Douglas,
of
Cavers.
AN EXAMINATION
OF THE
FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CHAPTERS
OF
Mr. GIBBON's HISTORY
OF THE
Decline and Fall of the ROMAN EMPIRE.

In which his view of the
PROGRESS of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION
Is shewn to be founded on the MISREPRESENTATION
of the AUTHORS he cites:

AND
Numerous Instances of his INACCURACY and PLAGIARISM are produced.

BY HENRY EDWARDS DAVIS, B.A.
OF BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"" When at every Step—I find you misquoting the Words, and misrepresenting
the Sense of the Authors, it is not in my Power (I confess) to think you a
fair and impartial Writer."" EP. PEACE'S Reply to Dr. MIDDLETON.

"Ne gloriari libeat alienis bonis."" PHÆDRUS.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, IN PALL-MALL.
MDCCCLXXVIII.
ADVERTISEMENT.

The whole of this work was printed off before I perused Dr. Chelsum's second edition of his Remarks, and Mr. Burgh's "Inquiry into the Belief of the first Christians," &c. But though I now find, that some few of my observations had occurred to these gentlemen; so extensive a list of Mr. G.'s misrepresentations, inaccuracies, and plagiarisms remained untouched by them, or by others, that, I flatter myself, the world will not consider this publication as unnecessary.
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ERRATA.

Page 2. line 4. dele bad
11. note. infert artes before sollerti. Make a stop after percepisset
20. line 1. for more distant, read later
72. note 1. 2. read διδοσκαλον
77. 1. 14. after of, read our
78. note. for inbae, read in bac
85. note 1. ult. instead of a period after κοσμον. it should be a Greek note of interrogation;
90. 1. 21. after does not, read at all
98. 19. for sooken, read spoken
104. note 1. 2. for Ignatianus, read Ignatianas
115. 1. 13. read no other objection
130. note 1. 8. for affici, read affici
134. 1. 15. for s'etendit, read s'étendent
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163. note 1. 8. for nor, read not
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235. 15. for animale, read animal

INTRO-
INTRODUCTION.

IT has been judiciously observed, that it is not the business of the historian to profess himself a sceptic in matters of religion.

Machiavel, whose detestable principles, in his political works, are well known, found it necessary to assume a very different character, when he wrote the History of Florence. And even David Hume, in his History of England, is content with glancing at Sacred Truth by some oblique hints.

It is therefore to be wished, that Mr. Gibbon, satisfied with the applause due to him as an elegant historian, had not produced himself as an avowed champion for infidelity, in his fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, which have cast a blemish on the whole work.

It does not appear to have been essential to his history to touch at all on "the Rise and Progress of Christianity," much less to make so long a digression, which seems to have been wrought up with so much art, and care, and ingenuity, that we can easily trace the author's predilection for the subject. He treats it indeed con amore; which has induced many judicious persons to suspect, that the rest of the volume was written to introduce these two chapters with a better grace, and more decent appearance.

However, whether the conjecture be founded on truth, or not; had our author followed his design,
design, as "a candid enquiry," which he professes to do, he would have had a better right to our approbation and esteem.

The artful insinuations of so agreeable a writer, imperceptibly seduce his readers, who, charmed with his style, and deluded with the vain pomp of words, may be apt to pay too much regard to the pernicious sentiments he means to convey. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary, that they should be reminded of the unfair proceedings of such an insidious friend, who offers the deadly draught in a golden cup, that they may be less sensible of their danger.

The remarkable mode of quotation, which Mr. Gibbon adopts, must immediately strike every one who turns to his notes. He sometimes only mentions the author, perhaps the book, and often leaves the reader the toil of finding out, or rather guessing at the passage.

The policy, however, is not without its design and use. By endeavouring to deprive us of the means of comparing him with the authorities he cites, he flattered himself, no doubt, that he might safely have recourse to misrepresentation; that his inaccuracies might escape the piercing eye of criticism; and that he might indulge his wit and spleen, in fathering the abfurdest opinions on the most venerable writers of antiquity. For, often, on examining his references, when they are to be traced, we shall find him supporting his cause by:

* Ch. xv. p. 449. 2d edition.
† We may, with Virgil, metaphorically compare the beauties of his language, to the fragrant flowers which conceal and shelter a snake;

"Qui legitis flores, et humi nascentia fraga,
"Rigidas, o pueri! fugite hinc, lates anguis in herbâ."

Bucolic. Eclog. iii. lin. 52, 93.

manifest
manifest falsification, and perpetually assuming to himself the strange privilege of inserting in his text what the writers referred to give him no right to advance on their authority.

This breach of the common faith reposed in authors, is peculiarly indefensible, as it deceives all those who have not the leisure, the means, nor the abilities, of searching out the passages in the originals.

Our author often proposes second, or even third handed notions as new; and has gained a name among some, by retailing objections which have been long ago started, and as long since refuted and exploded.

In fact, sceptics and free-thinkers are of a date so old, and their objections were urged so early, and in such numbers, that our modern pretenders to this wisdom and philosophy can with difficulty invent anything new, or discover, with all their malevolent penetration, a fresh flaw. The same set of men have been alone distinguished by different names and appellations, from Porphyry, Celsus, or Julian, in the first ages of Christianity; down to Voltaire, Hume, or Gibbon in the present.

Such is the plan of our author. It must be mine to obviate and oppose it. In order to which, I have selected several of the more notorious instances of his misrepresentation and error, reducing them to their respective heads, and subjoining a long list of almost incredible inaccuracies, and such striking proofs of servile plagiarism, as the world will be surprized to meet with in an author who puts in so bold a claim to originality and extensive reading.

These offensive chapters of Mr. Gibbon's History have indeed met with some excellent remarks from
from a learned divine* of the university of Oxford. Nor has Cambridge neglected to send forth an able champion † in defence of our common faith ‡. But as both these gentlemen have confined themselves rather to confute the principles of Mr. G. than to expose the indefensible arts of supporting them, to which he has recourse, I flatter myself, the reader of the following pages will not accuse me of engaging in a controversy already exhausted.

* Dr. Chelsum, the author of "The Remarks on Mr. Gibbon's History of the Roman Empire."
† Dr. Warson, author of "The Apology for Christianity."
‡ Oxford seems to be particularly pointed out by a sneering sarcastical observation of Mr. Gibbon's (Note 78, c. xv.) that its "University conferred degrees on the opponents of Dr. Middleton," his favourite author. But, we should imagine, it cannot appear otherwise than a commendation, that it then expressed a just indignation against the cavils of Dr. Middleton, as it does now against those of his follower, Mr. Gibbon.
AN

EXAMINATION

OF THE

FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CHAPTERS

OF

Mr. GIBBON's HISTORY, &c. &c.

MR. GIBBON's own words, in the advertisement prefixed to his history, will most aptly precede the instances I mean to produce, in confirmation of the heavy charge I have brought against him. "Diligence and accuracy (says he) are the only merits which an historical writer may ascribe to himself; if any merit, indeed, can be assumed from the performance of an indispensible duty. I may, therefore, be allowed to say, that I have carefully examined all the original materials that could illustrate the subject which I had undertaken to treat."

Granting, then, for the present, that our author has performed what he boasts of as his merit, "That he has carefully examined all the original materials," this very circumstance will only serve...
to expose him to severer animadversion. For, I trust, I shall be able to lay before my readers, proofs as flagrant as they are numerous, that if he had consulted the authors, whose authority he had appeals to, only with a view to misrepresent them, he could scarcely have deviated more from plain truth, and fair interpretation of their meaning, than he now does.

Mr. Gibbon having, as a prelude to his attack on Christianity, first introduced the Jews, it may be proper that I should begin by pointing out some of the very extraordinary liberties he has taken, in his account of that people. We are told by him, that "the Jews, who under the Assyrian and Persian monarchies had languished for many ages the most despised portion of their slaves, emerged from their obscurity under the successors of Alexander. And as they multiplied to a surprizing degree in the East, and afterwards in the west, they soon excited the curiosity and wonder of other nations." In this short extract are to be found many instances of inaccuracy, if not ignorance. In the first place, the Jews were never under the Assyrian yoke; for the kingdom of Judea survived that monarchy, and was ruined by the Babylonians. And when they were carried into captivity, they were by no means held in low esteem; but, on the contrary, seem to have been greatly regarded. The chief officers of the courts where they resided, were often chosen from among them. They were admitted as statesmen; made cup-bearers to the princes; and appointed governors of provinces*

* See Daniel, c. i. ver. 3. 17.—c. ii. v. 48.—c. iii. v. 30.—c. vi. v. 1. 3.
Nehemiah, c. ii. v. 1.—Ezra, c. iv. v. 19.
See also Josephus, lib. xxi. throughout, of the Antiquities of the Jews.
It is equally unjust to speak of them as slaves to the Persians: For the first king of that country gave them permission to go home; and this, in the very first year of his reign. The permit seems to have been general: so that those who stayed behind, must have been in a state of free service: Their not accepting of the leave, plainly shews it.

There is scarcely in history an instance of a conquered people being so respected; and nothing can be a greater proof of it, than their wonderful return. The Philistines, Edomites, Moabites, Hamathites, with many other ancient states in the vicinity of Judea, were about the same time subdued; and seem to have undergone a like captivity. But we do not read of any of them returning; much less of their being again constituted into a nation. And though they may not have been immediately extinct; yet their poor remains dwindled soon to nothing; while the Jews became a respectable people, and, as the author confesses, "excited the curiosity and wonder of other nations."

It is to be observed, that Mr. G. not only speaks of their being held in great disrepute by their conquerors; but that they were despised for many ages. This is strange; for their captivity was but of seventy years duration; so that upon their return, some, who had seen the former temple, were present at the dedication of the second. But the author will perhaps say, that he includes the Israelites, the ten tribes, in the account here given. But they never returned, and he must speak with great inaccuracy to call the ten tribes Jews, and to talk of their "emerging from ob-scenity:" for they were never reinstalled; and we have scarcely any history concerning them.

* Ezra, ch. i. ver. 3.

B 4

But
But the author proceeds, and assures us, that the Jews did emerge: and that it was "under the successors of Alexander." He does not say, that it was in the time of those kings, but under them. By this we might be led to suppose, that this success was not owing to their own superiority and merit, nor to the divine assistance; but to the favour and indulgence of those princes. Now it is notorious, that the Jews never found any more bitter enemies, than some of these kings. Before the time of Alexander, the Jews had begun to recover themselves, and were increasing in affluence and splendour. But, upon his death, Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, his successor in Egypt, at one sweep carried off one hundred thousand of the inhabitants of Judea; of which thirty thousand were chosen persons, whom he forced to serve in his armies. The residue he gave up for slaves to his soldiers. He demolished the walls of Jerusalem, and transplanted many of the people to Egypt, and others were obliged to settle in the regions of Barca and Cyrene*. Nothing could be more critical to a growing state, than these misfortunes. But they were not to be compared to the cruelties of Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, the tyrant of Syria. He defiled their temple, and persecuted them for their religion in a shocking manner; putting numbers of them, on that account, to death. In short, he was very intolerant; and the inveteracy of the Greeks in general was such, as that nothing but the divine protection could have saved the Jews from ruin; for their utter extirpation was aimed

* See Josephus, Antiq. lib. xii. c. 1.—Contra Apion, lib. 1.
Eutychii Chron. — Appiani Syriaca. — Abrittas de lxx Interp.
Uler's Chronol. p. 221.—Pridaex's Connection, vol. ii.
Such was the mild influence under which Mr. G. supposes the Jews to have flourished; absurdly placing to their advantage, what tended to their ruin. Let us now turn our eyes back, and reconsider the account given by our author about the Jews being in servitude under the Assyrians, and under the Persians: and how they languished for many ages; and were the most despised portion of all their slaves: that they were of little consequence in former times; but emerged from their obscurity under the successors of Alexander: when they were dispersed to the east, and to the west; and soon became the wonder of the world. What a strange assemblage is here? It is like Milton's chaos, "without bound, without dimension: where time and place are lost." In short, what does this display afford us, but a deal of boyish colouring, to the prejudice of much good history.

