the mystically dead great father was inclosed and set afloat on the lake of Hades.

" who

Digitized by Google

" who for the obedience of faith has been MADE " KNOWN to all nations. That is, to those out of " the nations, who have believed in him: for to a " few only are REVEALED those things which are in " MYSTERY. Plato therefore well remarks, that we " ought to speak of God in ENIGMAS; so that, if a " book on the subject should be found either by sea " or by land, he who read it should not understand " it *."

It

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. v. p. 574—579. The same idea is briefly advanced by Bp. Stillingfleet.

" St. Peter," says he, " speaks thus to the dispersed Jews. " *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we* " *made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus* " *Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.* The power " and coming of Christ, which the apostle speaks of, was not, " as some improbably conceive, either his general coming to " judgment upon the world, or his particular coming upon the " nation of the Jews; but by an hendyades, by his power and " coming is meant his powerful appearance in the world, " whereby he mightily discovered himself to be the Son of " God. Now this, saith the apostle, was no σεσοφισμενος μυθος, " not like the heathen mythology concerning the παρουσιαι and " επιφανειαι of their gods among them; which were so fre- " quently believed among them, that Dionysius Halicarnas- " sèus condemns the Epicureans, because they did deride τας " επιφανειας των θεων *the appearances of their gods in the world.* " Now, saith the apostle, assure yourselves this is no such ap- " pearance of a god on earth, as that among the heathens was: " for, saith he, we ourselves, who declare these things, were " εποπται, we fully understood this μεγα μυστηριον, this *great* " *mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh;* for we saw " his μεγαλειοτης, that *great majesty which attended him in all* " *which*

Digitized by Google

It were easy to multiply similar passages from this writer: but what have been adduced both from him and

" *which he spake or did;* we saw all these μεγαλεια του Θεου, *the* " *great things of God* which were manifest in him, all those " miraculous operations which were wrought by him. There- " fore, as this was a great confirmation of the faith of the " apostles themselves, that they saw all these things: so, we " see, it was of great concernment to the world in order to " their belief that the Gospel was no cunningly devised fable, " in that it was delivered by such who were εποπται, *eye-wit-* " *nesses* of what they declared." Orig. Sacr. book ii. c. 9. § XIII.

The bishop is perfectly right in his observation, that the terms used by the apostle in this passage, μυθοις and παρουσιαν and εποπται, are all terms employed in the pagan Mysteries: and there cannot, I think, be a doubt, that he is designedly contrasting the real Avatar or incarnate descent of Christ with the pretended Avatars or incarnate descents of the heathen gods, and the genuine hierophantic office of the evangelical epopts with the spurious hierophantic office of the pagan epopts. From this contrast, the important result necessarily follows, that Christ was *truly* what the heathen divinities were *falsely alleged* to be, AN INCARNATE DESCENT OF THE GODHEAD: for, unless this be allowed, the apostle's allusion to the Mysteries is plainly quite beside the mark; there is no sort of similitude between the illustration and the thing illustrated.

Bp. Warburton thinks it strange, that the early Christian fathers should so studiously and formally transfer the terms, phrases, rites, ceremonies, and discipline, of the Mysteries into our holy religion. This had often been observed: and the general mode of accounting for the circumstance is, that such a plan was adopted by way of insensibly alluring the pagans from Heathenism to Christianity. But the matter cannot be thus satisfactorily explained; because we find the very same studied allusion to the Mysteries even in the New Testament itself,

previous

Digitized by Google

and from others are amply sufficient to shew, in what manner the early fathers understood the scriptural use

previous to its occurrence in the writings of the fathers. The *fact* however of this allusion is excellently stated by Casaubon, whatever may be thought of the *reason* which he assigns for it.

" Pii patres, quum intelligerent quo facilius ad veritatis " amorem corruptas superstitione mentes traducerent, et verba " sacrorum illorum quam plurima in suos usus transtulerunt; " et cum doctrinæ veræ capita aliquot sic tractarunt, tum ritus " etiam nonnullos ejusmodi instituerunt: ut videanter cum " Paulo dicere gentibus voluisse, ἃ ἀγνοουντες ευσεβειτε, ταυτα " παραγγελλομεν ὑμιν. Hinc igitur est, quod sacramenta patres " appellârunt *mysteria*, μυησεις, τελεταϛ, τελειωσεις, εποπτειας sive " επωψειας, τελεσϛηρια; interdum etiam οργια, sed rarius: peculi- " ariter vero eucharistiam τελετων τελετην. Dicitur etiam anto- " nomasticè το μυσϛηριον aut numero multitudinis τα μυσϛηρια. " Apud patres passim de sacra communione leges φρικτα " μυσϛηρια vel το ευπορρητον μυσϛηριον; Gregorio Magno, *magnum* " *et pavendum mysterium.* Μυεισθαι in veterum monumentis " sæpe leges pro *coenæ dominicæ fieri particeps*; μυησιν, pro " ipsa actione; μυσϛης est sacerdos, qui etiam dicitur ὁ μυσϛαγω- " γων et ὁ ἱεροτελεσϛης. In liturgiis Græcis et alibi etiam ἡ ἱερα " τελετη et ἡ κρυφια και επιφοβος τελετη est eucharistia. Quemad- " modum autem gradus quidem in mysteriis paganicis servati " sunt, sic Dionysius universam των τελεων την ἱερουργιαν, tradi- " tionem sacramentorum, distinguit in tres actiones, quæ et ri- " tibus et temporibus erant divisæ: prima est καθαρσις, *purgatio*; " altera μυησις, *initiatio*; tertia τελειωσις, *consummatio*, quam et " εποψιαν sæpe nominat. Spem meliorem morientibus attulisse " mysteria Attica dicebat paulo ante M. Tullius. Patres " contra, certam salutem et vitam æternam Christi mysteria " digne percipientibus afferre, confirmabant: qui illa contem- " nerent, servâri non posse: finem vero et fructum ultimum " sacramentorum θεωσιν, *deificationem*, dicere non dubitârunt, " quum scirent vanarum superstitionum autores, suis epoptis " eum

Digitized by Google

use of the word MYSTERY. They plainly supposed, a point indeed abundantly evident, that, whenever the

" eum honorem audere spondere. Passim igitur legas apud " patres, της ἱερας μυσταγωγιας τελος ειναι θειωσιν, finem sacramen- " torum esse, ut qui vera fide illa perciperent in futura vita dii " evadant. Athanasius verbo θεοποιεισθαι in eam rem est usus; " quod mox ab eodem explicatur, *participatione Spiritus con-* " *jungimur Deitati.* De symbolis sacramentorum, per quæ " divinæ illæ ceremoniæ celebrantur, nihil attinet hoc loco " dicere; illud vero, quod est et appellatur fidei symbolum, " diversi est generis, et fidelibus tesseræ usum præstat, per " quam se mutuo agnoscant, qui pietati sacramento dixerunt; " cujusmodi tesseras fuisse etiam in paganorum mysteriis os- " tendimus. Formulæ illi in mysteriis peragendis usurpatæ, " *Procul este profani,* respondet in liturgia hæc per diaconos " pronunciari solita: ὁσοι κατηχημενοι προελθετε, vel εξω περιπατειτε " ὁσοι ενεργημενοι ὁσοι αμυητοι; *omnes catechumeni foras discedite,* " *omnes possessi, omnes non initiati.* Noctu ritus multi in mys- " teriis peragebantur; noctu etiam initiatio Christianorum " inchoabatur: Gaudentio nominatur *splendidissima nox vigi-* " *liarum.* Quod autem dicebamus de silentio in sacris oper- " taneis servari a paganis solito, id institutum veteres Christiani " sic probarunt, ut religiosa ejus observatione mystas omnes " longe superarint. Quemadmodum igitur dicit Seneca, sanc- " tiora sacrorum solis initiatis fuisse nota; et Jamblichus de " philosophia Pythagoreorum in τα αποῤῥητα, quæ efferri non " poterant, et τα εκφορα, quæ foras efferre jus erat: ita univer- " sam doctrinam Christianam veteres distinguebant in τα εκφορα, " id est, *ea quæ enunciari apud omnes poterant,* et τα αποῤῥητα, " *arcana temere non vulganda.* Τα δογματα, inquit Basilius, " σιωπαται· τα δε κηρυγματα δημωσιευεται. Chrysostomus de iis " qui baptizantur pro mortuis: *Cupio quidem perspicuè rem di-* " *cere, sed propter non initiatos non audeo: hi interpretationem* " *reddunt nobis difficiliorem, dum nos cogunt, aut perspicue non* " *dicere, aut arcana quæ taceri debent apud ipsos efferre.*

" Atque

the inspired authors employed it, they did so with a studied allusion to the ancient MYSTERIES of Paganism.

SECTION II.

On the use of the word Mystery, with a special reference to the text which speaks of the Mystery of godliness, as directly establishing the true doctrine of our Lord's nature.

IT having been now ascertained, that, whenever Christ and the inspired writers of the New Testament use the word MYSTERY, they use it with a direct and studied allusion to the ancient Mysteries of paganism; we might fairly conclude, that, when the apostle Paul speaks of *the* MYSTERY *of godliness*, he likewise speaks with the same reference to the old Orgies: for it were strangely contrary to analogy, if we were to suppose, that, while the word MYSTERY

" Atque ut ἐξορχεισθαι τα μυστηρια dixerunt pagani, de iis qui " arcana mysteriorum evulgabant; ita dixit Dionysius, *Vide* " *ne enuncies aut parum reverenter habeas sancta sanctorum.* " Passim apud Augustinum leges, *Sacramentum quod norunt* " *fideles.* In Johannem tract. xi. autem sic. *Omnes catechu-* " *meni jam credunt in nomine Christi, sed Jesus non se credit eis.* " Mox, *Interrogemus catechumenum, Manducas carnem filii* " *hominis? nescit quid dicimus.* Iterum, *Nesciunt catechumeni* " *quid accipiant Christiani: erubescant ergo, quia nesciunt.*" Casaub. Exercit. xvi. in Annal. Baron. apud Warb. Div. Leg. book ii, sect. 4. note Q.

has

Digitized by Google

has been shewn to have such a reference in every other place where it occurs, in this place alone it has *not* such a reference. That nothing however may be taken for granted, let us now consider the remarkable passage, wherein St. Paul expatiates upon *the great* MYSTERY *of godliness*, in connection with the general tenor of the epistle which contains it: that so we may fully satisfy ourselves, whether here also the term has not been employed in immediate allusion to the gentile Mysteries.

I. The epistle itself is addressed to Timothy, the first bishop of the Ephesians. Hence, as St. Paul is writing to the prelate of a gentile Church, and as in another epistle addressed to the collective members of that Church he repeatedly alludes to the pagan Mysteries; the natural presumption is, that in each epistle the word MYSTERY is used with the same reference: for he would scarcely employ the term allusively to the Mysteries in a letter written collectively to the Ephesians, and yet employ it without any such intentional allusion in a letter written specially to their bishop.

1. To establish the peculiar propriety of the opinion, that the sacred writers used the word MYSTERY in reference to the pagan Mysteries, so far as it respects the two epistles to the Ephesians and their bishop; we have only to consider the nature of the superstition, which so eminently prevailed at Ephesus.

The deity worshipped in that city was the great mother under the name of *Artemis* or *Diana*.

This

Digitized by Google

This was the Diana Multimammia: and the mode, in which the goddess was represented with numerous distended breasts, aptly shadowed out the character which she sustained in the established theology. She was accounted the general parent both of gods, and of men, and of all things: she was venerated, as the consort of the great father: and, as he was thought to float upon the surface of the chaotic ocean during the period which intervenes between each two successive worlds; she was esteemed a maritime divinity, who presided over navigation and under whose auspices the seaman might hope to accomplish his voyage in safety. With respect to her personality, she was the same as the western Venus, the Phenician Astoreth, the Syrian Atargatis, the Egyptian Isis, and the Indian Isi or Cali. A notion prevailed, that her statue venerated at Ephesus had fallen from heaven; which is plainly a tale of an exactly similar nature and import, as that of the egg of Atargatis dropping from the Moon into the waters of the Euphrates. The Moon in fact was a form of the goddess herself: but then it was mystically said to be that floating Moon or crescent-like boat; within which, as within a coffin, her murdered consort was inclosed in the shews of the Orgies, and consigned to the waters of the consecrated infernal lake. Out of this Moon he was thought to have been born again, or to have experienced a wonderful resurrection from the dead; and, as Diana herself was no other than this identical

Digitized by Google

tical Moon of Hades, she was revered in her infernal character as Brimo or Hecatè or Proserpine.