The author will perhaps tell us, that he has the authority of Tacitus for all that he alleges. But the misfortune is, that Tacitus was very little acquainted with the ancient state of the Jews; and, setting this aside, there is nothing in the quotation, which comes up to the author's purpose. He totally mistakes the meaning of it, when he alludes to the Jewish captivity, and speaks of the people, as the most desppicable of Slaves. I cannot find any thing of this purport in the Roman historian. He seems to have known nothing of the captivity; nor does he mention any state of slavery. There is, moreover, a mistake in Mr. G's quotation; for, according to him, the passage is—"despectissima pars servitutis," (the most despised part of their

* See Diodori Ecloga, lib. xl. p. 921.
Taciti Hist. lib. v. c. 8.

Slavery
Slavery) but in the original we find it "ipse speclat. ma pars servientium."—of their foreign subjects.

This mistake, I am confident, was not designed; and must therefore be imputed to a slip in memory: but it is, however, of consequence; for the terms serviens and servire do not necessarily denote slavery. They may be applied to any people, who have been conquered, and rendered tributary and dependant *. Many nations have been reduced to a state of subservience and even vassalage: and yet have never been deemed slaves. The purport of the account given by the Roman historian, is this. He has been speaking of the chief city of the Jews, and of their sumptuous temple, and polity: and he supposes, that they began to make a figure soon after the time of Alexander the Great. He mentions their grandeur, the rise of which he dates from that era; but, excepting some few vague traditions, he seems quite ignorant of every circumstance that has preceded. His words are as follow: "† A great part of Judea is scattered in

Dion Cassius speaking of Phraates says, Ουτας δε Αραβιας παρ τινι τοις Ρωμαιοις ΔΟΥΛΕΥΟΝΤΩΝ μετοικει τις εκεινης Σαλαμενίς. Lib. xxxvii. p. 20. Edit. R. Steph. "He, Phraates, reigned over the Arabians, who at that time were subject to the Romans, as far as the Red Sea."

The Author does not mean, by the term ΔΟΥΛΕΥΟΝΤΩΝ, they were subject, or servile to," that the Arabians were really slaves, but only that they were tributary.


Hill. lib. v. cap. 9.

† Would not the passage read better, if instead of primit, we read firmis?
villages: they have also towns or cities: Jerusalem is the metropolis. They have a temple there immensely rich, and the city is strongly fortified, as is also the palace. The temple is shut up within; the Jews have access only to the doors; none but the priests pass over the threshold. Whilst the East was under the dominion of the Assyrians, and the Medes and Persians, they were the most despised part of their subjects. After that the Macedonians gained the superiority, King Antiochus endeavoured to destroy their superstition, and to infuse into them the manners of Greece, in order to transform and amend a barbarous race; was impeded in his designs by the Parthian war.

In the account here given, the historian is not speaking of the Jews being carried into captivity, nor of any state of slavery; for, as I said before, he was totally unacquainted with it. He is speaking of Judea being a province to the eastern monarchs, and, he says, that the people were the meanest of all that were tributary. His reason for saying so was, because he had never heard of them antecedent to this æra; and he, therefore, makes his ignorance an argument for their obscurity.

It is to be observed, that Tacitus seems to have had as great a prejudice against the Jews, as Mr. Gibbon has; and it is therefore no wonder, that the latter so often applies to his authority. It should, however, have been considered by Mr. Gibbon, that whoever adopts another's evidence, at the same time makes himself accessory to his mistakes and absurdities. Of these, I think some traces may be found in the following quotation about the same people. Tacitus has been speaking of Antiochus being called off by the revolt of the Parthians
thians under Arsaces; and then adds, * * At that
time the Macedonians being weak in power, the
Parthians not yet arrived at their strength, and
the Roman authority at a great distance, the
Jews elected their own kings." It is well
known, that Tacitus was fond of refinement, and
would fain find out the spring of action in every
great event. Hence, instead of being conducted
by the sage and steady historian, we are often mis-
tled by the subtility of the politician, till we are
quite bewildered. Thus, in the extract above,
having mentioned that the Jewish nation grew
great, and erected themselves into a kingdom, he
would likewise give us the reasons for this rise and
alteration. But he founds it all upon negative
principles; and, instead of shewing what was the
cause, he tells us, what was not the impediment,
which is surely a strange way of proceeding. It
arose, we should imagine, from their being popu-
lous and powerful; and, at the same time, from
the intrigues and ambition of particulars, who
were desirous of a change in the government. No,
says our historian; the reason of their admitting
royalty was, because the Macedonians were weak,
the Parthians immature, and the Romans at a
great distance. He might have also inserted, be-
cause they were not ruined by a famine, nor de-
stroyed by a pestilence, nor overwhelmed by a de-
luge. Their first king was Aristobulus (A. U. C.
649.) between whom and their return from captivi-
ty, was an interval of above 420 years. Hence
they might have had a king, if they had chosen it,
before the Macedonian, or the Parthian, was at all
known; nay, before the name of the Roman had
well reached to the foot of Italy.

* "Tum Judæi: Macedonibus invalidis, Parthis nondum adulti,
itis, & Romani procul aberant, sibi ipsi rege: impostrere."
It is remarkable, that not one of the authors referred to by Mr. Gibbon*, in confirmation of his account of the Jews, mentions "their emerging from obscurity;" much less do they specify the particular period fixed on by our author, "under the successors of Alexander." To what has been already shewn, I shall add the words of Diodorus Siculus.

"† Under the Persian and Macedonian government, from their intermixing with the Heathen World, many of the ancient laws and institutions of the Jews were changed," as having become obsolete.

This change seems to imply a prior establishment; and that the Jews "did not emerge from obscurity" under the Persian or Macedonian empire, but had long before enjoyed the free prerogatives of their laws and liberties. The words of the historian will admit of no other construction; for, what he had before said, absolutely contradicts Mr. Gibbon's assertion.

"After speaking of the Jews coming from Egypt under the guidance of Moses, and extolling his prudence as a legislator, and for training them up to labour and martial discipline:" he continues thus, "†He (Moses) waged war also with the neighbouring nations; and having gained large tracts of land, divided it among the people for an inheritance." And

* Note 2. chap. xv.

† Diodorus Siculus, lib. xl. p. 544.WESTFLEGG. Ed. Κατὰ ἰὸν τῶν οὐρανομοιάς ἑπαρατίας ἐκ τῶν ἀλλοφυλῶν ἑπιμείξιος, ιπται ἄπειρα τῶν Περσῶν ἡγομονίας, καὶ τῶν ταυτοῦ καταλυσάριων Μακεδόνων, πολλαὶ τῶν πατρίων τῶν Ἰουδαίων ὁμοίων ἐσκευασθένη.

Γαῖαν ἑαυτὸν ἐκ καὶ στρατιάς εἰς τὴν ἀποστόλοχα τὰς ἑδίπτι καὶ ἀπὸ καταπτυσάμενος χρυσὶς, κατακλασάριως, again
again he says, "† The Jewish nation was ever very " populous."

It is not easy to say how this account can be made to coincide, even by the skilful Mr. G. with his representation, that "they were the most, " despised portion of slaves," and just "emerged " from obscurity." How could people in such a weak and despicable condition, invade the territories of their powerful neighbours, vanquish their forces, and take possession of their country?

Our author found, that Diodorus made mention of the Jews, and one would suppose, that he therefore deemed it necessary to cite such learned authority, without regarding how widely he differed from him in the relation of the facts, and of important points in their history.

Neither does Justin, another writer appealed to by Mr. Gibbon, authorize this his assertion. He says, that "*Xerxes first subdued the Jews: " afterwards, with the Persian nation, they were "subjected to the Macedonian empire under "Alexander the Great, and were for a long time "servient to it. On revolting from Demetrius, and seeking an alliance with the Romans, "they were restored to their liberty, the first of "all the eastern nations."

This can hardly be said to agree with our author's sentiments. For, if Xerxes first made them tributary, they were previously free. Nor are

† ἦς τὸ γένος τῶν Ιουδαίων ἐν ἑαυτῷ σπουδασμόνιν.

* Justinus, l. xxxvi. c. 2, 3. (8vo. edit. Lugd. Batav. 1650.)

"Primum Xerxes rex Persarum, Judæos domuit: potestas cum "ipsum Persis in ditionem Alexandri Magni venere, diuque in "potestatem Macedonici imperii subjecit Syriæ regno fuere. A "Demetrio cum deficiissent, amicitia Romanorum petita, primum omnium ex orientalibus libertatem receperunt, facile "tunc Romanis de alieno largientibus."
they described as a despicable set of slaves; on the contrary, we find them the very first whom the Romans thought worthy to receive their liberties.

After all, were we even to admit, that Mr. Gibbon had asserted nothing concerning the Jews, but what he had really found in Justin, Diodorus, and Tacitus, would he not deservedly incur our censure, for calling in the testimony of witnesses whom he himself must know to be shamefully ignorant of the facts in question?

Another part of Mr. Gibbon's account of the Jews, though given to us on the authority of Dion Cassius, is not really to be met with in that historian. Our author's words are these: "From the reign of Nero to that of Antoninus Pius, the Jews discovered a fierce impatience of the dominion of Rome, which repeatedly broke out in the most furious massacres and insurrections."

To confirm this, he relates the dreadful accounts of those at Cyrene and Cyprus; and appeals to Dion.

Now, although the reference to Dion in Reimarus's edition, leads us to the dismal relation of

* For instance, Justin says, that "The Jews were exiled from Egypt as contagious—that Joseph used magic arts—that it was the custom of the nation to consecrate the seventh day, called the Sabbath, by a feast—that they, through veneration for their leader, Moses, they in all ages united the regal and sacerdotal office, in one person."

† Chap. xvi. p. 521.
‡ Chap. xvi. note 1.
§ L. lxviii. p. 1145.

* Cum magicas ibi follerti ingenio perceptisset septimum diem more gentis, Sabaum appellatum Ienias sacravit—semperque exinde hic nos apud Judæos fuit, in omne sènum; ut eosdem reges ac sacerdotes habuerunt.

Diodorus Siculus adopts nearly the same erroneous opinions.
these horrid barbarities perpetrated under the reign of Trajan, which our author has circumstantially described, yet Dion gives no testimony to the preceding assertion, that "their fierce impatience of the dominion of Rome repeatedly broke out in the most furious massacres and insurrections," as these were which he had just related; nor does he accuse them of being guilty of such, during the long period of time which elapsed from "the reign of Nero to that of Antoninus Pius."

But, on the contrary, there is no mention made by Dion of the Jews under Nero, Galba, or Otho. Under the reign of Vitellius, it is briefly said, that Vespasian "carried on a war against the Jews*. In that of Vespasian, Dion slightly speaks of Josephus †, and of the taking of Jerusalem ‡.

We read no further account of them under Titus, Domitian, nor Nerva. During the reign of Trajan, the massacre at Cyrene and Cyprus are mentioned by him; and he speaks of the emperor Hadrian's being engaged in a war with them on founding the colony of Ælia Capitolina.

We see that it does not appear from Dion, but that the Jews lived in quiet submission, without impatiently breaking forth in repeated insurrections and furious massacres; during the reigns of several emperors between Nero and Antoninus. If their impatience of the dominion of Rome had thus broken through every restraint, and gratified its rage with the blood of their enemies, the pen of

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* Dion's words are, οὐκ θεραπευοντο Ιουδαίοις στολάμιν. P. ic65. lib. lxvi. Reimar. Ed.
† L. lxvi. p. 1077. Reim.
the historian could not have passed it over in silence.

So that, though Mr. G. could establish the truth of this part of his history from other authority; yet, as he has appealed to Dion alone, who does not give him reason for his assertion, he merits our censure.

Our author, in treating of the Jewish economy and ceremonies, has, in a particular passage, not only made use of a fallible argument, but misrepresented and manifestly perverted the authority he quotes. The sentence is this,

"If a strict obedience had been paid to the order, that every male, three times in the year, should present himself before the Lord Jehovah, it would have been impossible that the Jews could ever have spread themselves beyond the narrow limits of the promised land."

The authority, to which Mr. G. directs † us, as corroborating the sentiment, is that of the Universal History ‡;—where we are to find "a sensible note †" on the subject. Such indeed it is; but it happens, somewhat unluckily, that this sensible note supports an hypothesis directly opposite to that of Mr. Gibbon. So far is it from denying the possibility "of paying a strict obedience to the order," or insinuating a neglect of it; that, on the contrary, it endeavours to remove the grand objections that have been raised against it §.

But

* Page 453, c. xv.
† Note 11, c. xv.
§ The two grand objections are, 1st. "If they assembled, from every part, at Jerusalem at once, how that city could contain such prodigious multitudes? And, 2dly. How they could leave their cities defenceless?" In answer to the first,
But what shall we say, if, indeed, no such order was ever given? Mr. G. in asserting that there was, may perhaps be thought more excusable, as several men of learning agree with him here. But much may be urged to prove, that they are in a mistake. The matter stands thus. It is said in Exodus, *Thrice in the year shall all your men-children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel*. The like occurs in Deuteronomy. *Three times in the year shall all the males appear before the Lord thy God: in the place which he shall choose:*—and they shall not appear before the Lord empty.* The objection made to this is to shew the absurdity of such an ordi-

the note (O) observes, that "the Talmud exempts from this obligation, 1. The women, who were to take care of their families. 2. Boys under twelve years of age. 3. All old men above sixty. 4. All the sick and impotent, lunatics, &c." Though by these exceptions the numbers must be greatly diminished, yet the note adds also an exception which must crush Mr. G.'s objection. "And, lastly, all that either lived at such a distance from the tabernacle, and afterwards from the tem-
ple, that they could not perform the journey on foot." Besides this, "Calculation is here made of the spaciousness of Jerufalem; and the probability of their dwelling in tents round about it is urged."—It is noted also, "that they did not all appear together on the same day; but took it by turns, and lay in the city but one night; and, on the next morning, having performed their devotions, returned, and made way for others."

The latter objection is answered by shewing, that "half of the males slayed at home to guard their houses, children, wives, lands, &c. whilst the other half went up:" and furthermore, that "some went one month, and the others the next."

Is it not strange that Mr. G. should corroborate his assertion, by appealing to an authority that contradicts it? What judgment must be formed of this proceeding? Shall we say he has not consulted the Universal History? Or that he has been guilty of gross misrepresentation, by producing this testimony to confirm his proposition, which it aims to refute?

* Chap. xxxiv. ver. 23.
† Chap. xvi. ver. 16, 17.
ance; and the impracticability of its being carried into execution. It is particularly urged, that those, who lived at a great distance, could not go up so often to Jerusalem; and if they did go up, it was still impossible for the city to hold them. Besides, they must leave their lands for too long a time neglected; and their borders would be exposed to the inroads of any enemy, that would take advantage of their absence. To obviate these objections, many well-meaning persons have considered the extent of Jerusalem, and calculated how many it could hold. They have also made an estimate of the number of tents, which might be pitched without the walls, and of other accommodations, which might be procured. They mention, that all did not come up upon the same day; and their lands, therefore, need not be supposed to have been entirely neglected. The Authors of the Universal History, as we see in the foregoing note, have recourse to the Talmud, to shew, that children, sick persons, lunatics, and old men were excused. But these expedients are as unnecessary, as the objections are idle: These learned men have been labouring to find out a remedy, where there is no disorder; for the passage is totally misunderstood. What we find in our translation rendered thrice, and three times; is, in the original, תרכז, tribus vicibus anni—at three of the changes, or seasons of the year, every male was to present himself before the Lord. By this was not meant, that they should go up to Shiloh, or to the temple, all these three times; but only at one of the three. For three different seasons were appointed for the convenience of those who were to make their appearance. Instead of applying to the Talmud, and the Jewish rabbis, the best way to interpret the scriptures is by the scriptures; and that people went up only at one of these three times, may be seen from various passages. It is said
said of Elkanah, the father of Samuel, that he went up out of his city yearly to worship, and to sacrifice to the Lord God of hosts in Shiloh.* And it is repeated, that the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow †. Concerning every firstling of the flock, and of the herd, it was thus enacted:—Thou shalt eat it before the Lord thy God, year by year, in the place which the Lord shall choose ‡. We find, that once only in every year they were to make this offering. Hence it is said by the prophet Zechariah, Every one that is left, &c. &c. shall go up from year to year to worship §. In conformity to this we find, that the parents of our Saviour went up to Jerusalem every year: and we are told, that it was at the feast of the passover ||: For this feast was more particularly observed. From these instances we may, I think, be assured, that it was once only in the year when this presentation was enjoined: at which time none were to appear before the Lord empty. At one of these seasons they brought all the offerings commanded by the law, and presented them before the Lord. Three times in the year (or at the three particular changes and divisions of the year) shall all the males appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose: in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God, which he hath given thee **. Among the presents then made were the first fruits, and the firstlings of their flocks and herds. Thou shalt do no work with the firstlings of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of the sheep. Thou

* Samuel, c. i. v. 3. § Zech. c. xiv. v. 16.
‡ D. ut. c. xv. v. 20. ** Deut. c. xvi. v. 16, 17.

† shalt
shall eat it before the Lord year by year in the place, which the Lord shall choose, thou and thy household*. But it may be said, that this is still a precept full of danger; for after all there must be a time, when one third of the people would necessarily be drafted away; and some of the provinces be bereft of their proper defence. It must likewise be inconvenient, and hardly practicable, for people at the extremities of the country to drive their cattle, and carry their other offerings to Jerusalem. And, lastly, there must have been many other impediments; such as arose from remoteness, sickness, badness of the roads, inclemency of the weather, which rendered the ordinance impolitic, as well as impracticable. These three objections are answered to our hands by the sacred writer. In respect to the injunction being injudicious, from the lands being left defenceless; it is observable that, when God appoints the yearly presentation to be made, he is pleased to promise the divine interposition and security. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man defile thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice (it is, in the original, at the three changes: in the seventy τρεῖς φασις) of the year †. In respect to the second objection, about conveying their cattle and other offerings, we find, in the same place where the duty is enjoined, an occasional remedy provided.—But if the way be too long for thee, or that thou art not able to carry it, or if the place be too far from thee, which the Lord thy God shall choose, &c. then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go up unto the place which the Lord thy God

* Deut. c. xv. v. 19. † Exodus, c. xxxiv. v. 24.
This, I think, affords a sufficient answer to the second cavil. As to the other difficulties, which might arise from poverty, or sickness, and distance from the capital, there was also an allowance made for such cases. Many of the people resided, according to their lot, beyond Jordan; some lived near Beersheba; and others as far as Dan, and the entrance of Hamath. To many of these it must certainly have been very inconvenient, and, perhaps, impracticable, to take this annual journey. There must, likewise, among the children of Israel, as among all other nations, have been some persons in no degree of affluence. There were, undoubtedly, thousands in many of the tribes, who had their petty offerings to make, to whom, however, it would have been almost ruin to have taken such an expensive journey. All this is very true: and it was accordingly foreseen by the allwise and merciful frame of these laws. The fame God who appointed the ordinance, admitted likewise of a dispensation. All reasonable excuse was allowed; and the affair seems to have been left to their own consciences. It is, therefore, farther said:—When the Lord thy God shall enlarge thy border, as he hath promised thee, &c.—if the place, which the Lord thy God hath chosen, to put his name there, be too far for thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd, and of thy flock, which the Lord hath given thee, as I have commanded thee: and thou shalt eat in thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after. That is, thou shalt eat it without offering it, or making any sacrifice; for all sacrifices, and all vows, were indispensable to be performed at Jerusalem. Take heed that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest; but in the place, which the

† Deut. c. xii. v. 20. † Chap. xii. v. 21.
Lord shall choose in one of thy tribes: There thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings; and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.—Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thine oil, or the firstlings of thy herds, or of thy flock, &c. &c. But thou must eat them before the Lord thy God, in the place, which the Lord thy God shall choose. Then comes the dispensation above-mentioned †, that if the place were too far from them, they might remain at home; and without making any offering, enjoy the blessings bestowed upon them within their own precincts. Thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock,—as I have commanded thee: and thou shalt eat it within thy gates. We see here an indemnity granted to those who could not, without great inconvenience, go up; and we may suppose, that thousands in every tribe availed themselves of it.

We have not, as yet, done with our author's misrepresentations relative to the Jews. He tells us ‡, "During the long period which elapsed between the Egyptian and Babylonian servitudes, the hopes as well as fears of the Jews appear to have been confined within the narrow compass of the present life."

In support of this he appeals to Le Clerc §§.

Now it is remarkable, that so far is this author from confirming the representation given by Mr. Gibbon, that he says not a word respecting the sentiments of the Jews on this subject, at the place to which our historian refers us. He tells us ‖ indeed that the Pharisees really believed in a resurrection, and such a one as the gospel taught; but this

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* Deut. c xii. v. 13, 14, and 17, 18.
† Ver. 21.
‡ Page 459.
§ Note 57. c. xv. Polegomo. ad Hist. Ecclesiast. c. i. § 3.
‖ C. ii. § 8. C 4

relates
relates to a much more distant period. This being the case, what opinion can the reader have of Mr. Gibbon's fidelity in appealing to this authority?

One more instance of our author's accuracy on the subject of the Jews appears in the following passage: "After Cyrus had permitted the exile nation to return into the promised land; and after Ezra had restored the ancient records of their religion, two celebrated sects, the Pharisees and Sadduces, insensibly arose at Jerusalem."

In confirmation of the above, Josephus * is the authority appealed to. But we may again observe, that our author builds without a foundation. For Josephus, as here referred to, says nothing of the rise of the Pharisees; but only speaks of their peculiar tenets.

On reading Mr. G.'s references to the testimony of heathen writers, cited by him in order to oppose and contradict the Jewish and scriptural history, I could not help reflecting on an admirable passage of bishop Warburton on this subject; which the reader will thank me for introducing here, as being equally applicable to Mr. G. as to his predecessors in infidelity, and serving to shew that he only treads over again the same beaten path.

"† This is ill enough," says the bishop, "but the perversity I speak of is infinitely worse: And that is, when the same writer, on different occasions, assumes the dogmatist and sceptic on the very same question, and so abuses both characters, by the most perverse self-contradiction."

"For instance, how common is it for one of your writers, when he brings Pagan antiquity to

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† See the dedication prefixed to the Divine Legation of Moses, p. 39. vol. i. 8vo edit.
contradict and discredit the Jewish, to cry up a Greek historian as an evidence, to which nothing can be replied? An imperfect hint from Herodotus, or Diodorus, though one lived a thousand, and the other fifteen hundred years, after the point in question, picked up from any lying vagabond they met in their travels, shall now outweigh the circumstantial history of Moses; who wrote of his own people, and lived in the times he wrote of.