Now the pagan Mysteries, as we have already seen, directly treated of the varied fortunes of him; who was adored, as being at once the consort of this goddess and the supreme divine creator of heaven and earth. Descending periodically from the celestial regions to purify and reform a corrupt race, he was throughout the east believed to have been born an infant from the womb of a virgin, to have taken upon himself the form of a man though in truth the greatest of the gods, to have been an universal benefactor during his sojourn in this world, to have been cruelly murdered by a malignant enemy, to have been inclosed within a coffin and to have descended into Hades, to have remained in a state of death and invisibility during the space of three days calculated after the oriental manner, to have returned from Hades and to have risen from the dead on the third day, to have triumphed over the foe by whose machinations he was slaughtered, and at length to have ascended from the summit of a lofty mountain to his native heaven.

Such was, and still is throughout pagan Asia, the character of the great father. This personage was ever venerated conjointly with Isis or Astoreth or Diana. And it was in honour of him and his allegorical consort, that the gentile Mysteries were celebrated. Hence it is obvious, that, in an epistle either to the Ephesians or their bishop, any allusion

Digitized by Google

to such Mysteries would be both strictly appropriate and readily understood.

2. Let us inquire then, on the same principles that the discussion has hitherto been conducted, what evidence there is for the existence of an allusion to the pagan Mysteries in the first epistle to the Ephesian bishop Timothy.

(1.) At a very early period of the Church, an attempt was made by various oriental heretics to ingraft Christianity upon the stock of Paganism: and the effects of this attempt are still sensibly felt throughout the East. The Messiah was identified with the great father of gentile adoration: and his appearance upon earth was pronounced to be only one of the innumerable descents of their fabulous divinity, from whom was deduced an endless series of mundane genealogies. Against this gross though plausible error, St. Paul, at the very commencement of his letter, solemnly warns his son Timothy.

" As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus " when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest " CHARGE SOME THAT THEY TEACH NO OTHER " DOCTRINE, NEITHER GIVE HEED TO MYTHOLO- " GICAL TALES* AND ENDLESS GENEALOGIES, " which minister speculative inquiries rather than " the economy † of God which is in faith: so do.

Now

* Gr. μυθοις.

† Gr. οικονομιαν. This term the fathers use to describe the Mystery of Christ's existence as the second person of the Godhead. Thus Tertullian: " Simplices enim quique, ne " dicam

" Now the end of the commandment is charity out
" of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith
" unfeigned: FROM WHICH SOME, HAVING SWERVED,
" HAVE TURNED ASIDE TO A VAIN DISCOURSE *;
" desiring to be TEACHERS of the law, understanding
" neither what they say, nor concerning what things
" they confidently affirm †."

(2.) The apostle then states what is to be received as the genuine doctrine of the Gospel, the real initiatory DISCOURSE of a Christian hierophant, in opposition to the VAIN DISCOURSE of those paganizing heretics who would so grievously pervert it.

" This is a faithful DISCOURSE and worthy of all
" acceptation, that JESUS CHRIST CAME INTO THE
" WORLD" (not a pretended great father, but the Messiah himself) " to save sinners. Now unto the
" king eternal, immortal, invisible, THE ONLY WISE
" GOD, be honour and glory for ever and ever.
" THIS CHARGE I commit unto thee, son Timothy,
" according to the prophecies which went before on
" thee" (not according to those mythologic tales and

" dicam imprudentes et idiotæ quæ major semper credentium
" pars est, quoniam et ipsa regula fidei a pluribus diis sæculi
" ad unicum et verum Deum transfert; non intelligentes uni-
" cum quidem sed cum sua OECONOMIA esse credendum, expa-
" vescunt ad OECONOMIAM." Tertull. ad Prax. sect. iii. p. 502.

* Gr. Ματαιολογιαν. The initiatory discourse of the hierophant was termed Λογος: the apostle well denominates it Ματαιολογια.

† 1 Tim. i. 3—7.

" endless

Digitized by Google

endless genealogies which are now brought forward), " that thou by them" (not by pagan fictions) " mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a " good conscience, which some having put away " concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom " is Hymenèus and Alexander; whom I have deli- " vered unto Satan, that they may learn not to " BLASPHEME *."

(3.) As St. Paul had just before warned Timothy against MYTHOLOGIC TALES and ENDLESS GENEALOGIES, the context necessarily shews, that it was by turning to such fancies that Hymenèus and Alexander had made shipwreck concerning the faith. Accordingly, in the second epistle to the Ephesian bishop he distinctly specifies the nature of their heresy; insinuating at the same time, that, however these perverse mystæ might deem all others PROFANE, such a term ought rather to be applied to their own whimsical speculations.

" Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of " David WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD according " to my gospel" (not according to the theory borrowed from the Mysteries): " wherein I suffer " trouble as an evil-doer, even UNTO BONDS; but " the DISCOURSE of God is NOT BOUND. This is " THE FAITHFUL DISCOURSE" (let it not be corrupted to the VAIN DISCOURSE of a pagan hierophant): " IF WE BE DEAD WITH HIM, WE SHALL " ALSO LIVE WITH HIM. Of these things put

* 1 Tim. i. 15, 17—20.

" them

Digitized by Google

" them in remembrance, charging them before the " Lord not to contend about DISCOURSES, which " are of no profit but to the subverting of the " HEARERS" (Regard not thou therefore the invitation of the pagan formula, HEAR). " But shun PRO- " FANE * and vain babblings" (namely those mythologic tales and endless genealogies, to which I alluded in my former epistle): " for they will increase " unto more ungodliness. And the DISCOURSE re- " specting them will eat as doth a canker: of whom " is Hymenèus and Philetus, who concerning the " truth have erred, saying, that THERE HAS AL- " READY BEEN A RESURRECTION, and subvert the " faith of some †."

Here we find, that the mythologic tales advocated by these heretics involved the doctrine of A RETROSPECTIVE RESURRECTION. Now this was the identical doctrine taught in the Mysteries. There has *already* (such was the favourite speculation of the Gentiles) been an endless series of worlds, as there will hereafter be an endless series. The great father has *already* become incarnate innumerable times; has *already* been slain; and has *already* been raised from the dead at each of his manifestations. In each new world those have reappeared, who had lived and died in a former world. THERE HAS

* Gr. βεβηλους, the very word used in the Orgies to describe the uninitiated.

† 2 Tim. ii. 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18.

Digitized by Google

ALREADY BEEN A RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD.

(4.) Further light is thrown upon the nature of that heresy, to which some of the Ephesian converts were so strongly addicted, by the name which the apostle has thought fit to bestow upon it. He calls it BLASPHEMY: speaking of Hymenèus and Philetus, he says, *that they may learn not to* BLASPHEME.

Now a very common sense of BLASPHEMY in the New Testament is APOSTATE IDOLATRY: that is to say, *an ascription to false deities of that worship and character, which belong only to the Supreme Being.* Thus, when Jesus of his own authority forgave sins, "the scribes," rightly deeming that he claimed to himself the honours of divinity; "said "within themselves, This man BLASPHEMETH *." Thus, again, when he declared "I and my Father "are one," the Jews, still very naturally under the same impression, prepared to stone him, which was the punishment specially appointed under the Law for IDOLATRY †: and, when our Lord remonstrated with them, their answer was this; "For a good "work we stone thee not, but for BLASPHEMY, and "BECAUSE THAT THOU BEING A MAN MAKEST "THYSELF GOD ‡." And thus the municipal governor of Ephesus styles a denegation of worship to

* Matt. ix. 2, 3.
† Levit. xx. 2. Deut. xiii. 10. xvii. 5.
‡ John x. 30—33.

Diana,

Digitized by Google

Diana, and an ascription of it to another person in opposition to her, A BLASPHEMING *of that deity**.

If then the heresy of the *Christian* converts Hymenèus and Philetus was of such a nature as justly to subject them to the charge of BLASPHEMY, they must have transferred to some other being the veneration due to Christ. And this, I take it, was the precise crime, of which they were guilty; a crime, which (the apostle well says) "eats as doth a canker;" a crime however, which rapidly spread to the utmost limits of Asia, and which still flourishes throughout the East in baneful luxuriancy. Observing in many points a resemblance between the character of Christ and that of the great father, they contended, that our Lord was the great father himself in one of his numerous incarnations, and thence transferred to an idol of paganism the honour due to the Saviour of mankind.

This was their BLASPHEMY: and to it Clement of Alexandria alludes in a very pointed manner.

After observing that many useful moral doctrines might be collected from the philosophy of the Gentiles, he goes on to say, in reference to their filiation of one god from another and to their celebrated tenet of a demiurgical triad of deity: "This philosophy "treats not of the Son of God nor of the economy "which is according to foreknowledge, in the same "manner that we do; for it is unacquainted with "the genuine worship of the Divinity. Wherefore

* Acts xix. 37.

 "those

" those heresies, WHICH ARE FASHIONED UPON " THE MODEL OF THE BARBARIC PHILOSOPHY, " though they speak of one God, and though they " affect to venerate Christ, yet do it only IN PRE- " TEXT and not IN REALITY: for they have disco- " vered ANOTHER GOD, and RECEIVE NOT CHRIST " AS THE PROPHECIES HAVE DECLARED HIM *."

Here Clement adopts and illustrates the language used by St. Paul in his epistle to Timothy. The apostle declares Christ to him ACCORDING TO THE PROPHECIES: and intimates, that the heresy of Hymenèus and Philetus and Alexander originated from their not attending to the scriptural mode of revealing the Saviour †. This led to their BLASPHEMY; which consisted, as Clement speaks, in their venerating Christ ONLY IN PRETEXT and NOT IN REALITY.

It is worthy of observation, that St. Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, yet *more* pointedly alludes to the heresy, which Clemens describes, as setting forth ANOTHER God, and as not receiving Christ agreeably to the prophetic declarations.

Censuring one of those semi-pagan teachers, who, like Hymenèus and Alexander, preached a heresy, fashioned (as Clemens speaks) upon the model of the barbaric or eastern philosophy, and proclaiming the Messiah to be only one of the numerous incarnations of the great father; the apostle expresses him-

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vi. p. 675.

† 1 Tim. i. 18—20.

self

Digitized by Google

self in the following remarkable terms. "I fear, "lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve "through his subtilty, so your minds should be "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. "For, if he that cometh preacheth ANOTHER Jesus "whom we have NOT preached, or if ye receive, "ANOTHER Spirit which ye have NOT received, or "ANOTHER Gospel which ye have NOT accepted;" in good sooth, "well might ye bear with him*." This passage is the very counterpart to that, which I have cited from Clemens: and the two mutually explain each other. The stigmatized heresy, it appears, set forth ANOTHER Jesus or the incarnate great father, ANOTHER Spirit or the soul of the world preached by the early paganizing Gnostics, and ANOTHER Gospel or a spurious volume modelled according to the fancies of the barbaric theology. Each of these they had NOT received from the apostle: each therefore was DIFFERENT from those, preached by the apostle †.

(5.) Having thus borne his testimony against the paganizing heresy which had started up in the church of Ephesus, and having briefly stated what alone was to be received as the faithful initiatory DISCOURSE of a Christian hierophant; St. Paul goes on to set forth more at large the nature of that DISCOURSE, still in opposition to that VAIN DISCOURSE

* 2 Cor. xi. 3, 4.

† See my Horæ Mosaicæ. book ii. sect. 2. chap. 2. § I, II. 2d Edit.

of

Digitized by Google

of his opponents which would exhibit our Lord as one with the great father of the Mysteries.

" God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, " and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. " For there is one God, and one mediator between " God and men :" and this mediator is not the fabled middle god of the pagan triads, but " the man " Christ Jesus ;" neither is this unity of God the demiurgic unity set forth in the Mysteries as the Supreme Being, but the spiritual and unsexual Jehovah. The sole mediator, I say, is " the man " Christ Jesus ; who gave himself a ransom for all, " to be testified in due time. To which I have been " appointed A HERALD," far unlike the HERALD who plays his part in the Orgies *, " and an apostle " (I speak the truth in Christ, I lye not :" I faithfully proclaim to you the real mediator in opposition to the phantom, which the lying blasphemy of Hymenæus would introduce), " a teacher of the Gentiles " in faith and verity," not in imposture and falshood †.

(6.) The genuine doctrine being now propounded, the apostle is naturally led to describe the character of a faithful Christian HIEROPHANT and his subordinate MINISTERS. In the course of his delineation,

* Gr. Κηρυξ. In the Mysteries, the Hierophant had three assistant officers, Δαδουχος or the Torch-bearer, Κηρυξ or the Herald who represented the eloquent Mercury, and Ὁ επι βωμῳ or the officer superintending the altar. St. Paul, as an orator, appropriates to himself the title of the Κηρυξ.