But now turn the tables, and apply the testimony of those writers, and of others of the best credit of the same nation, to the confirmation of Jewish history, and then nothing is more uncertain and fallacious, than ancient writings. All antiquity is darkness and confusion: Then we hear of

Quicquid Græcia mendax

Audet in historia.

Then Herodotus is a lying traveller, and Diodorus Siculus a hasty collector.

Again, when the choice and separation of the Israelites, for God's peculiar people, is to be brought in doubt, and rendered ridiculous, then are they represented as the vilest, most profligate, and perverse race of men: Then every indiscreet passage of a declamatory divine is raked up with care to make them odious; and even the hard fate of the great historian Josephus pitted, that he had no better a subject than such an illiterate, barbarous, and ridiculous people.

But when the scripture account of the treatment, which the Holy Jesus met with from them, is thought fit to be disputed, these Jews

are become an humane and wise nation; that
interfered not with the teachings of sects, or the
propagation of opinions, but where the public
safety was thought to be in danger by seditious
doctrines,” &c. &c.

We have seen, at some length, how little founda-
tion Mr. G. had for appealing to the several au-
thors, whose names figure in his notes, in support
of his gross misrepresentations concerning the Jews.
Let us now pass on to a review of his treatment of
the first defenders of Christianity.

After attacking that revelation on which the
gospel is founded, his next part was to encounter
these champions of the gospel faith. The tran-
sition was easy, and natural enough.

The peculiar acrimony with which our author so
frequently cenures the fathers, having roused my
indignation, led me to examine what reasons he
had for such harsh language. And, upon exami-
nation, I found them to be either entirely ground-
less, or, where there was some ground for them, to
be cruelly and unjustifiably exaggerated.

The views of Mr. G. are manifest; he wishes
per fas aut nefas to lessen the authority of the fa-
thers, and diminish the respect and reverence justly
due to them; hoping, thereby, to aim an effectual
blow at the religion, of which their testimony ever
has been justly considered as a strong support.
The vindication of them, therefore, is a cause in
which I willingly engage; because it will appear
to be equally the cause of truth, as it is that of
Christianity. Still let it be remembered, that I
do not undertake an indiscriminate defence of all
the fathers; nor even of the whole works of any
one of them. Whoever reads them must, amidst
all his commendations, find something to blame.

Nor
Nor shall Mr. G. go beyond me in expressing a disapprobation of their far-fetched allegories, and of their indefensible austerities.

I shall here beg leave to introduce the following passage from Dr. Gregory Sharpe*, as expressive of my own sentiments.

"Some men had lifted up the authority of the fathers higher than could be justified: They were not content to make saints of them, but their opinions must be decisive in all matters of faith and religious controversy.

"From one extreme are the fathers fallen to the other, from having been almost Gods, they are become lower than the children of men. The great reverence the Christian world once had for them, may have proceeded from the excellence of their characters, and a frequent reading their productions; for it is hard to read them, and not to be prejudiced in their favour: And that this esteem is now gone, may be owing to a neglect of their writings: And perhaps they who have been most free in their censures of them, have been least conversant in their works. Men who knew nothing more of them, than that they were Christians, strangers to their very names as well as to their real characters and writings, are most ready to pursue and join the cry against them, as if they had been the very worst, or the very weakest of men.—But for the sake of justice and honour, let us not condemn men without knowing what can be said for them; nor for the sake of common sense, as well as common ho-

*Sharpe's "Apology for some of the first Christians," added to his "Arguments in defence of Christianity," p. 88, 89, 8yo. ed.
nestly, condemn them, without knowing what it
is they have done.

From such voluminous writings, many strange
things may and have been produced, but this is
not peculiar to the Christian fathers; and if men,
or books are to be judged of only by their faults,
who shall be saved. It would be thought very
partial, and very unjust, to glean from Diodorus,
Herodotus, Livy, Pliny, Plutarch, and other
good and ancient pagan writers, the rubbish of
all sorts that may be found in their writings, by
a man who has the dirty disposition to look after
such filth, and impose his medley of faults upon
the world for a specimen of the veracity and ap-
proved abilities of those authors. But this has
been done over and over again with the fathers;
so that their latest enemies are not entitled so much
as to the merit of discoverers; nor have they
added much to the old heap, though they have
much to clamour and abuse."

Tertullian, amongst the fathers, stands in a pe-
culiar point of view. In his maturest compositions,
warmth of temper betrayed him into indiscretions
of sentiment and expression, perhaps not strictly
defensible; and it is well known, that he at last
adopted the most extravagant notions of childish

* The learned Cave has ingeniously pointed out the proper
use of the Fathers.

"Veneramur patres non tamquam fidei judices, sed testes, qui
quid quovis saculo gestum creditumve it nobis fideliiter expon-
nunt, Sacrum fidei depositum ad nos transmittunt; quae heredes,
et quando ortae, hunc vel illum fidei articulum oppugnatur,
perplicue docent. Et qui vetustiores hi testes sunt, e0 vali-
dius ferunt testimonium, et nos majori nituitur certitudine." See
his "Epistola Apologetica"—p. 18, 19.—The reader
may here also find an account of the ill-treatment which the Fa-
thers have met with, and the probable causes of it alligned.

enthusiasm.
enthusiasm. No wonder, therefore, that Mr. G. so frequently produces "the stern Tertullian"—"the zealous African," as an object of his sneering abuse. But I shall shew that the impartial historian has unfairly distorted his character.

Misrepresentations of Tertullian.

I.

From the first instance I shall give, one would think Mr. G. was little acquainted with the writings of this father. For he says*, "Tertullian has written a severe treatise against idolatry, to caution his brethren against the hourly danger of incurring that guilt." "Recogita sylvam, et quantae latitant spinae." c. 10.

These words, I should imagine, we ought to find in ch. 10. of this his severe treatise against idolatry. Yet our author’s reference to c. 10. does not direct us to the sentence. Neither do I remember reading it in the whole treatise. When therefore he tells us, "he has carefully examined all the original materials," are we to believe him? or is it his design to try how far the credulity and easy disposition of the age will suffer him to proceed unsuspected and undiscovered?

This is not the sole umbrage which the above treatise gives Mr. G. he resumes the attack in these words,

II.

"If a pagan friend (on the occasion perhaps of sneezing) used the familiar expression of Jupiter

* Note 39. c. xv.
"bless you, the Christian was obliged to protest against the divinity of Jupiter."

Our author here throws aside the mask, and discovers the design of his writing these two last chapters; namely, to make religion appear in the garb of ridiculous superstition. It is to be wished, that this mode of writing were not suited to the taste of the present times. However, I have the happiness to say, that it is a groundless sneer.

Before I enter on the proof, I beg leave to ask Mr. G. if Tertullian gives him authority to write idolatria for idolatry. This very ridiculous blunder, were he not so learned a man, and so "careful to examine the original materials," one would be apt to impute to inaccuracy, or neglect of the press, if it had not uniformly preserved its place through the three editions of his history. But to proceed: We find what was allowed be-

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* Note 47. c. xv.

† I may here aptly subjoin the sentiment of the learned Dr. Maclaunie, on this part of Mr. Gibbon's history.

He had been reading the account given by Mr. Edward Gibbon, of the progress of the Christian religion; in which the gravest subject, and one of the gravest kinds of writing, are both dis honoured by a perpetual and unnecessary sneer. I say an unnecessary sneer, because Mr. Gibbon lives in a country where a man may write and speak as he thinks, without danger or molestation. He was therefore under no necessity of aping the manner of some of the French philosophers (as they are pleased to call themselves), who cover their infidelity with a sedate and well disguised irony, to escape the secular arm of religious persecution. It is true a sneer may have it's place and time; but surely it's place cannot be historical narrative, through which, at least, it never ought to reign; nor is it a time to sneer, when Christianity is the subject of discussion, because this religion has a professed relation to the most solemn and important interests, and has, in effect, been a source of consolation and hope to the wretched of mankind in all ages."
fore* to be a caution in this treatise on idolatry, now magnified into an obligation. Yet the stern Tertullian has acted the contrary part, and diminished the restraint.

For, he says, after putting them on their guard with respect to the use of their words:

"The law forbids that the Gods of the nations should be named, not indeed that we may not utter their names, which, as I may say, conversation extorts from us. But if there must be mention made of the Gods, something should be added, by which it might appear, that I do not speak of them as Gods †." This passage, no doubt, is what Mr. G. hints at; but it does not seem so unreasonable as to merit a sneer; especially if we consider what he had premised. "‡ We should be cautious," says he, "lest we suffer idolatry to intermix in our discourse, either through custom, or fear."

He excuses then the customary fault in conversation, (which Mr. G. seems to urge) and gives several instances of it when inoffensive; excepting one only, and even that conditionally, and proceeding from the Christian himself §. On the other hand, when this acquiescence arose from timidity, he

* Note 30. c. xv.
† C. 20. "Deos nationum nominari lex prohibit: non utique ne nomina eorum pronuntiemus, quae nobis ut dicas mus conversationem extorquet. Quod si Deos dicendum erit, sed jiciendum est aliquid, quo adparcat, quia non ego illos Deos dico."
‡ "Sed enim cum conversationem divinæ disciplinæ non facitis tantum verum etiam verbi periclitetur—meminisse debemus esse in verbis quoque idololatricæ incursum praecavendum, aut de confusis dubitatis vita, aut timiditatis."
§ "Ceterum confusitudinis vitium est me Hercule dicere, me dies abint, accidens ignorantia quorumdam qui ignorant jus jurandum esse per Herculem."
ranks it as inexcusable, and explains when it might be said to proceed from this cause.

"† A Christian likewise," says he, "will not suffer himself to be blessed by the Gods of the heathen; for this is to be cursed by God. If I should give alms to any one, or do him some other good action, and he should intreat his Gods to be propitious to me: in that case, my gift or action redounds to the honour of the idols, through whom he recompenses my favour with a blessing."

We now see that we have not, through the whole quotation, the particular instance of jneexing which Mr. G. is pleased to give as a matter to be laughed at; and I hope the wide difference between the words of Tertullian, and those of our author, will not pass unnoticed by the ingenuous reader. The one speaks with a seriousness and benevolence highly becoming a sincere Christian; the other, with that air of ridicule and detraction, in which the Sceptic usually treats such matters. But, as our author has not sufficient reason for his sarcastical remark, shall he with impunity be suffered to make it? Nay, even pitiful as it is, he cannot call it his own. I trust I shall be able to direct my reader, before I conclude, to a modern writer

‡ "Timiditatis est autem, cum te alius per deos suos obligat juratione, vel aliqua tesiificatione, et tu, ne intelligaris, quiescis: nam aequo quiescendo confirmas majestatem eorum, cujus causa videberis obligatus. Quid refert Deos nationum dicendo Deos, an audiendo, confirmes? jures per idola, an ab allo adjurator, adquiefas?"

† C. 22. "Æque beneficì per Deos nationum, Chriifo initiatī
non suftinebit, ut semper reijciat immundam benedictionem, et eam sibi in Deum convertens emundet. Benefici per Deos nationum, maledici est per Deum. Si cui didex evemolynam, vel aliquid praefiterso beneficii, oblato mea vel operatim idolo- rum honor crit, per que benelectionis gratiam compensat."

from
from whom he has borrowed this and many other abusive sneers.

III.

As a third instance, I shall here shew how Mr. G. mutilates and mistranslates a passage, which he produces, to bring in this father guilty of passing an unjust sentence of "condemnation on the wisest "and most virtuous of the Pagans".*"

I have translated the material part inserted in our author's history, as literally as the different idioms of the two languages, and the author's mode of writing will permit †. The whole passage in the original is transcribed in the note, that the learned may see what foundation I have for my charge.

† TERTULLIAN—On Public Shows.

C. 30. "But what a spectacle is now at hand, the Advent of the Lord, now undoubted, now glorious, now triumphant? What exultation of angels, what glory

| Mr. Gibbon's translation. (p. 474-.) |
| "You are fond of spectacles," exclaims the stern Tertullian, "expect the greatest |

* Note 70. c. xv. Tertullian de spectaculis, c. 30.
† The words which our author has omitted in his translation are marked out by a different character. I have placed my translation in a column opposite to Mr. Gibbon's, that his partiality and unfaithfulness may be more manifest.

† Tertullianus de spectaculis, c. xxx. edit. Rigalt.
"Quale autem spectaculum in proximo est, adventus Domini, "jam indubitati, jam superbi, jam triumphantis? quaevilla exultatio angelorum, quaegloria resurgens sanctorum? quae "regnum exinde justorum? quasilis civitas nova Hierusalem?
"At enim seperunt alia spectacula, ille ultimus et perpetuus "judicii dies, ille nationibus imperatus, illa derisus, exom tania "faculi ruysteras, et tot ejus natiuitates unoigne hautemitur. Quis "tunc spectaculi latitudo? quid admirer? quid sidem? ubi gaudeam?"
"glory of the saints rising
gain, thenceforth what a
kingdom of the just? what
a city the new Jerusalem?
Yet there remain other spec-
tacles, the last and eternal
day of judgment, that day
unwashed for by the nations,
that day derided by them;
when all the succession of
tages shall be swallowed up in
one conflagration. What a
prodigious spectacle will
this be! How may I ad-
mire?
gauem? ubi exultem? tot spectans ac tantos reges, qui in
caelum recepti numiabantur, cum ipso fuere ac ipsis suis testibus
in imis tenebris, consociati sunt item presides perfectorum
Doni iniuriae, saevioribus quam ipsi contra Christianos sevi-
erunt flammas in fluctuavitibus ignescientes; praetera sapiens illis
philosophos, coram discipulis suis una conflagrantibus, quibus
nibil ad Deum pertinent e suadebant, quibus animas aut nulias,
aus non in pristina corpora reducendas affirmabant; etiam poetae
non ad Rhadamantum, nec ad Minos, sed ad inopinato
Christi tribunal palpitantes. Tunc magis tragedi audiebant,
magis scilicet vocales in sua propria calamitate. Tunc hifri-
ones cognoscendi solutiores multo per ignem. Tunc spec-
tandum auriga, in flammis rota totus ruber: Tunc xystaci con-
templandi, non in gymnasiis, sed in igne jaculati. Nihil quod
nec tunc quidem velim visos, ut qui malum ad eos potius con-
spectum infamabilem conferre, qui in Dominum defauierunt.
Hic est ille (dicam) fabri aut quaeque prior filius, sabbati destructo,
Samarites, et daemonium habens. Hic est quem a Juda rede-
mitis, hic est ille arundine et colaphis dibererus, fputamen-
tis dedecoratus, selle et aceto potatus. Hic est quem clam
discernit subripuerunt, ut resurrexisse dicatur, vel hortulanus
detraxit, ne lactuca fusa frequentia commuementium adlaederen-
tur. Ut talia spectes, ut talibus exultes, quis tibi praece, aut
conful, aut quaeor, aut sacrificos de sua liberalitate prestatib? 
et tamen hac jam quodammodo habemus per sibi spiritu
imaginante reprezentata. Ceterum quia illa funt, quae nec
oculus vidit, nec aperis audivit, nec in cor hominum ascenderunt?
Credo, circi et utraque cavea, et omni fladio gratiora."
"mire? how may I laugh? how may I rejoice? how may I exult? when I behold so many and so great kings, who were reported to have been received up to heaven, groaning in infernal darkness, together with Jupiter and his adherents? likewise governors, persecutors of the name of the Lord, dissolving in insulting flames, more fierce than they themselves raged against the Christians; moreover, those wise philosophers, blushing before their disciples, burning together with them, whom they persuaded that God had no concern with the affairs of the world, whom they assured, either that men were not endowed with souls, or that they did not return into their former bodies; poets also trembling, not before Rhamantus, nor before Minos, but at the unbought tribunal of Christ. Then the tragedians will be more audible, more loudly lamentable in their own calamity," &c.

"magistrates, who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquefying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against the Christians, so many sage philosophers blushing in red hot flames, with their deluded scholars; so many celebrated poets trembling before the tribunal, not of Minos, but of Christ; so many tragedians more tuneful in the expression of their own sufferings; so many dancers"——

Such is the passage here appealed to, in Tertullian. I mean not to argue on the propriety, or to
enter into a vindication of it. My point is to expose the shameful mutilation which Mr. G. has been here guilty of. Who can observe with indifference, how he culinary every sentence, that is adapted to his purpose of vilifying the Father; nay, often takes a part of one, and leaves out the remainder? He selects each furious expression of "the zealous African," but passes over the reasons assigned by him. To induce us the more readily to condemn the zealot, and to enliven the picture not coloured enough already, he inserts the words "red hot flames;" and left the sufferers should be deemed only few in number, he makes the frequent addition of so many magistrates,—so many poets, &c. though no such expressions occur in the original. Thus he continually exaggerates the relation, too dismal and horrid without such aggravation. I cannot, therefore, but think, that, if it is "an infernal description," which in an equivocal sense of the word we may allow, our author has rendered it still more so by his unfair and partial translation.—Besides, after he has quoted the most offensive sentences, he affectedly asks "leave of the humanity of the reader to draw a veil over the" rest of this infernal description, which, he says, "the zealous African pursues in a long variety of "affected and unfeeling witticisms.""

I should be glad to know where our historian finds this "long variety of affected and unfeeling "witticisms." In Tertullian, after a sentence or two, speaking of the fâge-players and wrestlers of the Roman games, as being in the same deplorable situation, we have words of a different import, expressive of the indignities and reproaches cast on our Saviour by the Jews; which he retorts on the

* Page 474. deluded
deluded nation, at that time, to be convinced of their error. And concludes with a very rational observation: How unprofitable and trifling such amusements are, in comparison of that ineffable bliss, "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive."

But I beg leave particularly to ask the reason why Mr. G. appeals to this passage of Tertullian as a proof of his ascertaining the "condemnation of the "wisest and most virtuous of the Pagans?" Tertullian only instances false gods, deified monarchs, inhuman magistrates, profligate actors, and atheistical philosophers; and unless these come under the denomination "of the wisest and most virtuous of the Pagans," our author must be charged with gross misrepresentation.

IV.

We come now to the fourth instance of the liberty our author takes with Tertullian. Having spoken in high terms of the virtues of the Primitive Christians, he proceeds thus*: "Near a century afterwards, Tertullian, with an honest pride, could boast, that very few Christians had suffered by the hands of the executioner, except on account of their religion." This glorious commendation Mr. G. disgraces by the following note. "He adds, however, with some degree of hesitation, "aut si † alius jam non Christianus ‡."

I first observe that Tertullian says not only very few, but, more emphatically, none §: "No Chri-

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* Page 481.
† Note 83. c. xv. Tertullian. Apolog. c. 44.
‡ In Rigalt's edition we read, Aut si et alius, &c.
§ Nam ille Christianus, &c.
"than is in that number," &c. That Tertullian expresses any degree of "hesitation," I cannot perceive. However that be, it is certain that the primitive Christians did not look on any one as a true member of their society who scandalized his profession by his immoral practices†. If this be so, our author has undoubtedly shewn his kind intention, even at the hazard of inconsistency, to tarnish the encomium he himself has given the professors of Christianity, even without a sneer, in these words: "But the primitive Christian demonstrated his faith by his virtues; and it was very justly supposed, that the divine persuasion which enlightened or subdued the understanding, must, at the same time, purify the heart, and direct the actions of the believer ‡, &c."

V.

Our historian says §, that "among the various articles (of luxury) which excited the pious indignation (of the primitive Christians) was the practice of shaving the beard, which, according to the expression of Tertullian, is a lie against our own faces, and an impious attempt..."

* There is a note in Rigalt's edition at this place, which will quite clear Tertullian from any suspicion of hesitation. His words are (Apologet. p. 34. not. l.) "Et enim magistriuim," ut ait Arrianus Episteli interpret, ἀλλὰ μὲν τῆς ἀλήθεις ἐγγὺς ἔστι τοῦ ἀπελλογεῖται τῷ Ἰουδαίῳ Christianum intelligunt." L. ii. c. 9.

† This remark is particularly confirmed by a canon which we read in Dupin, (Life of St. Basil, tom. ii. p. 530.)

"Dans le canon quarante-cinquième, il remarque que le nom de Christien ne servira de rien à celui qui mene une vie indigne d'un chrétien." "The name of Christian will be of no service to him who leads a life unworthy of a Christian."

‡ Page 479.

§ P. 483. 484.
to improve the works of the Creator."—In opposition to this, I would observe, that the expression of Tertullian cannot well be translated, "a lie against our own faces." He says, indeed, "† Will he please God, who alters his countenance with a razor? unfaithful to his face," &c. This, I suppose, is the passage which Mr. G. hints at: We find nothing at all in Tertullian of the other part of his sentence, "an impious attempt to improve the works of the Creator." The Fathers may sometimes have carried their attention to minute ceremonies too far, and been too fond of frivolous austerities; yet surely this can give no foundation for heightening their excesses, or aggravating their foibles. I shall have occasion to shew, in the prosecution of my work, that Mr. G. has servilely adopted the sarcasm from a modern writer.

VI.

Mr. G. says, "‡ Yet, notwithstanding the many favourable occasions which might invite the Roman missionaries to visit their Latin provinces, it was late before they passed either the sea, or the Alps; nor can we discover, in those great countries, any assured traces, either of faith or of persecution, that ascend higher than the reign of the Antonines."

At note 170, he adds, "With regard to Africa, see Tertullian ad Scapulam, c. 3".

Now Tertullian, in c. 3, treats of a different subject; and in c. 4, so far is he from speaking of Christianity as being low, that he particularly dwells on the rapid increase, and the vast number

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* Note 88. c. xv. Tertullian de spectaculis, c. 23.
† "An Deo placebit qui vultus suos novacula munat? insidiae erga faciem suam," &c.
‡ Page 510.
of converts to the faith. Even our author has, hereafter *, cited the passage with this view, "What will you do," says Tertullian †, "with so many thousands of men and women of all ages, of every dignity, voluntarily delivering themselves up to you? How many and how great fires, what numbers of swords will you have occasion for?" &c. I do not know how Mr. G. can impartially refer to Tertullian for a proof of his assertion. For, by his mentioning so emphatically the immense number of those who had embraced the Christian religion, it inevitably follows that it could not be recently founded, or only propagated at the late period our historian pitches upon. It must not be denied, however, that some of the authors cited by him countenance his opinion; yet it is surprising he should crowd in among them Tertullian, whose authority would have been more aptly appealed to, where he speaks of "the eagerness with which the gospel was received on the burning sands of Africa."