† 1 Tim. ii. 3—7.

his

Digitized by Google

his mind still impressed with the baneful heresy which he had been combating, he remarks, that a bishop ought not to be *a novice* or *neophyte*, one who had been only recently born into the Church, "lest, "being inflated with conceit, he fall into the con- "demnation of the devil:" and he adds (such ought to be the venerable sanctity of those admitted to the highest ecclesiastical order), "Moreover, he must "have a good report" even "of them WHICH ARE "WITHOUT;" even of those, who have not yet been initiated into the Mysteries of the Gospel. He then adverts to the office of deacon: and, after stating what he required of persons ordained to that office, he observes, that they ought to "hold the MYSTERY "of the faith," not according to the fantastic purifications in the solar fire and the lunar water prescribed to the pagan aspirants, but "in a PURE conscience." For in this manner ought they to "be first proved," not agreeably to the vain rites of a probation for the Orgies *.

(7.) In a subsequent part of the epistle, he again adverts to what seems to have completely occupied his mind during the whole composition of it; namely the mischievous heresy of Hymenèus and his associates.

"Refuse PROFANE† and idle MYTHOLOGIC "TALES‡: and EXERCISE thyself rather unto god- "liness. For BODILY EXERCISE," such as the pe-

* 1 Tim. iii. 1—10. † Gr. βεβηλους.
‡ Gr. μυθους.

nances

Digitized by Google

nances and probationary macetations of the aspirants which they undergo in order to their initiation into the Mysteries, "profiteth little: but godliness is "profitable unto all things, having promise of the "life that now is and of that which is to come. "This is a faithful DISCOURSE," befitting a Christian hierophant*—"If any man teach otherwise, and "consent not to wholesome DISCOURSES, even the "DISCOURSES of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to "THE DOCTRINE WHICH IS ACCORDING TO GOD-"LINESS; he is proud, knowing nothing, but "DOTING ABOUT QUESTIONS AND STRIFES OF "WORDS, whereof cometh envy, strife, BLASPHE-"MIES, evil-surmisings, perverse disputings of men "of corrupt minds and destitute of the TRUTH, "thinking that godliness may be turned to profit. "From such withdraw thyself. O Timothy, keep "that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding "PROFANE† babblings and oppositions of falsely-"styled KNOWLEDGE‡" such as the initiated into the Mysteries boast themselves eminently to acquire; "which some professing HAVE ERRED CONCERNING "THE FAITH," applying to the great father of the pagan Orgies the venerable name and character of our Lord and only Saviour Jesus Christ §.

* 1 Tim. iv. 7—9.

† Gr. βεβηλους.

‡ Gr. γνωσεως. From this pretended *Gnosis* or illumination, some of these paganizing heretics took at an early period the title of *Gnostics* or *Men of Knowledge*.

§ 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5, 20, 21.

II. Now

Digitized by Google

II. Now in the midst of an epistle, thus full of allusions to a most destructive adaptation of the Mysteries and the god of the Mysteries to the Gospel and the prophet of the Gospel, occurs the remarkable passage, in which St. Paul speaks of *the* MYSTERY *of godliness*. Hence it is almost impossible to doubt, that such phraseology has been studiously adopted, in consequence of a leading idea having taken complete possession of the apostle's painfully anxious mind. Yet, that nothing may be left without due discussion, let us specially examine the passage itself.

" These things write I unto thee, hoping to come " unto thee shortly: but, if I tarry long, that thou " mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself " in THE HOUSE OF GOD, which is the Church of " the living God, THE PILLAR and FIRM FOUNDA- " TION of THE TRUTH: for without controversy " great is the MYSTERY of godliness *."

St. Paul, in the course of his charge to Timothy happening to mention THE HOUSE OF GOD, is thence immediately led to employ certain very peculiar expressions: and these expressions serve to introduce what he calls *the* MYSTERY *of godliness*. Now, since he is thus finally brought to speak of a MYSTERY *of godliness*; since he had already been animadverting upon a gross perversion of the ancient MYSTERIES; and since in the course of only a few verses before, he had been urging the deacons to

* 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15, 16.

hold

" hold the MYSTERY of the faith in a pure con-
" science *:" it is evident, that his incidental mention of THE HOUSE OF GOD threw his mind into a rapid train of thought, which once more conducted him to the main subject of the epistle; namely, *a heresy built upon the adaptation of Christianity to the pagan Orgies.* What we have to do therefore is to endeavour to develop this train of thought: and our method of developing it must evidently be by considering the phraseology, from which it originates, and to which it gives birth.

1. The phraseology, whence it originates, is THE HOUSE OF GOD. The first question therefore is, how the use of such phraseology could turn the mind of the apostle to the old Mysteries.

This question we shall readily answer, by observing how he applies the phrase, and by attending to the language employed in the Orgies.

Now he applies the phrase to the Church; and that divine society he elsewhere terms AN UNIVERSAL MOTHER: " Jerusalem which is above is free,
" which is THE MOTHER OF US ALL †." The Church then presented itself to the mind of the apostle, as being at once THE HOUSE OF GOD and AN UNIVERSAL MOTHER.

But these were the identical titles of the goddess venerated in the Mysteries, as the consort of the great father. She was celebrated, as the bountiful

* 1 Tim. iii. 9. † Gal. iv. 26.

MOTHER

MOTHER BOTH OF MORTALS AND OF IMMORTALS *; and she was denominated both THE HOUSE OF THE CHIEF GOD in particular, and THE HOUSE OF THE GODS in general †.

Thus, when we recollect the drift of the whole epistle, it is no wonder that a mention of the Church, under the appellation of THE HOUSE OF GOD, should immediately turn the mind of St. Paul to the Mysteries.

2. The phraseology, to which this train of thought immediately gives birth, is THE PILLAR and THE FIRM FOUNDATION OF THE TRUTH: and these titles he applies to the Church.

(1.) Some have fancied, that, by the PILLAR here spoken of, we are to understand *the pillar of a cloud and of fire*, in which the Lord went before the Israelites during their journey through the wilderness ‡; the phrase thus involving an allusion to the history of God's ancient people.

Such a theory seems to me objectionable in every point of view. In the first place, it is strangely unnatural to suppose, that, when the mind of the apostle was full of an heretical adaptation of the old Mysteries, and when he was thence led to use both the technical language of the Mysteries and the very word MYSTERY itself; he should so completely travel

* Orph. Hym. ii. 1, 2. ix. 1. xiii. 8. xxv. 1. Hesiod. Theog. ver. 126 et infra.

† Ισιν, οικον Ωρυ. Plut. Isid. et Osir. p. 374. Ἑστία, οικε θεων. Orph. Hym. lxxxiii. 1, 5.

‡ Exod. xiii. 21, 22.

out

Digitized by Google

out of the record, as to refer abruptly to an event in the history of the Israelites. And, in the second place, it exhibits him as employing a phraseology, which is scarcely reconcileable with common sense: for, as it is the Church which he styles THE PILLAR, the term PILLAR must doubtless be strictly appropriate to the Church; but surely, unless by the most strained figure of rhetoric that ever entered into the head of man, the Christian Church can never be mystically identified with the fiery pillar which served to mark the visible presence of Jehovah. We must seek therefore both a totally different interpretation, and one which will harmonize with the apostle's train of thought at the precise time when he was writing the passage.

Immediately before he uses the word MYSTERY, and immediately after his bestowing upon the Church a title of the great mother, he chooses to denominate that same Church THE PILLAR. Here then a question naturally arises, Was the great mother of the Orgies ever thus designated or thus represented? A very moderate knowledge of ancient mythology will furnish an answer. A large and massy STONE PILLAR was one of the most common symbols of that goddess, who was deemed the universal mother both of gods and men, and who was styled *the house of Orus and the immortals.* Under this figure (not to multiply instances), Cybelè was venerated on the confines of Phrygia in her special character of THE GREAT MOTHER: and all mankind, subsequent to the deluge, were thought to have been produced from

Digitized by Google

from the enormous stone, which itself was feigned to be divinely animated *. To this same figure also Jeremiah alludes, when, censuring the Israelites on account of their idolatrous apostasy to the superstitions of the Gentiles, he remarks, that they were accustomed to "say to A STONE, THOU HAST "BROUGHT ME FORTH †." The superstition before us seems to have originated from a perversion of the patriarchal rites, which were long preserved in an uncorrupted state among the posterity of Heber. Thus, after Jacob had beheld the remarkable vision of the ladder, he set up a stone PILLAR; and denominated the place, where it was erected, BETH-EL or THE HOUSE OF GOD. Nor was the place only thus designated: the name was equally applied to the PILLAR itself: *this stone*, said the patriarch, *which I have set up for* A PILLAR, *shall be* GOD'S HOUSE ‡.

(2.) But St. Paul bestows upon the Church the additional title of THE FIRM FOUNDATION.

This also is a name given with the same reference as the last. The great mother of the Orgies was distinguished by this very appellation; and was celebrated by the mystæ, as being THE FIRM FOUNDATION of the immortal world §. An initiation into

* Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. v. p. 157. † Jerem. ii. 27.

‡ Gen. xxviii. 18, 19, 22.

§ The Apostle styles the Church Ἑδραίωμα: Hesiod and the Orphic poet denominate the great mother Ἕδρανον αθανατῳ κοσμῳ, Θνητων στηριγμα κραταιον, and Παντων ἑδος ασφαλες αιει αθανατων. Orph. Hymn. xxv. 4. lxxxiii. 5. Hesiod. Theog. ver. 117.

her

Digitized by Google

her MYSTERIES was deemed an admission to THE TRUTH: whence they, who had been initiated, were styled *epoptæ* or *persons who see things as they really are;* whence also the hierophant prefaced his solemn discourse, by declaring, that the things, which he was about to reveal, were eminently TRUE*. The apostle joins the two together: and claims for the Church, in direct opposition to the great mother of Paganism, the title of THE FIRM FOUNDATION OF THE TRUTH; as he had just before, with similar studied opposition, vindicated to it the appellation of THE PILLAR.

3. Having been thus led by his peculiar train of thought to adopt the language of the Orgies, he naturally concludes his parenthetic digression, still in opposition to that MYSTERY of iniquity with which Hymenèus and his fellows sought to identify the Gospel of Christ, by enforcing that real MYSTERY of which he had been constituted an apostle or hierophant.

"Without controversy great is THE MYSTERY OF "GODLINESS."

III. We are now obviously brought to inquire, what particular point of doctrine St. Paul wished to illustrate by thus studiously referring to the ancient Mysteries; what it was in short that he meant by that MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, which he pronounces to be great beyond the possibility of dispute. For this purpose let us attend to the entire context.

* Εξοιμι γαρ ΑΛΗΘΕΑ. Orph. Fragm. apud Just. Mart. edit. Gesn. p. 357.

"These

Digitized by Google

" These things write I unto thee, hoping to come " unto thee shortly: but, if I tarry long, that thou " mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself " in THE HOUSE OF GOD, which is the Church of the " living God, THE PILLAR and FIRM FOUNDATION " of THE TRUTH; for without controversy great is " THE MYSTERY of godliness: GOD was manifested " in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, " preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the " world, received up into glory."

Now it is sufficiently evident, that, what the apostle has chosen to illustrate by the language of the Orgies, and what in consequence of adopting such phraseology he denominates THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, IS THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN THE FLESH, and, in conjunction with certain other specified particulars, HIS FINAL ASCENSION TO HEAVEN. That this is what St. Paul styles THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, cannot for a moment be doubted: it will be proper however to consider a disputed word in the passage, before we attempt to ascertain *the reason why* he bestows upon the doctrine in question so peculiar an appellation.

1. The disputed word in the passage, *God was manifested in the flesh*, is GOD: for, though some manuscripts and ancient authors read GOD; others read WHO the pronoun relative in the masculine gender, and others again WHICH the pronoun relative in the neuter gender. Of these three readings the variation is thus presented to the eye in Greek characters, the language in which the epistle is written:

ΘC,

Digitized by Google

$\overline{\Theta C}$, the mode in which ΘEOC or *God* is contracted in all the oldest manuscripts; OC or *Who*, the masculine pronoun relative; and O or *Which*, the neuter pronoun relative.

(1.) The last of these is a reading of very little authority, being found only in a single manuscript, though it has been adopted into the Old Latin and Vulgate versions, and is thence used by all the Latin fathers and some of the Greeks. In fact, it is a mere attempt to correct the reading OC: and it has plainly, I think, originated in the following manner.

The writer of the manuscript in which it appears, using a copy which contained the reading OC, and perceiving that the *masculine* relative OC could not possibly agree with the supposed *masculine* antecedent MYCTHPION, took upon him to alter it to O: by which plan he procured a *neuter* relative for a *neuter* antecedent.