VII.
Our historian wilfully disguises Marcion, a chief heretic ‡, "under the name of a stranger from Pontus, who proposed to fix his residence in the

* Note 187. c. xv.
† Tertullian ad Scapulam, c. iv.
‡ "Quid facies de tantis millibus hominum, tot viris ac fœmini, omnis sexús, omnis ætatis, omnis dignitatis offerentibus se tibi? Quantis ignibus, quantis gladiis opus erit? Quid ipfa Carthago passura est decimanda à te, cum propinquos, cum contubernales suos illic unaquisque cognoverit, cum viderit illic forastæ et tu ordinis viros ac matronas, et principales quæque personas, et amicorum tuorum vel propinquos vel amicos? Parce ergo tibi, si non nobis, parce Cathaginii, si non tibi; parce provinciae visa intentione tua obnoxia facia est concussi onibus et militum et inimicorum suorum cujusque."
‡ Page 496.

"capital;"
He refers us to Tertullian *, who speaks of this person in a very different manner, and informs us, that, after this donation, he set forth heretical opinions; on which, the church returned him his money, and expelled him from her society.

Mr. G.'s design in thus concealing Marcion's name, and representing his case in a different manner from what Tertullian, whom he cites, has done; appears to be, that he might the more easily describe the church, as being in an opulent luxurious state †, eager to extort the posseions of its members; and also that he might more covertly pass over the material circumstance mentioned by the Father, that the great sum was in a disinterested manner returned to him again.

VIII.

Our author says ‡, "the pagan magistrates sometimes proceeded with more temper and moderation than is usually consistent with religious

* Note 134. Tertullian de præscriptione, c. 30.

† Marcion quidem cum ducentis sestertios quae ecclesiae intulerat, novissime in perpetuum diicidum relegati, venena doctrinarum suarum dissimulaverunt.

‡ Father Paul, of ecclesiastical benefices and revenues, speaks of this matter in a more accurate and ingenious manner (English translation, 8vo edit.):

P. 7. "A remarkable instance of these large contributions, was that of Marcion, about the year 170, who made an offering of 500 drachmas of gold at one time, in the church of Rome. But because he held certain unfruit doctrines in matters of faith, the expelled him out of her congregations, and returned him all his money, believing she would have been polluted, in keeping the money of an heretic."

‡ Page 529.

"zeal."
"Deal!" This he instances by the example of Pliny, and would corroborate his observation by informing us, that "Tertullian expatiates on the fair and honourable testimony of Pliny, with much reason and some declamation."

The chapter referred to, speaks of Pliny, and the emperor his master, in a language very different from applause. Tertullian says, "that the Christians were not allowed the common privilege even of all other criminals, that of speaking in their own behalf;" and continues thus with respect to Pliny himself,—"† Pliny the younger, being governor of the province, condemned some of the Christians, and degraded others; and being alarmed at the great number of them, consulted the emperor Trajan what he should do with the rest." Tertullian does not appear in this passage "to expatiate on the fair and honourable testimony of Pliny" in a strain of declamatory approbation, as we should imagine he did from the words of Mr. G. For the governor proceeded to judgment against the Christians, before he had consulted the emperor. Tertullian, therefore, could not well pass any encomium on such severe conduct as this towards the Christians. Was there indeed the least doubt about his sentiment, the continued strain of just censure, with which he lashes "the "moderate Trajan's answer," must immediately determine it †.—If we may judge from the words of

* C. xvi. note 23. Apolog. c. 2.
† "Plinium enim secundus, cum provinciam regeret, damnas, tis quibusdam Christianis, quibusdam gradu pulsis, ipse tamen multitudine perturbatus, quid de cetero aget, consulit tunc Trajanum imperatorem." Apolog. c. 2.
‡ "Tunc Trajanus rescriptit, hoc genus inquirendas quidem non esse, oblatos vero puniri oportere. O lententicam necessitate
of this father, our author has not, without good reason, injected the limited particle 
\textit{sometime}s; when he says, "the pagans' 
\textit{magistrates sometime}s " proceeded with more temper and moderation " than is usually consistent with religious zeal." Nor does he give us reason to credit "the tempe-
\" rate policy of the Roman legislators, and the 
\" humane lenity of the emperor and his prefects," on whom our historian seems to think he cannot sufficiently lavish his compliments, though he thereby shews himself to be as insensible as the Romans to the unjust sufferings of the Christians."

"\textit{Statue confusam! negat inquirendo, ut innocentes, ut man-
\" dat penitendos, ut nocentes. parcit et salvit. dissimulat, et, \" animadverterit. Quid tempus? tempura circumservis? Si
\" damnas, cur non inquiris? Si non inquiris, cur non et absolv-
\" vis? solus Christianum inquit non iust, osservi iust."}

* P. 540. &c.

† There is another reflection made by Mr. G. on Tertullian, which, as it cannot be called a misrepresentation, I shall place in a note.

Our author says, note 194. c. xv. "When Tertullian affirms " the pagans, that the mention of the prodigy" (of the darkness at the passion of our Saviour) "is found in Arcanis (not Archi-
\" via velatrix) (see his Apology, c. 21.) he probably alludes to the " Sibylline verses, which relate it exactly in the words of the " gospel."

In answer to this, it may be said, that the word \textit{Arcanis} may imply \textit{Archibis}; they have at least been considered as synonymous terms by judicious writers. Rigalt, in his edition of Tertullian, writes it \textit{Archibis} in the note on this passage, though it is \textit{Arcanis} in the text. The learned Beza also, in quoting part of this chapter, transfers the word \textit{Archibis}, "quem Romani in suis " \textit{Archibis habent,}" Tertullian. Apol. c. 21. (Beza Comment. in Marc. xv. 33.) Besides, there is not the most distant intimation of Tertullian's alluding to the Sibylline verses, which the penetrating, though prejudiced, eye of our historian vaunts to have discovered.

Having
Having convicted Mr. Gibbon of so many unfair quotations from Tertullian, I proceed now to give a very striking instance of his

Misrepresentation of Sulpicius Severus.

Our author says, "In the council of Laodicea (about the year 360) the Apocalypse was tacitly excluded from the sacred canon, by the same churches of Asia, to which it was addressed; and we may learn, from the complaint of Sulpicius Severus, that their sentence had been ratified by the greater number of Christians of his time."

It happens rather unluckily for the credit of our historian, that Sulpicius makes no complaint; nor do we meet, in that author, with any ratification of such a sentence. I have great reason to assert, that I have had the satisfaction of discovering the passage to which Mr. G. does not choose to refer his reader; at least, I have the sentiment of Sulpicius on the subject; it is thus introduced: "† Some time afterwards Domitian, the son of Vespasian, persecuted the Christians. At which time, he banished John the apostle and evangelist into the island Patmos; where he wrote and published the book of the sacred Apocalypse, (which indeed is not received by some, either through folly or impiety,) the secret mysteries being revealed to him." The sense and connection point out this as the pas-

* Note 65. c. xv.
† Sulpicius Severus, l. ii. c. xlv. p. 399. 8vo edit. Hornius.
"Interfecto deinde tempore, Domitianus, Vespasiani filius, persecutus est Christianos. Quo tempore, Ioanum apostolum aequo evangelistam in Pathum infilam relegavit: ubi arcantis ubi mysteriis revelatis. Librum sacræ Apocalypsis (qui quidem à Plerisque aut salute aut impie non recipiitur) conscrip-
tum habuit."

fage
fage to which Mr. G. alludes. At least we must suppose this, till he can produce some other passage from this author, on which he might found his remark. The complaint, as it is stated, of Sulpicius Severus, is so important as to be penned up in a short parenthesis. And though we might expect, from the representation of Mr. G. to find in this author the formal account of "the tacit exclusion of the Apocalypse," and the reasons displayed at length, which induced the Christians of his time to "ratify" the sentence of the council of Laodicea; Yet no reader, the most versed in Sulpicius, can discover anything like this in his history. As to our author's saying, that "their sentence was "ratified by the greater number of Christians of the "time of Severus;" the original word plerique, which is translated by him "the greater number," cannot have this import here. Because it is impos-

* The author of the Remarks (p. 17, &c.) has given reasons for the conduct of the council of Laodicea; and shewed, that the tacit exclusion of the Apocalypse consisted, not in its being proscribed, but in that it was not enjoined to be read.

The learned Dallæus (or Daille) is of the same sentiment; that "it was not read in the church, because it was not found in the number of those books which the council decreed should be read."

"Cum postremus concili Laodicenfis canon, qui est 163 codicis Græci ecclesiæ universalis in ecclesiæ libros alios legi praeterquam canonicos prohibeat, eodem omnes ordine recenset. Inferuit quidem in codice suo Dionyflis exiguus principium canonis quo prohibetur ne, praeter Veteris & Novi Testamenti volumina, ulli alii libri legantur; sed eorumdem librorum catalogum prorsus omittit, veritatis reor, ne ecle- siam Romanam offenderet, in qua multis ante annis Innocentius pontifex in Veteris Testamenti canonem retulerat Maccabæos, Sapientiam, Ecclesiasticum, Tobiam, Judith, quorum apud patres Laodicensos nulla est mentio, cum viginti duorum tantum Veteris Testamenti librorum meminerint, & à Novo de Apocalypse tacuerint. Si cui refellationis sibiuss probabilior occurrat ratio, per me eam edat licet: min quidem ea vitæ est veritissima. De vero eto Patrum, p. 72."
able to represent Sulpicius Severus as taxing the
the greater number of Christians with folly and impi-
ey. To make sense of the passage, it is necessary
so suppose that he only meant some, or several*, of
the Christians were guilty of this folly and impiety.

Such then being the very material difference be-
tween the words used by Sulpicius Severus, and
those assigned to him by Mr. Gibbon, can we
avoid bringing him in guilty, either of "not con-
vincing the original," or of wilfully perverting
it? The misrepresentation, if it had passed unde-
tected, would have furnished a notable argument
against the canonical authority of the Apocalypse.

I shall here subjoin, for the sake of connection,
another instance of misrepresentation which our
author has been guilty of in speaking of that book.
After his groundless remark of the complaint of
Sulpicius Severus, which I have just now exposed,
he thus pursues his note†.

* From what causes then is the Apocalypse at
present so generally received by the Greek, the
Roman, and the Protestant churches? The fol-
lowing ones may be assigned. 1. The Germans
were subjugated by the authority of an impostor,
who, in the sixth century, assumed the character
of Dionysius the Areopagite. 2. A just appre-
hension, that the grammarians might become
more important than the theologians, engaged
the council of Trent to fix the seal of their infal-
libility on all the books of scripture, contained
in the Latin vulgate, in the number of which
the Apocalypse was fortunately included. (Fra

* If we only look into Stephens's Thesaurus, we shall find
(vol. ii. p. 649.) on the authority of Quintilian, that plurige
does not always imply a majority, but signifies nonnulli, some.

† Note 65. c. xv.
"Paolo Istoria del Concilio Tridentino, l. ii.

The advantage of turning those mysterious prophecies against the see of Rome, inspired the protestants with uncommon veneration for so useful an ally. See the ingenious and elegant discourses of the present bishop of Litchfield on that unpromising subject.

For the first of these remarks, Mr. G. quotes no authority; I shall therefore pass on to what he observes on the determinations of the council of Trent. His partiality will appear in purposely omitting the important consideration which induced the council "to fix the seal of their infallibility upon the Apocalypse."

That very ridiculous reason, which our historian has singled out, is indeed mentioned by Father Paul; but, at the same time, the Father gives another more substantial reason on which the council built their determination. In short, it appears that they looked on the Apocalypse as having equal authority with the epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews; that of St. James; the second of St. Peter; the second and third of St. John; and the epistle of St. Jude: Of the authenticity of which, though there had been doubt in former times, yet by use and custom, they had obtained canonical authority.