Such a correction no doubt produced very good grammar, but then it unfortunately produced equally bad sense. By adopting the *neuter* relative instead of the *masculine*, and by referring that neuter relative to the preceding word MYSTERY (*the* MYSTERY *of godliness*, WHICH mystery *was manifested in the flesh*), he necessarily made the word MYSTERY the subject of the apostle's description. Now, though A MYSTERY might be *preached unto the Gentiles* and *believed on in the world*; it is not very easy to conceive, how A MYSTERY could be *manifested in the flesh* and *received up into glory*. Such language evidently relates only to *a person*. A mysterious *person*

Digitized by Google

person might indeed be thus manifested and thus received up: but it would be palpably absurd to predicate these circumstances of a *Mystery*. Common sense therefore, even independently of the slender authority on which it rests, would be sufficient to set aside the reading which exhibits the neuter relative WHICH.

(2.) We have only then to consider the merits of the two other readings GOD and WHO, or in Greek characters $\overline{\Theta C}$ and OC.

Between these the *abstract* question is plainly this: whether it be more probable, that $\overline{\Theta C}$ by the accidental or intentional erasure of the central mark in Θ has been transmuted into OC, or inversely that OC by an unwarrantable insertion of the central mark in O has been transformed into $\overline{\Theta C}$.

Now so nearly balanced are the distinct evidences in favour of each reading, so far as manuscripts and versions and authors are concerned, that I fear it is impossible to decide *positively* to which side the scale inclines. Happily however the sense is precisely the same, which ever reading be adopted. If we suppose $\overline{\Theta C}$ or GOD to be genuine; then of course GOD is declared by the apostle to be the person manifested in the flesh. If, on the other hand, we suppose OC or WHO to be genuine; GOD will still be the person spoken of, because there is no other antecedent to which the masculine relative WHO can be referred. In this case, to procure good sense and good grammar, we must throw into a parenthesis the digression allusive to the Mysteries, which St. Paul

Digitized by Google

(as we have seen) was induced to make, in a manner perfectly agreeable to his ordinary style, by his incidental mention of THE HOUSE OF GOD. The passage, thus arranged with the adoption of the reading OC or WHO, will run as follows.

" That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to " behave thyself in the house of GOD (which is the " Church of the living God, the pillar and firm " foundation of the truth; for without controversy " great is the Mystery of godliness), WHO was mani- " fested in the flesh *."

Thus, in either case, the MYSTERY set forth to us by St. Paul is this: that GOD WAS MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH AND RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY.

2. The Socinian editors however of a new version of the Greek Testament, rejecting at once the reading $\overline{\Theta C}$ in favour of OC, and perceiving that the regular grammatical construction even of the adopted reading would not favour their own views relative to the nature of Christ, have exhibited a translation of the passage which might suit with their theory that the Saviour of mankind was a mere man and nothing more than a man. They propose to render it as follows: *He, who was manifested in the flesh, was justified by the Spirit.*

Of such a translation I will not say, that the Greek is absolutely *incapable*; though the merest

* In the Greek, ἱνά ειδῃς πως δει εν οικῳ ΘΕΟΥ αναστρεφεσθαι (ἠτις εστιν εκκλησια θευ ζωντος, στυλος και ἑδραιωμα της αληθειας· και ὁμολογυμενως μεγα εστι το της ευσεβειας μυστηριον), ΟΣ εφανερωθη εν σαρκι.

sciolist

Digitized by Google

sciolist in that language will perceive, by a bare inspection of the original text, how perfectly forced and unnatural this rendering is, how plainly resorted to merely to serve a turn, and how wholly abhorrent from the regular Hellenic idiom *. I would rather discuss

* I need scarcely remark, that, according to the well known idiom of the Greek tongue, had St. Paul meant to say what these editors ascribe to him, he would not have written ὃς ἐφανερωθη ἐν σαρκι (conceding for a moment, what never can be absolutely demanded as a concession, that ὃς is the genuine reading), but ὁ ἐν σαρκι φανερωθεις.

Of the three examples which the editors adduce in favour of their translation, namely Mark iv. 25, Luke viii. 18, and Rom. viii. 32, the two first are in fact but one, being mere duplicates of the same passage: and, what is still worse, they are wholly inapplicable to the case before us; because the moulding of the sentence is such, that the regular Greek idiom would have produced bad grammar, and therefore of course could not be used. St. Mark writes Ὃς γαρ αν ἐχῃ, δοθησεται αυτῳ: but throw this sentence into the regular idiom, ὁ γαρ ἐχων, δοθησεται αυτῳ, and we have immediately bad grammar. Hence this instance is manifestly quite inapplicable: for the Greek idiom plainly *could not* have been used in it.

As for the third, though it is not liable to the same objection, yet it bears so faint a resemblance to the passage in the epistle to Timothy, that I can scarcely allow it to be a sufficient authority. The difference between the two is precisely this. No one can avoid translating Rom. viii. 32, just as it stands translated in our common version: but no one, *when the whole context is considered*, would think of translating 1 Tim. iii. 16, with the reading Ος, in the manner that the present editors have done; unless he had a purpose to serve by such a version.

Let the two passages however be exhibited in the original Greek, and let the cautious reader determine for himself.

Digitized by Google

discuss its merits after another fashion: I would rather inquire, how far a translation, which is meant to involve a reception of the Socinian hypothesis, will be found to harmonize with the general drift and purpose of the context.

Ὃς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο, ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτὸν· πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται. Rom. viii. 32.

Ἐὰν δὲ βραδύνω, ἵνα εἰδῇς πῶς δεῖ ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ ἀναστρέφεσθαι (ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζῶντος, στῦλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας· καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶ τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον), ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι, ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις, ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν, ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ, ἀνελήφθη ἐν δόξῃ. 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

In the first of these passages there is not the slightest ambiguity: and, I think, scarcely more in the second, when viewed by an unprejudiced mind. The succession of Aoristi primi, beginning with ἐφανερώθη and ending with ἀνελήφθη, plainly shews, unless we are resolved to twist the passage from its obvious meaning, that they ought all to be translated homogeneously. Whence, if ὃς be the genuine reading (which after all can never be proved to be the case), it must relate to some antecedent in the foregoing clause of the sentence. But the only antecedent, which can there be found, is ΘΕΟΣ. In short, if St. Paul really wrote ὃς, and if he meant to express what the editors contend for; I can with difficulty believe, that the learned apostle, who required no divine inspiration to teach him Greek, but to whom its idioms were familiar from his very boyhood, would have penned such an awkward sentence to convey such an idea: for, when translated so as to suit the Socinian hypothesis, never surely was there a more strangely awkward sentence constructed in that language. I venture therefore to repeat, that, if he had intended to say what the editors suppose, he would surely have written ὁ ἐν σαρκὶ φανερωθεὶς not ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί.

(1.) Now

(1.) Now St. Paul tells us, that the Gospel sets forth a MYSTERY of godliness: and this MYSTERY of godliness, he goes on to inform us, is THE MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST IN THE FLESH, including other particulars which he subjoins to what is plainly the leading one; I say *the manifestation of* CHRIST *in the flesh*, because, whatever different sentiments may be entertained respecting *the nature* of our Lord, all are agreed that HE is *the person* here spoken of.

According to the Socinian theory however, unless I wholly misunderstand it, Christ is a mere man, born like any other man from a mortal father and mother. This mere man Christ, thus born after the ordinary course of generation, was a person of exalted piety and most exemplary holiness: hence he was selected by the Supreme Being, as a proper instrument to convey his high purposes to mankind. In pursuance of such a plan, being divinely inspired for the occasion, he delivered a very excellent moral code, and taught authoritatively the doctrine of future retribution. In attestation of his sincerity, he laid down his life rather than he would give up his principles; and thus fell a sacrifice to the cause, in which he was employed. His devotedness was recompensed, and the truth of his main doctrine was established, by his own resurrection from the dead long prior to the day of judgment: and, when he *had* thus risen from the dead, as the earth could no longer be decorously his permanent habitation, he was of course taken up to heaven.

On

Digitized by Google

On the abstract merits of this theory it may be obviously remarked, that a pure code of morals is doubtless a very excellent thing, that an authoritative declaration of a future state of rewards and punishments is a matter of palpably high importance, and that we have great reason to be thankful to God for any communication which he may be pleased to make to us through the agency of one of our fellow-men: but this is not precisely the ground of the present question. St. Paul assures us, that the manifestation of Christ in the flesh is A MYSTERY: that it is not a Mystery of *trifling* moment; but A GREAT MYSTERY: that it is not an *equivocal* great Mystery, or a thing which *he* might choose thus to denominate while *others* might well question the propriety of the title; but A GREAT MYSTERY BY THE UNANIMOUS CONSENT OF ALL BELIEVERS, a Mystery of such a sort that no person in his senses would ever dream of controverting its evident right to the title not *simply* of A MYSTERY but *intensely* of A GREAT MYSTERY *.

Now, understanding the word MYSTERY only as a mere unlettered reader would do who had never so much as heard of the existence of the pagan Mysteries; where, according to the Socinian theory, shall we discover this GREAT AND INDISPUTABLE MYSTERY, which seems as it were to exhaust all the powers of language, possessed by the eloquent and

* This is plainly the drift of the apostle's singularly strong and cumulative language. Και ΟΜΟΛΟΓΟΥΜΕΝΩΣ ΜΕΓΑ εστι το της ευσεβειας ΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ.

copious

copious apostle, in order that it may scarcely at length be laboriously exhibited with becoming dignity? On *that* hypothesis, so far is the Gospel from setting forth A GREAT AND UNANIMOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED MYSTERY, that it sets forth, so far as I can judge, NO MYSTERY AT ALL. At least, if the doctrine of St. Paul had *indeed* been the doctrine of the modern Socinian school, and if he still asserted in the very teeth of common sense that this doctrine was A GREAT AND UNDENIABLE MYSTERY; I scruple not to say, that I should have felt myself compelled directly to contradict him. Instead of subscribing to his assertion, I should have fearlessly maintained, that, so far from his doctrine being *what no one would* DENY *to be a Mystery*, every man of a plain understanding *would* DIRECTLY DENY *it to be any such thing;* and that, so far from its being *a* GREAT *Mystery*, it was in good truth NO *Mystery* WHATSOEVER.

For what is there *mysterious* in the circumstance of a very good man being born, just like all other men, of a natural father and mother: in the circumstance of that good man being employed by a gracious Providence to teach his brethren their duty; and to assure them, that, as they did or did not perform it, they would be rewarded or punished hereafter: in the circumstance of that same good man creating much animosity in his character of a reformer: in the circumstance of his being murdered by his enemies, because he virtuously refused to give up his integrity: and lastly in the circumstance of his

Digitized by Google

his being rewarded by a premature resurrection from the dead and an admission into the kingdom of heaven? All these are mighty plain facts: nor can I at all comprehend, why the apostle should affect industriously to shroud them in a veil, as if they were any way extraordinary, by styling them collectively THE GREAT AND INDISPUTABLE MYSTERY.

According to *such* a view of the question, he might just as well, or rather just as ill, have used the same language, when speaking of Moses or Elijah or Isaiah or Jeremiah or Daniel or almost any other ancient prophet. Though it might appear somewhat strange and affected and unlike our ordinary phraseology to say, that each of these holy men *had been manifested in flesh*; because, *as* men, it is difficult to conceive in what other way they *could* have been manifested: yet it is a clear case, that every one of them had a father and a mother. It is likewise a clear case, that they were all inspired by the Supreme Being, and that they were all moral teachers. It is equally clear, that some of them, with scarcely less distinctness than our Lord himself, taught the great doctrine of a future retribution *. It is equally clear too, that some of them fell a sacrifice to their zeal as reformers, just as much as Christ himself could do. And it is a recorded fact, that one of them ascended bodily to heaven after his death, and that another of them ascended bodily to heaven before his death: for, in the day of the transfiguration, Moses and

* See particularly Dan. xii. 2, 3.

Elijah

Digitized by Google

Elijah are described, without the slightest difference of language, as severally appearing with Christ in a glorified form; whence, if the bodies of Christ and Elijah were real and palpable, it is hard to say, why the exactly similar manifestation of the Hebrew Lawgiver should be deemed visionary and unsubstantial *.

Now

* It is said of Moses, that the Lord buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, and that no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. Deut. xxxiv. 6. But this does not preclude his resurrection in the body; which, as he is allowed to be an eminent type of Christ, would complete the similitude. That he *had* risen again, is evident from his appearance with Elijah: and, that he had risen again *in the body*, seems at once to be insinuated in the history of the Transfiguration and to be alluded to by St. Jude. This apostle speaks of Michael the archangel contending with Satan for the body of Moses. But the body was interred by Jehovah himself: and it is alike absurd and unwarranted to imagine, either that Satan was present upon *that* occasion, or that any contest could arise between him and Michael for a body which Jehovah himself had in charge. The contest therefore must have taken place *subsequent* to the burial. But, if it took place *subsequent* to the burial, I see not how we can well avoid concluding that the body had been exhumed.