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L. ii. p. 148. "Altri erano di parere, che tre ordini soffero "stabiliti: Il primo di quelli, che sempre furono tenuti per differenti; il 2° di quelli, che a se non hanno riscontro dubio, ma "per uso attuato autorità canonica; nel qual numero sono le "6 epistole (cioè sotto nome di S. Paolo a gli Hebrei, di S. "Giacomo, 2° di S. Pietro, 2° & 3° di S. Giovanni, & una di "S. Jude) & l'Apocalisse del Nuovo Testamento, & alcune particole degli evangelisti. Il 3° di quelli, che mai sono certificati, &c."
We have here an evident proof that Mr. G. is equally expert in misrepresenting a modern as an ancient writer, in that he willfully conceals the most material reason, with a design, no doubt, to instil into his reader a notion that the authenticity of the Apocalypse is built on the slightest foundation.

As to "the uncommon veneration with which the Protestants are inspired for the Apocalypse," because it "gives them the advantage of turning some mysterious prophecies against the see of Rome," I shall only observe, that if the Protestants have just grounds for doing so, if our Mede and our Newton have, in a manner, demonstrated, however mysterious these prophecies may be thought at first sight, that, when applied to the history of the church, they become clear, and point out, in the most expressive manner, the rise and progress of the Romish corruptions; then, surely, whatever Mr. G. and such determined opposers of Christianity may think, Protestants have the justest grounds for receiving the Apocalypse, as the work of an inspired author, and for treating it with uncommon veneration:

Misrepresentation of Clemens.

Our author says, "*The epistle of Clemens does not lead us to discover any traces of episcopacy either at Corinth or Rome.*"

I do not know what "traces" Mr. G. deems requisite "to lead us to discover episcopacy;" but the words of Clemens, in his epistle to the Corinthians, do really give evident proofs of it. For, otherwise, if that sacred order was not known in the church, it is perfectly surprising that Clemens

* Note 108. c. xv.
men's should say of "* the apostles, that they or-
dained the first fruits of their labours to be
"bishops; and gave them the charge of the rising
"church:;" And furthermore, that "they should
"lay down the necessary qualifications for a bi-
"shop, in order to keep a constant and proper
"succession; foreseeing what contention there
"would be in succeeding ages respecting the name
"and office of a bishop."—Yet these Clemens re-
lates; nay Clemens, himself was stiled bishop of
Rome.

And are not these sufficient traces of episcopacy?
Can such passages as these be adduced from an epis-
tle, whose author is to be considered as ignorant of
such a distinction, or of such an order of men in
the church? But I leave the determination to the
judgment of the reader.

* Clementis Episcopi Romani Epistola ad Corinthios, I. SS, Pa-
trum Apollole. opera, tom. i. 8vo: edit. Russel.

§ 42. p. 158. Οι απόστολοι — κατά χάρας οὐ καὶ σώλης κυ-
ρίστοντες, καθίσαντο τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάζοντες τὴν ἀπώματα
αἰς ἘΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ καὶ διακονοῦσι τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτῶν. Καὶ τούτο οὐ,
καὶ οὐ," &c.

§ 44. Καὶ οἱ απόστολοι ἠμῶν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ
Χριστοῦ, ὥστε ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος θης ἐπι-
ΣΚΟΠΗς.* Διὰ ταύτην ὡς τὴν πρόξωσιν εἰληφθεὶς τελεῖται, κατεσ-
κας τὸς προσημερὴν, καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπικομήθη διδακάσεως, ὅπως ἐκ κοιμή-
θησθεν, διαδίδονται ἐπισκόποι διδακτομασίαι ἀπὸ τὴν ἁπτουργίαν αὐτῶν.
Τοὺς οὓς κατασταθήσεται ὃπως ἕκινησι, η μεταξὺ ὑπ’ ἐτέρῳ ἐνδογέμαρ αὐ-
τῶν, συνιστοκατάστης τὴς ἐκκλησίας σωσίς, καὶ λιτουργικάς ἀμέ-
ῳς τῷ ποιμένι τοῦ Χριστοῦ μετά πανορθόσημης, ἠπείθης καὶ ἀδικί-
σες, ἡραρματυμημένοις τῷ σωλότοις χερσὶν ὑπὸ σωσίς, τούτους ἐν δικαῖ-
ως ἐνομίζομεν ἀποδιάδασθαι τῆς λιτουργίας καὶ τ. ἦν.

* See the notes in Russel.
Misrepresentation of Irenæus.

"The knowledge of foreign languages," says our author, "was frequently communicated to the contemporaries of Irenæus, though Irenæus himself was left to struggle with the difficulties of a barbarous dialect, whilst he preached the gospel to the natives of Gaul."

In support of this, he appeals to *Irenæus.

Let us see what Irenæus really says. "† You will not expect from me, who live among the Cælæ, and am called upon to make use of a barbarous language, the art of speech which I have not learned; nor the elegant power of a writer, which I have not affected; nor the harmonious diction, which I am ignorant of: But my writing is simple, true, and plain."

May we not here appeal to every candid reader, whether there is the least foundation for Mr. G.'s assertion? Irenæus does not say he was ignorant of the Celtic language, or that "he was left to struggle with the difficulties of a barbarous dialect;" on the contrary, he plainly says, "he was called upon to make use of it." It is beyond all doubt, therefore, that our author adopt-

† Irenæus adversus Hæres. Erasmi, fol. edit. 1532.
P. 2. "Non autem exquiris a nobis, qui apud Celtas com-moramur, et in barbarum sermonem plerunque avocamur, ora-tionis artem quam non didicimus, neque vim conscriptoris, quam non affectavimus, neque ornamentum verborum, neque suadelam quam necimus: sed simpliciter et vere et idiotice, ea quæ tibi cum dilectione scripta sunt, cum dilectione pecipi-"es, et ipsa augeas ea penes te, ut magis idoneus quam nos, quaśi semen et initia accipiens a nobis: et in latitudine sensus tui multum frustræcabis ea, quæ in paucis a nobis dîcta sunt, et potenter suffuses his qui tecum sunt, ea quæ invalesce a nobis relata sunt."
ed the remark ready made to his hands by Middleton, who, as will afterwards be taken notice of, thus wrested the passage to serve his own purpose. But such gross blunders are the necessary consequences of blindly transcribing quotations, without ever examining their accuracy, by looking into the authors quoted.

**Misrepresentations of Cyprian.**

I.

Our author, after disparaging the characters and conduct of the first bishops in general, singles out the prelate Cyprian, as the particular object of his censure; which he thus expresses:

"* From the imperious declamations of Cyprian, we should naturally conclude, that the doc-
trines of excommunication and penance formed the most essential part of religion; and that it was less dangerous for the disciples of Christ to neglect the observance of the moral duties, than to despise the censures and authority of their bishops. Sometimes we might imagine that we were listening to the voice of Moses, when he commanded the earth to open, and to swallow up, in consuming flames †, the rebellious race which refused obedience to the priesthood of Aaron; and we should sometimes sup-
pose, that we heard a Roman consul ascerting

* Page 501, 502.
† Mr. G. has introduced, in thislaboured, yet distorted, description, as in the case of Tertullian, the expressive words, consuming flames, to compleat the catastrophe, notwithstanding he is not warranted to insert them by the original relation of Moses. His manner of working up the whole of this sentence, plainly intimates that he took this opportunity of reflecting on the conduct of Moses.
the majesty of the republic, and declaring his inflexible resolution to enforce the rigour of the laws. If such irregularities are suffered with impunity," (it is thus that the bishop of Carthage chides the lenity of his colleague) "if such irregularities are suffered, there is an end of EPISTOCPAL VIGOUR, an end of the sublime and divine power of governing the church, an end of Christianity itself."

With what bitterness of language, and vehement severity, does Mr. G. here inveigh against Cyprian*. How studied is his translation of the prelate's expressions? How skilfully does he arm every word to attack and alarm his conduct? How artfully does he palliate the charges laid against the sectaries; and censure, severely censure, the advocates of the established orthodox church? I shall therefore shew that Cyprian may be cleared from several of our autho's unjust reflections.

If we are to credit the relation of Cyprian, we find a black character given of Felicissimus, and of his heretical associates Fortunatus, Novatus, &c. that he was "† an enemy of Christ, no new one, but long ago separated," from the church, "for his many and heinous crimes; a defrauder of money entrusted to him; a debaucher of virgins, and a scandalous adulterer."—Then follows the particular passage which our author has inserted in his history, to which, that his misrepresented.

* See also the ungenerous, inadequate motives which our historian cautiously supposes might induce Cyprian to suffer martyrdom, p. 55c.

† Cyprian. Epist. 59. edit. Oxon.
P. 126.—"hostem Chritii, non novum, sed jampridem ob crima sua plurima et gravissima abhentum—pecuniae fidei commissae fraudator, fluprator virginiun, matrimoniorum multorum depopulator atque corruptor."
entation may be more manifest, I shall oppose the literal translation of the whole connected paragraph in Cyprian.

"But if these things be so, my beloved brother, that the audacity of the most wicked men is to be dreaded, and that iniquitous persons are suffered to accomplish, by rash and desperate actions, those things which they are not able to effect by justice and equity; the exertion of episcopacy is rendered vain, the sublime and divine power of governing the church becomes useless, nor can we longer continue to be Christians, if it is come to this pitch, that we are to be daunted by the threats and treachery of the most abandoned men."

Our author, in this instance, has served Cyprian in the same manner, as he had before served Tertullian. He doth not, as a faithful interpreter would have done, translate the whole passage, but he picks out such parts of it as are best adapted to his purpose, of conveying to his reader a notion of unreasonable severity predominating in the prelate's conduct, while he industriously omits other parts of the passage in which the matter is explained. Surely this is not a mode of translation very consist-

"Quod si ita res est, frater carissime, ut nequissimorum timentur audacia, et quod mali jure atque aequitate non possunt, tamen ac desperatione persicient; actum est de Episcopatus vigore, et de ecclesiae gubernanda sublimi ac divini potestate; nec Christiani ulterius aut durare, aut esse jam possumus, si ad hoc ventum est, ut perditorum minas atque insidias persimescamus."

The words marked in a different character, are left out by Mr. Gibbon in his translation.

I may notice also the inaccurate reference of our Author to epist. 69, whereas this matter is contained in epist. 59. Fell's edition, Oxon. to which particular edition of Cyprian's works he refers us, note 82. cap. xvi.
ent with the vulgar ideas of good faith.—As our author transcribed the harsh expressions of Cyprian, he ought to have transcribed also the reasons which provoked him to use them. Both being blended in the same passage, they must both remain or fall together. In how concise and palliative a manner does our advocate for the sectaries translate the original words expressive of great audacity, injustice, and iniquity, by the softened term "irregularities?" Upon the whole, if the accusation of the bishop be strictly true, we must allow the propriety of his words and conduct. But if, through other motives, he deviates into calumny, and rash declamation, as some imagine *, it behoves us not to condemn these persons as heretics, before we have sufficient grounds for the charge. This must be granted, that whatever was the cause of the dispute, these persons had separated themselves from the established church, and thereby exposed themselves to the censure of its governors, whose authority they had disdained and shaken off.—However, even this construction will not clear Mr. G. from the charge of partial misrepresentation.

* Beaufobre is an apologist for the heretics, as they are called.

Mothesim impartially observes, "that there were doubles faults on both sides, and how far the sectaries were culpable, we can form no proper judgment, as we have such an imperfect and partial representation of the case."


He else where speaks of Cyprian, as "acting with a manly courage and propriety, and tempering severity with lenity, in the case of the Libellatii; and of those who had aped them" (de lapsis) yet, says he, "Cyprian proceeded to great extremities, in the contest with Novatus and Felicitas;" mus." Ibid. p. 490.

II,
II.