Such an action however, on such a supposition, will exactly accord with the characters both of Michael and Satan.

The former is described by Daniel, as the great angel presiding over the resurrection: and the latter is always exhibited to us, as the malignant accuser of the just. These being their characters, the contest for the body of Moses *subsequent* to his interment by Jehovah leads almost necessarily to the conclusion, that it took place, when Moses, as a type of Christ, was, *in the body*, raised from the dead and received up into glory.

See

Digitized by Google

by a plain allusion to the ancient Mysteries; *that* summary, which he denominates A GREAT MYSTERY, must, in *his* apprehension of it, have borne some striking resemblance to the peculiar tenets by which the PAGAN MYSTERIES were characterized: otherwise it will be utterly impossible to conceive, WHY he should have studiously designated the Christian summary of doctrine by a term, which would immediately direct the attention of every Ephesian reader to the familiar Mysteries of the great universal father.

The object however of the apostle was *to warn the Ephesians and their bishop Timothy against a strange heresy, then creeping into the Church and even yet prevailing to a very great extent throughout Asia.* This heresy consisted mainly, *in the identification of Christ with the universal father of the Orgies, and in the endeavour to engraft the Gospel upon the old system of philosophical Paganism.* But, as it is not easy to comprehend why the expedient of *identifying Christ with the great father* should ever have been resorted to, unless there had been some obvious resemblance between their characters: so neither is it easy to comprehend, why St. Paul, writing in avowed opposition to this dangerous heresy, should yet illustratively call away the Ephesians from the pretended GREAT MYSTERIES OF GENTILISM to the real GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, unless he had felt and acknowledged the resemblance upon which the heresy was founded. His object at any rate is plainly to call away the Ephesians from the

Digitized by Google

the pagan Mysteries, as modified by Philetus and Hymenèus and Alexander, to that genuine summary of Christian doctrine, which in the way of allusive opposition he styles *the great Mystery of godliness.* How then will his invitation run, if we receive as evangelical verity the hypothesis of the Socinian school? Truly it will run in the following somewhat unusual strain.

Certain heretics among you, O Ephesians, boast largely of THE GREAT MYSTERIES OF PAGANISM: *in which it is taught, that he, whom the Gentiles venerate as the supreme creator of heaven and earth and as the first and oldest of the Gods, descended from the celestial regions; became incarnate in the womb of a virgin; was born in the shape of a man; was the reformer of a corrupt age; was murdered by an inveterate enemy; was inclosed, when dead, within a sepulchre; was restored to life and light on the morning of the third day after his murder; vanquished his apparently triumphant foe; and at length ascended to his native heaven from the summit of a lofty mountain. Now the God of these Mysteries they would impiously identify with your Saviour Jesus Christ; and would fain persuade you, that the Messiah is but one of the numerous incarnate descents of the great universal father. Doubtless these would be* GREAT MYSTERIES; *if the facts, as exhibited in them, rested on any solid historical foundation. But turn away, I beseech you, from such vanities. Listen to me; and I will indeed set forth to you* A GREAT MYSTERY: *a Mystery, which* BY UNIVERSAL

Digitized by Google

Now what should we think of a person, who assured us, that the history of these pious men was A MYSTERY, nay A GREAT MYSTERY, nay a Mystery which we know very well we could not pretend to DENY amply deserved such a title? What, I say, should we think of a person, who held this language to us? Yet precisely such, with respect to Christ, is the language held, on the Socinian theory, by St. Paul; a man, even putting aside his inspiration, of the very first genius and acquirements.

(2.) But the incongruity of that theory with the language used by the apostle will appear even in a yet more striking point of view, if we understand the

See Jude 9. and Dan. xii. 1, 2, 3. Such a conclusion will render the history of the Transfiguration more intelligible; while, at the same time, it will be corroborated by that history, which equally asserts the visible manifestation of Moses and Elijah in a human form. I suspect, that St. Jude refers to the established opinion of the Jews: and, referring to it as he does with approbation, he of course gives it the sanction of his apostolical authority. The opinion is thus exhibited by Maimonides. "Our masters have assured us, that our master Moses is not "dead, but that he ascended into heaven, where he serves God "to all eternity." Maimon. Præfat. in Thalmud. En. Israel. p. ii. p. 39. Josephus makes the same assertion: but, most unwarrantably and in direct opposition to Scripture, maintains, that he never died at all, but that he himself wrote the account of his pretended death lest he should be worshipped by the Israelites if they knew that he had been taken away in a cloud while conversing with Joshua and Eliezer. Ant. Jud. lib. iv. c. 48. See Calmet's Dict. vox *Moses*.

The force of these remarks will not be at all weakened, if we suppose that Michael is the same person as Christ; a supposition, which I believe to be perfectly well founded.

word

Digitized by Google

word MYSTERY to be here used, not as a mere English writer might use it, but as a Greek contemporary with St. Paul would have done.

We have seen, that this word, which occurs very frequently in the New Testament, is never once employed, either by our Lord or by the inspired penmen, without a manifest allusion to the ancient Mysteries of the Gentiles. We have seen, from the whole drift of the first epistle to Timothy, that it is most clearly used with the same reference by St. Paul, when he speaks of the great MYSTERY of godliness. And we have further seen very much at large, what was the nature of those pagan Mysteries, to which our Lord and the inspired writers of the New Testament have thought fit so repeatedly to allude.

Now it is impossible to suppose, that they would thus industriously allude to them, except in the way of *illustration*. But the pagan Mysteries could serve for no purpose of *illustration*, unless they bore some degree of resemblance to the Mystery of the Gospel or (as St. Paul styles it) *the great Mystery of godliness*. Therefore the very circumstance of *the so frequent allusion to them* is in itself sufficient to prove, that the resemblance in question must to a certain extent have existed: for we are wont to illustrate any matter by something palpably *similar* to it, not by something altogether *dissimilar*. Hence it will follow, unless we deny to St. Paul the claim of mere common sense, that, since he has chosen to illustrate the grand summary of evangelical doctrine by

Digitized by Google

VERSAL CONSENT *well deserves such an appellation; a Mystery, which the angels themselves desire to look into; a Mystery, before the* FAR HIGHER *wonders of which the boasted pagan Mysteries may well hide their diminished head. Attend then; and I will unfold unto you the depth and height of this* MYSTERY OF MYSTERIES, *this* MOST STUPENDOUS OF ALL MYSTERIES: *for* BY UNIVERSAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS. *The* PREEMINENT MYSTERY *is briefly this. A very good man has been born in Palestine of a mortal father and mother, named* Joseph *and* Mary; *just as you or I or any other man might be born. Him God has been pleased to employ in the capacity of his prophet; just as he employed Moses and Elijah and Isaiah and many other very good men. His office was, to declare and enforce a pure code of morals, and to reveal the doctrine of future retribution; just as it was the office, though not quite to so great an extent, of his brethren the prophets that came before him. His faithfulness caused him to fall a sacrifice to the tenets, which he zealously inculcated; just as many other very good men had already been put to death by those, who disliked their troublesome admonitions. The truth however of his mission was confirmed, by his resurrection from the dead, and by his ascension to heaven: but this is no more than what we devoutly hope and trust will be the case with many other good men. Here, my brethren, you have indeed* A MYSTERY: *and, unless you be strangely blinded by prejudice, you will ingenuously*

Digitized by Google

ously acknowledge, that the WONDERS *of the pagan Mysteries are a mere nothing compared with this* WONDER OF WONDERS.

Such will be the sum and substance of St. Paul's reasoning according to the Socinian hypothesis: if *this* however had been the strain of it, if he had *thus* disputed from *the pagan Mysteries* to *the Christian Mystery of godliness*, I doubt, whether Hymenèus and his friends would have readily allowed him to have the better of the argument; I doubt, whether they might not have suspected more plausibly than a great modern champion of Socinianism, that he was a very inconclusive reasoner.

3. Having tried the apostle's powers of ratiocination according to the Socinian scheme, let us now see whether he argues any better on the supposition that he might possibly have held the catholic faith. In this case, his reasoning would be to the following effect.

You have paganizing heretics among you, O Ephesians; who, led away by a fond attachment to the ancient Mysteries of their idolatrous forefathers, giving heed to mythologic fables and endless genealogies, addicted to the vanities of a misnamed knowledge, and asserting that there has already been a resurrection from the dead, would blaspheme the venerable name of your Saviour Christ by attempting to identify him with the god adored in the Orgies. I allow, that there are many points of resemblance between them: for this god, though the reputed creator of the universe, is said to have descended from heaven,

Digitized by Google

heaven, to have been born incarnate from the womb of a virgin, to have been a general benefactor, to have been slain by an implacable enemy, to have been consigned to the tomb, to have risen from the dead on the third day, and to have finally ascended to heaven from the summit of a lofty mountain. All this I will freely allow: and I may add, that it is in consequence of such a resemblance, that I so frequently, after the example of my divine Master, allude to the old Mysteries by way of illustration. But, after all, the god revered in those Mysteries, though ignorantly worshipped by erring pagans as the supreme creator and moderator of the world, is a mere idol and not the true God. Turn then from such lying vanities: and suffer not yourselves to be seduced, by any specious similitude, into that horrid blasphemy of Alexander and Hymenèus, which would transfer to the divinity of the Mysteries the veneration due to Christ your Saviour. Rather attend to me: and I will unfold to you, what is indeed A MYSTERY, *what is* A GREAT MYSTERY, *what is* A GREAT MYSTERY BY THE UNANIMOUS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ALL CHRISTIANS, *what is* A MYSTERY *before which* THE MYSTERIES *of Paganism shrink into worse than insignificance. That* ETERNAL AND TRUE GOD, *whose house is the Church, who (as it was foretold by Malachi) should suddenly come to* HIS OWN TEMPLE*, *whose way (the way of* JEHOVAH *himself) should be prepared by the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness*†: *that* ETERNAL AND TRUE GOD

* Malach. iii. 1. † Isaiah xl. 3.

was

Digitized by Google

was manifested in the flesh, being born of a pure virgin; was justified of the Spirit; was seen of ministering angels, who reverently acknowledged his infinite superiority; suffered death on the cross, that he might make atonement for us miserable sinners; descended into the realms of Hades; rose again from the grave on the third day; was preached, by our agency, to the Gentiles, that they might turn from idolatry to serve the living God; has already been extensively believed on in the world; and, after various appearances to his disciples subsequent to his resurrection, was visibly received up into glory. Here you have indeed A MYSTERY *worthy of all acceptation: for the person, of whom it treats, is no* FALSE DEMON-GOD *tricked out by blind or interested superstition with the attributes of divinity; but that* OMNIPOTENT BEING, *God of God, who is the visible image of the invisible Jehovah, the first born from the dead* * *of every creature, by whom (as it is but falsely pretended of the spurious deity venerated in the Orgies) all things were created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. By him and for him all things were created: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

Whatever a modern Socinian may choose to think respecting the divinity of our blessed Lord; he can-

* Compare Coloss. i. 15. with ver. 18. and Acts xiii. 30, 33. Rev. i. 5. The same word πρωτότοκος is used both in Coloss. i. 15, 18. and in Rev. i. 5.

Digitized by Google

not but allow, that, on the principles of the catholic faith, St. Paul's argument is at length perfectly conclusive. In exact accordance with the general drift of his letter to the Ephesian bishop, and agreeably to a mode of illustration in which we find him perpetually indulging, he takes his note from the familiar speculations of the pagan Mysteries which had served for the basis of a very dreadful heresy; and thence, directing the attention to the great Christian *Mystery of godliness*, he regularly argues from *the less and the false* to *the greater and the true*. Now therefore the apostle, who, according to the Socinian theory, rambles most strangely from the mark, and who reasons with a degree of inconclusiveness which may well beggar credibility: *now* the apostle argues directly to the point, and winds up his inference with all the concinnity of an accomplished logician.

4. Thus, whether we adopt the reading $\overline{\Theta C}$ or OC, GOD or WHO, we are equally compelled, by the scriptural use of the word MYSTERY and by the necessary tenor of St. Paul's argument when he speaks of THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS, to maintain, that he meant to describe the person manifested in the flesh as being indeed THE TRUE AND LIVING GOD.

It is not very material which of the two readings we may prefer; for, in either case, the sense will be precisely the same. Yet, as the authorities for the reading $\overline{\Theta C}$ or GOD stand very high; as the sense produced by that reading is at all events the sense of the passage; and as it coincides remarkably with an inspired

Digitized by Google

inspired declaration of St. John, which was penned *subsequent* to the first epistle to Timothy, and which therefore may not unreasonably be viewed as *a comment* upon the language of St. Paul: I am inclined to suspect, however ill it may suit the speculations of the Socinian school, that *that* is after all the genuine reading.

St. John, writing against a heresy, in its leading points the same as that against which St. Paul had borne his testimony; for the Gnostics and Manicheans pronounced our Lord to be one person with the great father Mithras or Buddha: St. John, like his brother-apostle, having occasion to set forth the real nature of his Master in opposition to those who would identify him with a heathen divinity, expresses himself in a manner so nearly similar, that he may well be thought to have had in his eye the remarkable declaration to Timothy. He opens his Gospel with asserting, that the Word was in the beginning, that this Word was with God, and that the same Word was also himself God. He then proceeds to tell us, that he came into that world of which he himself was the creator, but that the world knew him not: and he continues to speak of this divine personage in such a manner, as to leave no doubt that by *the Word* he means *Jesus Christ*. It is therefore the manifestation of Christ which he would describe to us, when he says, that THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH. But he had already declared, that THE WORD WAS GOD. Hence, in asserting that THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, he to all intents and purposes

poses asserts that GOD WAS MADE FLESH. Now, if, in the epistle to Timothy, we adopt the reading ΘC; we shall have the identical proposition, which has been advanced by St. John, and which in that case he may be reasonably supposed to have meant to comment upon and to corroborate by his own apostolical authority. St. Paul, who writes first in order of time, sets forth, as A GREAT THOUGH UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED MYSTERY, that GOD WAS MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH: St. John, who writes after him in order of time, and who writes for the purpose of combating the very same sort of heresy, asserts, with a slight variety of expression by way of pointing out that God did *really* thus manifest himself; St. John asserts, that THE WORD WAS GOD, and that THE WORD thus being God WAS MADE FLESH. These two propositions are so palpably the same, that they must evidently be interpreted in the same manner.

On this ground, even if we do *more* than grant to the Socinians that OC is the genuine reading; even if we *allow* the propriety of their rendering the passage, in defiance of the Greek idiom, *He, who was manifested in the flesh, was justified by the Spirit:* if we freely concede the *whole* text to them, and admit both their favourite reading and their still more favourite translation: still I see not, that they will be one jot nearer the establishment of their peculiar opinion, that *Christ was a mere man, born like any other man from a mortal father and mother.*

Doubtless

Digitized by Google

Doubtless the person, who was manifested in the flesh, was also justified by the Spirit: the question however will yet remain, *What was the* NATURE *of the person thus manifested?* Now, both St. Paul's argument, and his allusion to the Mysteries of Paganism, plainly require, that *this person should be God as well as Man:* for, otherwise, how could he set up, in opposition to those Mysteries which taught that the creator of the world became incarnate, *the Mystery of godliness* as a Mystery preëminently *great?* But, on the Socinian plan, instead of a *greater* Mystery, we have *no* Mystery at all: for the point is not, whether the god of the Orgies was the true God; but whether he was not *in the apprehension of the initiated* a much more mysterious being, than Christ is *in the apprehension of the Socinians.*

The initiated readily acknowledged, that *their* god was a man who had flourished on earth and who was the universal father of the human race: but then they contended, no matter whether justly or no; they contended, that he was *also* the god, who had existed from all eternity and who was the creator both of heaven and of earth. On the contrary, the Socinians, while they symbolize with the universal Church in maintaining the *humanity* of Christ, most effectually do away every semblance of *Mystery* in his character by denying his *divinity.* Hence, if *their* principles be the principles of *the apostle,* it is impossible to comprehend, why St. Paul should have alluded, by way of illustration, to the ancient Orgies

gies; and equally impossible is it to conceive, how, in direct opposition to those Orgies, he could triumphantly bring forward the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, as AN INCONTROVERTIBLY GREAT MYSTERY. Had he *thus* distinguished them, while *he himself* advocated the opinion of the Socinians; the answer of Hymenèus and Alexander would have been obvious. *You call our attention to* A GREAT MYSTERY, *and you affect to say that it is* UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED *to be such:* WE *however make no such acknowledgment; for, instead of your doctrine being* A GREAT MYSTERY, *we can discern* NO *Mystery in it* WHATSOEVER.

But the divinity of our Lord depends not on a single text or a single argument.

The painful attempts of the Socinians, not so much to explain Scripture, as to explain it away, serve only to prove; that, after every effort to give any sense rather than the natural one to various passages which might easily be adduced, many still remain of so stubborn and inflexible a description that they will neither break nor bend. Respecting the person of Jesus Christ, the language of the inspired writers is so extraordinary, and (on the Socinian hypothesis) so *unaccountably* dissimilar to that which they use in speaking of any other prophet; that no candid mind can refrain from admitting, that there must be some great, some essential, difference between the Messiah and any one of his precursors.

In fact, this admission is the only mode in which we can rationally *account* for the phraseology in question.

Digitized by Google

question. For is it to be supposed, that God, who is ever represented as being peculiarly jealous of giving his glory to another, should yet direct his inspired servants to use such strange language respecting a mere man like themselves, as should inevitably have led an incalculably great majority of Christians in all ages and in all countries to believe, that this mere man was an incarnation of the Supreme Being? We find no such terms employed, when they have occasion to speak of any other person. What Jew or what Christian has ever been led by them into the error of fancying, that Noah or Moses or Samuel or Elijah was a fleshly manifestation of the Divinity? The error, as the Socinians choose to denominate it, SOLELY regards the person of CHRIST. No one, mentioned throughout the whole Bible as having appeared upon earth in a human form, has ever been mistaken, either by the Levitical or by the Christian Church, for a descent of the Godhead, save HE ALONE. Prone as the old Israelites were to idolatry, and highly venerating as they did their illustrious lawgiver; still, at no one period of their history, did they ever dream of paying him divine honours. Surely then it is strange, passing strange, that the whole Christian world should have erred so grossly respecting the person of Christ: if, all the while, there be no declaration to graft such an error upon; if, all the while, it be as lucidly plain as the Socinians would persuade us, that Christ is a MERE man.

The New Testament was written, not for critics and

Digitized by Google

and philologists who by a dexterous application of their craft can elicit any given sense out of any given number of words, but for simple-minded straightforward readers who are in the habit of understanding things in their natural and obvious sense. Sound and legitimate criticism may doubtless throw light on many parts of Scripture: but we must never forget, that the grand characteristic of the new dispensation is, that THE POOR should have the Gospel preached to them. Now let any poor illiterate man read the commencement of St. John's Gospel without the benefit of those often discordant Socinian commentaries, which have been laboriously excogitated for the purpose of ascribing to it any sense rather than its natural one; and I will venture to say, that, with or without reason, he will suppose the apostle to teach, that *Christ is God.*

We must therefore conclude, either that the Divinity, *professing specially to instruct the poor*, inspired his servants to use language, which, without the aid of a modern quibbling gloss, would infallibly lead them into rank idolatry: or that he, who was manifested in the flesh, was in the beginning with God, and at the same time was HIMSELF GOD likewise.

SECTION

Digitized by Google

SECTION III.

On the use of the word Mystery, with a special reference to the text which speaks of the Mystery of iniquity, and as illustrating the poetical machinery of the Apocalypse.

It is foretold, that in the latter times the Church of Christ will suffer herself to be very extensively seduced into a remarkable apostasy, which in nature will be closely allied to the ancient superstitions of the Gentiles.

Now one very eminent branch of pagan theology was the worship of dead men, whom the excessive gratitude and veneration of posterity elevated to the rank of Hero-gods. These canonized beings were by the Greeks styled *Demons:* and, though now translated from this sublunary world to a higher state of existence, they were supposed to be still interested in the concerns of those whom they had left behind, and were thought to possess the power both of moderating their affairs and of gratifying their wishes *. Hence, whatever notions philosophical and

* Αυταρ επει κεν τυτο γενος κατα γαια καλυψε,
Τοι μεν ΔΑΙΜΟΝΕΣ εισι, Διος μεγαλυ δια βυλας,
Εσθλοι, επιχθονιοι, φυλακες θνητων ανθρωπων·
Οι ῥα φυλασσυσι τε δικας και σχετλια εργα,
Ηερα ἑσσαμενοι, παντη φοιτωντες επ' αιαν,
Πλυτοδοται. Και τυτο γερας βασιληϊον εσχον.
Hesiod. Oper. et dier. lib. i. ver. 120—125.

When

and speculative men might have of some great unknown first cause, the prayers of the vulgar were specially addressed to the Demons:. and the state-policy of every gentile government formally recognized and established this peculiar mode of worship.

The strenuous refusal of the primitive Christians to join in such adoration, and the task of openly denouncing its absurdity which the Gospel imposed upon them, were the true causes of those various persecutions which they experienced at the hands of their pagan governors. It was not, that the heathens would have objected after a decent interval to

> When in the grave this race of men was laid,
> Their souls the holy DEMON-GODS were made,
> Aerial spirits, by great Jove designed
> To be on earth the guardians of mankind.
> Invisible to mortal eyes they go;
> And mark our actions, good or bad, below.
> Th' immortal spies with watchful care preside,
> And thrice ten-thousand round their charges glide,
> They can reward with glory or with gold;
> A power, they by divine permission hold.—COOK.

Such were the Demons of ancient Paganism: if, in character and attributes, the reader can discover any difference between them and the canonized Saints of Popish mythology, he possesses much greater acuteness of discrimination than myself. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly," says the prophetic apostle, "that in the latter times some shall apostatize from the "faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of DE-"MONS (διδασκαλιαις ΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΩΝ); through the hypocrisy of "liars, cauterized in their own conscience, forbidding to marry "with an abstinence from meats." 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.

enroll

enroll the Messiah among their Demon-gods; it was not, that they would have disturbed his followers, either for venerating him as a Hero-deity, or for speculating philosophically on the nature of the first cause: all this they would have freely granted, on the universally received principle of intercommunity of worship; and imperial Rome, which boasted to be the general temple of the gods, would have as readily stretched forth her fostering arms to the Christians, as she did to the Gauls or the Syrians or the Egyptians. Recognize *our* objects of worship, and we will freely recognize *yours*. "Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim."

Such was the avowed maxim of Paganism: and it led, not so much to what in the modern sense of the word we should denominate *toleration*, as to *a joint admission* of all the various modifications of Hero-worship as they might be severally preferred by this people or by that people. *The truth* of any particular modification was not the point in debate, as if it involved the falsehood of all the others. *Each*, by the vulgar at least, was deemed equally true: and *each*, by the political legislator, was officially recognized as equally useful. Hence the Roman votary of the Capitoline Jupiter had no inducement to hate or to disturb the Egyptian votary of the Nileotic Osiris: for neither did the worship of Osiris imply any contempt of Jupiter; nor did the worship of Jupiter imply any disbelief in Osiris, as a present and potent divinity. The emperors in short, who presided over the whole of the then civilized world,

Digitized by Google

world, were honorary members of *every* pagan religion which was established within the wide circuit of their dominions. As Romans indeed, they specially professed to venerate with due gratitude those powerful Latin gods, whose favour had raised the empire to such an unexampled pitch of greatness; and this *paternal* worship they guarded with the jealous care of politicians, who believed the state-religion to be essential to the safety and welfare of the secular government: but they protected and favoured every multiplied form of provincial superstition; and, if in Egypt or in Syria, zealous as they were for the honour of their national deities, they yet discerned nothing of inconsistency or apostasy in worshipping with suitable honour the local deities of the country. Such adoration implied no abandonment of Quirinus or Summanus or Terminus: *all* the gods of the Gentiles were, with common consent, adored in their respective temples by their several more peculiar votaries. Thus a profound peace, though it might occasionally be broken by the petty squabbles of a few more hot-headed zealots, prevailed, so far as religion was concerned, throughout the entire world of Paganism *." "The strong man armed" literally "kept his goods *in peace*."

But the Gospel strictly forbad all such intercommunion between Christ and Belial. It did not merely proclaim *its own truth*; for that were no higher offence, in the eyes of a Roman, than the similar

* See Juvenal. Sat. xv. ver. 72—92.

readily-

readily-allowed demand of *every* provincial system: but it likewise proclaimed *the falschood of all other religions* throughout the world, save the Jewish alone on which it professed to found itself; even the imperial majesty of the Capitol was not excepted from its sweeping denunciations of general imposture. Now this, according to the politico-theological maxim then established and acted upon, was deemed nothing short of absolute treason. The Christians however could not compromise their consciences: and, as the very genius of their religion (unlike that of the Jews, who were thence but little disturbed by their pagan masters) was *unlimited proselytism*, they were forthwith esteemed traitors to the state, and were persecuted with the utmost malignity as professing what Tacitus emphatically and accurately (according to *his* opinion of its sufficiently obvious tendency) styles *a destructive superstition* *.

Yet, notwithstanding this horror of Demonolatry on the part of the Christian Church, St. Paul predicts, that, in the latter times, so great a revolution of sentiment should take place, that the worship of Demons or deified mortals should be established

* "Exitiabilis superstitio." Tac. Annal. lib. xv. c. 44. Some have thought it a strange mark of ignorant fanaticism in the historian thus to brand so perfect a moral system as Christianity: but the fact is, that Tacitus had nothing to do with *its moral excellence*; he only viewed, as a politician, *its avowed purpose of destroying every established state-religion*; hence he accurately styles it *exitiabilis*, which is the emphatic word in the clause.

with

Digitized by Google

with renovated permanency even within the very pale of the Church herself. The mortals, thus adored with a secondary veneration, might not indeed be the identical mortals who were revered by the ancient pagans: but *the principle* which should lead to their canonization, and *the essence* of the worship itself, should be the very same as *the principle* and *essence* of the old gentile Demonolatry *. Accordingly, Epiphanius interprets the prophecy of St. Paul after the precise manner in which it is here interpreted. Speaking of those *doctrines concerning Demons* which the apostle so distinctly foretells as about to prevail in the Christian Church, he remarks most justly, that the drift and intent of the prediction was this: "hereafter there shall be worshippers "of the dead among professed believers in the "Gospel, even as dead men or Baalim were for-"merly worshipped by the ancient Israelites †."

This being the case, since a relapse into the old Demonolatry of the Gentiles was to be expected even in the Christian Church; nothing could be more poetically decorous and appropriate, than that the prophets, who were specially commissioned to announce and describe it, should employ, as the most suitable vehicle, the very phraseology and imagery of Paganism.

Now, of the two prophets who were thus commissioned, namely St. Paul and St. John, the latter, who

* 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.

† Epiph. adv. Hær. lxxviii. sect. 22.

is

Digitized by Google

is by far the most copious and elaborate in treating of the subject, gives us a clue; by which we may understand, both the nature of his own machinery, and the drift of that peculiar phraseology which is used by the former in announcing the open revelation of the man of sin and the complete establishment of the approaching demonolatrous apostasy. While he describes a race of men, who should be characterized, as the pagans were of old, by the worship of Demons or canonized mortals and of idols formed out of gold and silver and brass and stone and wood: he foretells, that the outer court of the mystic temple and the entire circuit of the holy city should be given up to a numerous body of devotees whom he expressly styles *Gentiles*, and that they should tread down this sacred place during the period of 42 months or 1260 days *.

I scarcely need here remark, that *events* have demonstrated these 1260 prophetic days to be 1260 literal years: for the period in question is confessedly the same as the three times and a half, which Daniel allots to the tyranny of the little Roman horn; and that little Roman horn is described as springing up *synchronically* with those ten larger horns, which a Popish commentator himself acknowledges to be the ten Gothic kingdoms that were erected within the Roman Empire during the fifth and sixth centuries †: therefore the 1260 days can

* Rev. ix. 20. xi. 2.

† Bp. Walmesley's Gen. Hist. p. 120.

scarcely

Digitized by Google

scarcely have commenced later than the seventh century; and, consequently (since the events, which mark their termination, *have not yet taken place*), must both be 1260 natural years, and must likewise be 1260 natural years specially viewed as connected with the state of the Roman Empire ever since the seventh century. This I need scarcely *here* remark: my object for adducing at present the declaration of St. John, that *the Gentiles* should tread the holy city or the Christian Church under foot during the space of 42 months (for even a Popish commentator, Bp. Walmesley, fully acknowledges, that by *the holy city* we are to understand *the Christian Church* *), is this: that, since the apostle brands with the name of *Gentiles* or *virtual demonolatrous pagans* those who should prevail within the Christian Church, during a period which cannot have commenced very long after the division of the Roman Empire into ten Gothic kingdoms; poetical decorum and concinnity require him to treat of the practices of these *Gentiles within the Church*, in the phraseology, and in consonance with the machinery, of ancient Paganism.

It is on the very same principle, that, having applied the name of *Babylon* to the collective society of these ecclesiastical Gentiles, he thenceforth speaks of it in terms appropriate to the *literal* Babylon. Hence he styles his mystical Babylon, which every Popish expositor is compelled to identify in *some*

* Gen. Hist. p. 325—328.

 sense

Digitized by Google

sense with Rome, *a harlot* rather than *an adulteress:* for, as he is professedly describing those whom he denominates *Gentiles*, notwithstanding they bear rule during all the middle ages in the holy city or the Christian Church, he must needs, would he be consistent with his own language, speak of their demonolatrous apostasy in terms suited to their prototype the *literal* hero-worshipping Gentiles.

This same apostasy and these same Gentiles are foretold by St. Paul in his prophecy respecting the man of sin. He therefore, in like manner and on similar grounds, while he exhibits the head of the apostasy seated as a god in the very temple of God or in the Christian Church; studiously, as one treating of a new race of Gentiles, employs, throughout, the identical phraseology of the ancient pagan Mysteries.

I. To illustrate these remarks, let us begin with noticing the poetical machinery, which St. Paul has used in the construction of his prophecy respecting the man of sin: for nothing can afford a better introduction to our main subject, the poetical machinery of the Apocalypse.

We have already heard the learned apostle, speaking of *the* MYSTERY *of the Gospel* and of *the* MYSTERY *of godliness:* we must now attend to his prediction of *a great* MYSTERY *of iniquity*, which at some then future time should afflict and pollute the Church.

His phraseology is here again borrowed from the language and pageants of the Orgies.

Digitized by Google

During the process of initiation, many dreadful and portentous apparitions flitted before the eyes of the aspirants. These lying phantoms seemed to rise out of the ground: their forms were terrible and strangely monstrous: thunder and lightning marked their appearance: and they were attended by certain canine figures, whose loud howlings resounded throughout the whole temple. At length the god, who came with these specious wonders, was himself revealed to the enraptured devotee. Illuminated with a brilliant flame, and exhibited as a present deity in the very adytum of the temple, the self-conspicuous image of nature, that universal hieroglyphic of the great father, was presented to the wondering eyes of the now initiated aspirant.

To such pageants and such phraseology the apostle alludes in his famous prediction respecting the man of sin, that superstitiously venerated father and demigod of a corrupt Christian community.

"That day shall not come, except there first come "an apostasy, and that man of sin be REVEALED, "the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth "himself above all that is called God or that is "worshipped: so that HE AS GOD SITTETH IN THE "TEMPLE OF GOD, SHEWING HIMSELF THAT HE "IS GOD. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet "with you, I told you these things? And now ye "know what with-holdeth that he might be RE-"VEALED in his time. For the MYSTERY of ini-"quity doth already work: only he, that now "letteth, will let until he be taken out of the way.

"And

Digitized by Google

" And then shall that wicked one be REVEALED,
" whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of
" his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness
" of his coming: even him, whose COMING is after
" the working of Satan, WITH ALL POWER AND
" SIGNS AND LYING WONDERS AND WITH ALL
" DECEIVABLENESS of unrighteousness in them that
" perish; because they received not the love of THE
" TRUTH, that they might be saved *."

With this remarkable description let us compare the pageants and accredited phraseology of a papal inauguration.

When all is duly prepared and when expectation stands on the very tiptoe, the lordly pontiff is revealed to his gazing votaries, seated upon the high altar in the adytum of the temple, and making the Lord's table his footstool. In this attitude he receives what is called *the adoration* of the cardinals: a ceremony represented on the medals of Martin V; where two of them appear crowning the Pope while two others kneel before him, with the inscription *Whom they create they adore.* Henceforth the style and titles of the new god correspond with his inaugural worship. " Our Lord God the Pope; ano-
" ther God upon earth; king of kings, and lord of
" lords. The same is the dominion of God and of
" the Pope. To believe, that our Lord God the
" Pope might not decree as he decreed, it were a
" matter of heresy. The power of the Pope is

* 2 Thess. ii. 3—10.

 " greater

" greater than all created power; and extends itself " to things celestial, terrestrial, and infernal. The " Pope doeth whatsoever he listeth, even things un- " lawful; and is more than God *."

Such are the frantic ebullitions of impious vanity, which mark out, as the predicted head of the demonolatrous apostasy, that Italian priest; whom his adherents fondly denominate *the centre of catholic unity*, and from whom they arrogantly pronounce it heretical to separate †.

II. This same MYSTERY of iniquity, the revelation of which is briefly predicted by St. Paul, forms the chief subject of that remarkable sacred drama, which the beloved disciple was inspired to write for the information and consolation of the fainting Church.

As the apostasy, foretold by St. Paul, was to consist of a specious relapsing into the Demonolatry of the Gentiles; and as he was thence, in express reference to the pagan Orgies of the great father, directed by the Holy Spirit to style it A MYSTERY: so, in a longer and more ample prophecy, which treats both of that apostasy and of various other formidable enemies of the Gospel, St. John was led by the same Spirit, both to apply the identical name of MYSTERY to the Church over which the man of sin pre-

* Bonan. Numism. Pontif. Rom. apud Daubuz. p. 582. Jewell. Apolog. Downham. de Antichrist. Poole's English Annot. Barrow on the Pope's Suprem. Introduct. Newton on the Proph. vol. ii. p. 376, 377. vol. iii. p. 266.

† Rutter's Key. p. 248. Gen. Hist. p. 451, 452.

sides,

Digitized by Google

sides, and most curiously to frame the whole prediction from beginning to end upon the very model of the ancient Orgies *.

In each case, the reason, as I have already observed, was this. God foresaw, that a vast body of Christians would readopt, under a different name, the very principles and practices of Gentilism. Nothing therefore could be more strictly appropriate or more poetically decorous, than to foretell this perverse return to Paganism under imagery studiously borrowed from an initiation into the old Mysteries.

1. The prologue of the drama, in setting forth its *name*, serves at the same time, by that very act, to convey no obscure intimation of the *plan* which its author was about to adopt; a plan, if I may compare sacred things with profane, exactly analogous to that which Virgil has adopted in the sixth book of the Eneid. His careful introduction of the formula, *Begone, ye profane*, before his hero, under the guidance of the hierophantic Sibyl, prepares to encounter all the wonders of an initiatory descent into Hades and an evasion into Elysium, sufficiently points out the drift of what is about to follow: and, in a similar manner, since the apostle was directed to style his drama THE REVELATION *of Jesus Christ;* we may well expect, that the drama itself will relate to certain MYSTERIES †.

Nor shall we be disappointed. Even in the very prologue, the apparition of our Lord, as I have al-

* Rev. xvii. 5. † Rev. i. 1.

ready

ready had occasion to observe, adopts the language of the Orgies; and, personating an ancient hierophant, claims to himself the KEYS of HADES and of DEATH, speaks of a MYSTERY of seven stars, alludes to the OPENING and SHUTTING of a sacred DOOR, and is exhibited as being THE FIRST-BEGOTTEN OF THE DEAD *.

2. At the close of the prologue, the drama commences: and it characteristically commences with THE OPENING OF A DOOR in heaven, and with an invitation to COME and HEAR what was about to be revealed †. The apostle obeys: and is ushered into a magnificent temple, constructed indeed upon the model of that at Jerusalem so far as its internal arrangement is concerned, but alluding at the same time to that most ample building within which the Mysteries were wont to be celebrated.

In this temple he beholds various pageants, which successively present themselves upon the opening of six seals: and especially, when the sixth is broken, he perceives the terrified pagan sovereigns and great men hiding themselves, precisely as they are represented to do by Isaiah, in the consecrated dens and rocky Mithratic caverns of the mountains ‡.

3. After this he witnesses the SEALING of those saints, who had been perfected or initiated into the Mysteries of the Gospel §.

Here he alludes to a custom, which prevailed

* Rev. i. 18, 20. iii. 7, 8, 20. i. 5.
† Rev. iv. 1.
‡ Rev. iv, v, vi.
§ Rev. vii.

throughout

throughout the whole heathen world and which still prevails throughout Hindostan, of SEALING THE FOREHEAD of the initiated with the peculiar mark of the god to whose service they had devoted themselves; and, in another part of the Apocalypse, when the mishapen vehicle of the mysterious harlot is first described, he again refers to the same practice; informing us, that the monster caused all his votaries of whatsoever rank to receive A MARK in their right hand or in their foreheads *.

4. Next, after a short SILENCE allusive to the silence enjoined upon the aspirants by the officiating hierophant, he beholds, on the opening of the seventh seal, a series of other pageants: and at length, when the sixth minister has sounded his trumpet, a mighty angel descends from heaven, holding in his hand a little book. This book, when the angel has solemnly fixed a time for the PERFECTING of God's MYSTERY, he delivers to the apostle with an injunction that he should eat it. St. John obeys: and the taste of it is found to resemble that of HONEY †.

In this passage we have an allusion to the medicated preparation of HONEY, which the hierophant was wont to present to the aspirants in the course of their initiation. Both that production, and the insects which produce it, were esteemed peculiarly sacred. Honey was used in the embalming of the dead: and, as every aspirant was mystically said to die or to descend into Hades, the honeyed potion was

* Rev. xiii. 16, 17. † Rev. viii. 1—13. ix. x.

adminis-

Digitized by Google

administered to him previous to his descent into the mimic Inferum. Yet he died, only to be born again into a better state of existence: hence, from certain peculiarities attributed to bees, the new-born souls in the Mysteries were denominated *bees*, and a bee was said to be a form of the great universal mother herself*.

5. These preliminaries having been gone through, the prophet is made to behold a series of terrific visions, which answer to the first or doleful part of the Mysteries; during which the aspirant had a fearful walk through darkness visible, encompassed by ghastly bestial apparitions with numerous heads and mishapen bodies. Those dogs of darkness seemed to rise up out of the abyss or out of the bowels of the earth; and, with horrid yells, sought to spring upon him and to impede his progress. Their madness however was restrained: and the aspirant, if his courage failed not, accomplished his darkling march in safety.

(1.) The chief of these phantoms was a form, we are assured, of the deity venerated in the Mysteries: for he is identified with the god of Hades himself. Hence the varied fortunes of the god might properly be ascribed to his symbolical representation.

Of this circumstance St. John, even in the midst of predicting a future event, has most curiously availed himself.

The great father was said to be the child of the

* Porphyr. de antr. nymph. p. 259—263.

sea:

Digitized by Google

sea: and, after having long floated on its surface, he was thought at last to have safely reached the shore. He was likewise supposed to have been slain, to have lain dead for a certain space of time, and then to have been restored to life; or, as the matter was sometimes differently expressed, to have existed, to have vanished into a state of non-existence, and again to have existed.

All these matters the prophet ascribes to his chief bestial hieroglyphic. It is said to rise up out of the sea, and thence to emerge upon dry land: and it is further represented, as having been slain, as lying dead, and as being restored to life; or, in varied phraseology, to have been, to have ceased to be, and yet again to be *.

(2.) Another eminent figure of the great father was the mystic serpent; which sometimes was decorated with the head of a man or a bull or a dog, and which at other times was furnished with seven distinct heads.

Here again the prophet avails himself of a pagan symbol: and, as Satan was the original seducer into idolatry although that evil spirit might not be *literally* worshipped by the Gentiles, he most aptly shadows him out by an hieroglyphic, borrowed no doubt in the first instance like the heathen hieroglyphic itself from the history of the fall, but more immediately derived in its monstrous compound form from the seven-headed serpent of the East †.

* Rev. xiii. 1—10. xvii. 8. † Rev. xii. 11—17. xix. 20.

(3.) In

Digitized by Google

(3.) In the Samothracian Mysteries, which were imported by the Pelasgic Shepherds from Upper India, the great father under the Sanscrit name of *Axieros* was attended by an inferior god denominated *Cadmil*, who acted the part of a sacerdotal minister to himself and the great mother.

Exactly analogous to this character is the second emblematical beast of the Apocalypse, who causes all mankind to worship the slain though revived first beast, and who in his priestly capacity is denominated *the false prophet* *.

6. The pagans were greatly addicted to the veneration of names; both ascribing a magical potency to them, and often mystically designating the title of their universal father by a number produced from the arithmetical letters of which it was composed. Hence we find him denominated *Twelve hundred and eighteen;* because that number is the sum, which results from the letters that compose the title *Thouth* †.

To this practice St. John alludes, when he assigns to his ocean-born wild beast a name, of which the number is six hundred and sixty six ‡.

7. While the apostle is viewing these ghastly phantoms, an angel approaches to him, and assumes the precise character of an ancient hierophant. "Come," says he, "and I will SHEW unto thee the

* Rev. xiii. 11—15. xvi. 13. xix. 20.

† Θ 9, Ω 800, Υ 400, Θ 9 = 1218.

‡ Rev. xiii. 17, 18.

"judgment

Digitized by Google

" judgment of the great whore;" that destructive and almost incomprehensible portent, the very offspring of Tartarus, the Hecatè of the new demonolatrous system *. Under his guidance, St. John is brought to a nearer inspection of the monster beast, which now serves as the vehicle of a female figure. This figure bears in her hand an intoxicating cup, out of which she causes all her votaries to drink: and upon her forehead is written the name of MYSTERY. Such was the groupe presented to the imagination of the prophet: but, in words or in figurative description, the angelic hierophant exhibits the woman under a somewhat different aspect; " I will shew unto thee " the judgment of the great whore, THAT SITTETH " UPON MANY WATERS †."

Both these paintings are taken from the mythology of the Gentiles, which originated at Babylon, the mystic name bestowed by St. John upon the harlot.

The figure of the woman has been borrowed from that of the great universal mother, who in the pagan Mysteries was venerated conjunctively with the great father, and who was deemed his consort or energy. This personage was commonly depicted riding upon some sort of animal, either a bull or a lion or a tiger: but she was also celebrated as the goddess, who springs out of the ocean, and who floats navicularly on the surface of the mighty waters. Her Mysteries were the same as those of the great father: and her attributes and rites were such, as might well vindi-

* Orph. Argon. ver. 973—975. † Rev. xvii. 1—5.

cate

cate to her the appellation of *the grand harlot*. In pagan lore she is described as bearing a sacred cup. Sometimes also she is said to have assumed the form of that cup: and, when thus metamorphosed, she safely navigated the boundless stream of ocean. Out of this cup, they, who were initiated into her Orgies, were required to drink a medicated potion: and the formula, which they used on this occasion, was; "I have drunk out of the goblet, I have borne "the cup, I have entered into the bridal cham-"ber *."

The whole picture then of the apocalyptic harlot has been taken from the Mysteries: and accordingly, as St. John intimates that the very name of MYSTERY was written conspicuously on her forehead; so, when he was wondering at so strange a sight, the hierophantic angel immediately says, "I will tell thee "the MYSTERY of the woman and of the beast that "carrieth her †." His interpreter then goes on to explain the whole matter, particularly touching upon the DEATH and REVIVAL experienced by the terrific symbol.

8. Having now beheld the hieroglyphical monsters in the height of their power, the apostle is summoned to view their subjugation and destruction. Even here he still borrows his machinery from those Mysteries, which he had made the prototype of his drama.

* Clem. Alex. Cohort. p. 11. Jul. Firm. de error. prof. rel. p. 36.

† Rev. xvii. 5, 7

In

Digitized by Google

In the celebration of the Orgies, a sacred LAKE, esteemed the lake of Tartarus, was held to be of prime importance. Over this lake the aspirants were ferried in a small boat shaped like the lunar crescent; and into it the images of the great father and the great mother were sometimes religiously plunged.

Such a LAKE St. John introduces into the Apocalypse: and, still denominating it, as the epopts were wont to denominate it, *the* LAKE *of* HELL, he exhibits it as a terrific lake of fire; into which, not piacularly but penally, are precipitated the wild beast, the false prophet, and at length the serpent himself*.

9. After the apostle has been thus conducted by the officiating hierophant through what answers to the first or doleful part of the Mysteries, namely the passage of the aspirant through a region of death and darkness and horror: he finally approaches to that exhilarating vision, which corresponds with the second or joyful part of the Mysteries; when, emerging from the gloom and ghastly spectres of Hades, the now initiated devotee suddenly enters into the illuminated mountain-island of Elysium, where he encounters nothing but images of ravishing delight†.

(1.) Here, in reference to that grand MUNDANE RENOVATION which formed so prominent a feature

* Rev. xix. 20. xx. 10, 14.

† Virg. Æneid. lib. vi. ver. 637—678.

in

Digitized by Google

in the doctrine of the Orgies, St. John beholds "A NEW HEAVEN and A NEW EARTH; for THE "FIRST HEAVEN and THE FIRST EARTH were "PASSED AWAY *."

Here he beholds, not merely a single narrow DOOR through which the toiling aspirant with difficulty gained admission, but a glorious city with twelve ample GATES which are never SHUT †.

Here he beholds, not the artificial STREAM of a mimic Elysium, but a pure RIVER OF THE WATER OF LIFE, a substantial reality faintly shadowed out by the oriental AMRITA WATER OF IMMORTALITY ‡.

(2.) Yet, open as the gates always are, still the PROFANE are incapable of admission: "there shall "in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither "whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a "lye §." They who have been initiated into the MYSTERY of the Gospel, are alone suffered to pass through the gates of the heavenly city and to hear THE FINAL DISCOURSE OF THE HIEROPHANT.

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the "end, the first and the last;" exclaims an awful voice from the adytum. "Blessed are they that do "his commandments, that they may have a right to "the tree of life, and may ENTER IN THROUGH "THE GATES into the city. For WITHOUT are" the whole body of the PROFANE; "dogs, and sorcerers,

* Rev. xxi. 1.
† Rev. xxi. 12, 25.
‡ Rev. xxii. 1.
§ Rev. xxi. 27. xxii. 15.

"and

Digitized by Google

" and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters,
" and whosoever loveth and maketh a lye. I am
" the root and the offspring of David, the bright
" and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride
" say, COME. And let him that heareth say, COME.
" And let him, that is athirst, COME. And, who-
" soever will, let him take THE WATER OF LIFE
" freely. He, which testifieth these things, saith;
" Surely, I COME QUICKLY *."

(3.) At the conclusion of the Eleusinian Mysteries, the epopts were dismissed with the Sanscrit words, *Conx Om Pax* or (as the Hindoos pronounce them) *Cansch Om Pacsh.* Of these, *Cansch* signifies *the object of our more ardent wishes: Om* is the famous monosyllable, used, like *Amen*, at the beginning and conclusion of a prayer or any religious rite: and *Pacsh* denotes *the change or turn of work or duty* †.

Similar to this formula is the closing valediction of the Apocalypse. AMEN. EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS! THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN ‡.

* Rev. xxii. 13—17, 20. † Asiat. Res. vol. v. p. 300.
‡ Rev. xxii. 20, 21.

SUPPLE-

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

SUPPLEMENT.

I take the present opportunity of correcting an error, which I had suffered to pass in the former editions of this work.

In Dan. viii. 23. I have supposed the Hebrew word אחרית, expressed in our common English translation *the latter time*, to denote *afterhood* or *a period subsequent to another specified period:* whence I have interpreted the passage as importing, that *the king of fierce countenance should stand up during a period subsequent to the domination of the four Greek kingdoms which sprang out of the divided Macedonian Empire.* See above chap. v. § II. 2. (4.) p. 326. Thus it appears, that, from the turn of our English version, I was misled to esteem the word in question *a notation of time.*

But this was a mistake. The word, as it here occurs, is a notation, not of *time*, but of *place*. It certainly ought to be rendered, as in Psalm cxxxix. 9, *the hindermost part* or *the region behind:* so that the fierce king is, in reality, described, as standing up BEHIND the territories of the Macedonian he-goat, which were partitioned after the death of Alexander among his four principal captains. Accordingly, Mohammedism sprang up in Arabia BEHIND the Greek Empire of Alexander: and yet afterwards, by the invasion of Syria, it became the little spiritual horn of the he-goat. This last circumstance could not be represented in an hieroglyphic, otherwise than the prophet *has* represented it. Invading Syria, Mohammedism appeared to the eye of Daniel to spring from the great Syrian horn; just as the ten Gothic kingdoms of the Roman Empire, which truly originated *without* its limits, seemed, when hieroglyphically depicted, to be horns growing from the head of the fourth beast. I may observe, that the present passage is excellently rendered in the Greek, Επ' ισχατων της βασιλειας αυτων: just as we read in the Acts, ἐως ἐσχάτου

ισχατα της γης; and, with yet more exact correspondence, in Theocritus and Herodotus, επ' ισχατα γας, and τα ισχατα γης. See Acts i. 8. xiii. 47. Theoc. Idyll. xv. ver. 8. Herod. Hist. lib. iii. c. 25. as adduced by Parkhurst Gr. Lex. vox ισχατος § IV. So the lxx themselves render Psalm cxxxix. 9, εις τα ισχατα της θαλασσης.

Mr. Mede long since noted a similar error in our English version of Dan. vii. 24. It reads, *another shall rise* AFTER *them;* whereas it ought to have read, *another shall rise* BEHIND *them.* Thus, accordingly, reads the Greek: και ΟΠΙΣΩ αυτων αναστησεται ετερος.

THE END.

Printed by R. and R. Gilbert, St. John's Square, London.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google