"Cyprian," says Mr. G. "upon his conversion, had sold his gardens for the benefit of the poor. The indulgence of God (most probably the liberality of some Christian friends) restored them to him again." See Pontius, c. 15.

Our author, in this instance, as well as in several others, has inserted words in a parenthesis, which are not to be found in the writer to whom he appeals, as the learned reader will see by the note †, in which the original passage is transcribed. This seems to be done in order to throw an air of trivial absurd superstition on the circumstance.

III.

Mr. G. insists on "the inhuman Maximin's promiscuous massacre" being "improperly called a persecution ‡." And again he says, "notwithstanding the cruel disposition of Maximin, the effects of his resentment against the Christians were of a very local and temporary nature." For the truth of this remark, he quotes the authority of "Firmilianus §, a Cappadocian bishop of that age, who," says he, "gives a just and confined idea of this persecution."

Now although the promiscuous massacre might be improperly stiled a persecution; yet Firmilianus

* Note 83. c. xvi.
† Pontius vit. Cypriani, c. 15, p. 8, edit. Oxon.
‡ Et hi erant quotidiani actus destinati ad placentem Deo hostiam sacerdotis; cum ecce Proconsulis justu ad hortos ejus (ad hortos inquam, quos inter initia fidei suae venditos, et Dei indulgentia restitutos, pro certo iterum in usus pauperum vendidisset, nisi invidiam de perfecione vitae rekt) cum militibus suis principec repente subitavit.
§ Note 117. c. xvi. Firmilianus apud Cyprian, epist. 75.
E 4 relates,
relates, that there really "arose a severe persecution against the Christians, however temporary or "local it might be, on account of some natural "calamities; as earthquakes," &c. of which the superstitious Pagans supposed them to be the cause. "Therefore," he says, "they were oppressed by "many hardships and grievances." And, "to in- "crease their wretchedness and misery, unusually "distressing, a fierce and cruel persecutor was go- "vernor of the province. So that their only safe- "ty consisted in flying from the country."

It is not much to be wondered indeed, that our historian should speak of this persecution as being improperly so called; since with him, "exile, im- "prisonment, confiscation of goods and slavery "in the mines, are but mild punishments." He seems to look on no scene with abhorrence, which is not stained with blood, and covered with racks and gibbets. But the more humane and moderate reader may think it sufficiently dreadful, and that

† P. 222. edit. Oxon. "Ante viginti enim & duos sese "annis, temporibus post Alexandrum Imperatorem, multae "istae confiscationes & pressurae acciderunt, vel in commune "omnibus hominibus; vel privatim Christianis; terrae etiam "mosus plurimi & frequentes extiterunt, ut per Cappadociam "& per Pontum multa subuerent, quaedam etiam civitates in "profundum receptae, dirupti soli hiatu devorarentur, ut ex "hoc persecution quoque gravis adversus nos Christiani nomin "sieret. Quae post longam retro ætatis pacem repetente obterae, "de inopinato & inueto male ad turbandum populum nostrum "terribilior effecta est. Serenianus tunc fuit in nostra provin- "cia Praefes, acerbus & dirus persecutor. In hac autem per- "turbatione consistitis fidelifus, & huc atque illuc persecu- "tions metu fugientibus, & patrias suas relinquentibus, atque "in alias partes regionum transeuntibus (erat enim transeundi "facultas, eo quod persecution illa, non per totum mundum, sed "localis suffisset), &c.

† P. 545, &c.
the severity of the persecution will compensate for its locality.

There are some other instances of our author's misrepresentation of Cyprian, on the supremacy said to be given by the ancients to the church of Rome. But these, for the sake of connection, I shall give with those of other authors misrepresented on this subject.

**Misrepresentations of Origen.**

I.

I might retort on our historian the accusation which he has falsely laid against Origen, "of muttering the objections of his adversary." But the charge has been so fully proved against Mr. G. by the able author of the remarks on his history, that it would be a needless repetition. I pass on, therefore, to what our author says on "the meanness and ignorance of the first Christians," which he tells us, with an apparent pleasure and satisfaction, was "a very odious imputation, which seems to be less strenuously denied by the apologists, than it is urged by the adversaries of the faith."

I shall now lay before the reader, a convincing proof that Mr. G. has added falsehood to "this unfavourable picture," by saying, that "this charge,

* It is thus the learned Dodwell speaks of this persecution; Dissert. xi. 51. and thereby gives a much more adequate idea of it, than what Mr. G. has inaccurately copied from him, as will be shewn hereafter, can well give.
† Note 101. c. xv.
‡ P. 28.
§ P. 513.
|| Our author well observes, that "this unfavourable picture," which has but "a faint resemblance" to recom
charge, this odious imputation, was not strenuously denied by the apologists." He has referred us but to one, * for a proof of his words; I might alledge the testimony of others † to prove the reverse. However, I am content to keep to Origen, the one which he has singled out, and doubt not but I shall fully prove that this apologist has most strenuously denied the chief accusation of Celsus, that "the obscure Christian teachers were as mute in public, as they were loquacious and dogmatical in private. Whilst they cautiously avoided the philosophers, they mingled with the rude and illiterate crowd ‡." Origen having previously observed, that "many of the philosophers of Greece embraced Christianity, on account of that gracefulness which manifested itself therein, not only to slaves, but to persons of such superior judgment," goes on to confute the charge in these words:

*mend it, "betrayed by its dark colouring and distorted features, the pencil of an enemy." May we not then ask Mr. G. if he has not passed a sentence of condemnation on himself, in reviving and bringing to the light this distorted portrait? (Note 182. c. xv: Celsus ap. Origen, l. iii. p. 138.—142.)

† Dr. Warton (Apology, p. 151) has given us the authority of Jerome and Arnobius to contradict the malicious accusation. The reader will find this, and the several other important charges alleged against the First Christians by the Pagans, well accounted for by Turner. See his Cabalynics on the primitive Christians.

‡ Origen observes, one chief rise of this opinion was the perverse interpretation of that passage in Scripture; "not many wise, not many noble, not many rich, &c. were called" to the faith: they therefore concluded, that no wise, no noble, no learned persons embraced Christianity.

|| Origen contra Celsum, 4to edit. Hoeschelius, p. 121.

εἰτι ΣΕΜΝΌΝ τι ἵππαν τοὺς ἀνδρῶν τοὺς χριστιανούς, ἐν μόνοις (ὡς ὁ Κίλας, ὑπηρετής τοῖς ἀνδραφόποδίστηροις, ἀλλὰ καὶ πολλοῖς τοῖς ἑλληνικοῖς φιλολόγοις.

"How
"How can Celsus—-with any decency reproach us, as saying, let no learned, no wise, no prudent person come into our society; yea indeed, let the learned, the wise, and the prudent man, who is willing, enter among us: Yet, nevertheless, if there be any unlearned, unwise, un instructed, illiterate, let him come also; for such, when they embrace the faith, the word promises to heal, rendering them all worthy of God. But it is a rank falsity to say, that the teachers of the gospel choose to persuade the foolish alone, and the ignoble, and the insensible, and slaves, and women, and children: Th ese also the Word calls, to make them better; but it invites also those that are superior to them. For Christ is the Saviour of all men, particularly of the faithful, whether they be wise or simple."

Again he says, "See in what a manner Celsus falsely accuses us, in comparing us to quacks and itinerant praters, who hold forth in marketplaces. But what silly babbling do we utter? or in what respect is our conduct like theirs? For we, by our reading, and explanations of what we read, would exhort men wholly to the worship of God, and the practice of virtue; and...

† P. 141. (Spencer, edit. Cantab. 1658) ως ους ηνως ἐγκαλεῖ ὁ Κύριος ἡμᾶς ἢς φάσκουσιν μηδεὶς προτίμησιν παιδευόμενοι, μηδεὶς σοφοὶ, μηδεὶς γράφομεν, ἀλλα προτίμων μηδεὶς παιδευόμενοι, καὶ σοφοὶ καὶ γράφομεν, ἡ λοξάπορος οὐδεὶς ἐν ἄνως προσέτατο καὶ τις τῆς αμήκνης καὶ αὐτός καὶ απαλότης καὶ τυπίσως, καὶ γὰρ τοὺς τοιούτους φρονίζουσας ἔπεριφθισα τίτλον διακρινών τὸ λόγος, παρέτατος αἰσθής καὶ κατακανάς τὸν θεόν ΨΕΥΔΟΣ ΔΕ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ, ΜΟΝΟΥΣ οὐδεὶς καὶ ἀγαπᾶς καὶ αἰνωσθοῦς καὶ ἀφαδεσοῦσα, καὶ γάρνεια, καὶ παιδεύειν ΠΕΙ'ΘΕΙΝ ἘΘΕΛΕΙΝ ΤΟΥΣ ΔΙΑΣΚΟΝΤΑΣ ΤΟΝ ΘΕΙΟΝ ΔΟΤΟΝ. καὶ τούτους μην γὰρ καλεῖ ὁ λόγος, ἀλλα αὐτοῖς βιβλιαζόν. καλί δὲ καὶ τοὺς πολλοὺς τοῦτοι διαφέρονται - ἦσθι διὰ τὸν κατὰ τοὺς παραγόντων ἡ Χριστίνη καὶ μᾶλλα πιστὰ ὅταν συνιῶν, ὅταν απλούσθην."

"would
would deter them from despising the Deity, and
from doing all things contrary to sound reason*.
But as I need not multiply proofs to detain my
reader, though Origen continues on the vindication
for several pages, I shall only add, that he once
more affirms,

"We Christians exert our utmost endeavours,
that our assembly should be filled with wise and
judicious men; and we are then bold to intro-
duce in our public reasonings, those things which
are esteemed most good and sacred, when we are
crowded with hearers of understanding‡," &c.

I now appeal to the reader, if the power of
language can express, in a more emphatical man-
er, that "the odious imputation was most strenuous-
ly denied by the apologists." With what assurance
then could our historian cite the authority of Ori-
gen to confirm a charge which he labours to in-
validate *?

That many of the primitive Christians were of
the lower clas of people, cannot be denied. Our

* "Oros ἔδει ὑπὲρ τῶν τινών ἡμῶν ΣΥΚΟΦΑΝΤΗ ἕσομεν,
τοῦ ἐν ταῖς ἁγοραῖς τὰ ἐπιστρέφοντα ἐπιδιοίκησιν ὡς ἀφίσαιν, ποιεῖ
ἐπὶ ἑπιστρέφοντα ἐπιδιοίκησιν; ἢ τί τῶν παραπλησίων πράττομεν;
Οἴ ΚΑΙ Δ' ἈΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΩΝ, ΚΑΙ Δ' ΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΑ-
ἈΝΑΓΝΩΣΜΑΤΑ ΔΗΣΕΙΣ ΟΝ ΠΡΑΤΤΟΝΤΕΣ μιν ἐν τῇ τοῦ τὸν
Θεοῦ τῆς ὑλῆς εὐθείᾳ, καὶ τὰς συνεργίας τᾶς ἄρχειν ἀποτελο-
τες δι' ἀπὸ τοῦ καταφθονίου τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ παρὰ τοῦ
πάντων ἡμῶν πράττομεν; &c.

† ἡμῖς γὰρ, ἢς δύναμις, πάντα πράττομεν ὑπὸ τοῦ φρονίμου
ἀνθρώπου ἀνίχνευται τὸν σύλλογον ἡμῶν. καὶ τὰ ἐν ὑμῖν μάλιστα καλὰ καὶ διὰ
τότε τολμῶμεν ἐν τοῖς περὶ τὸ κοινὸν διαλόγων φίλων ἐς ὡς
ἐνπορεύμαστος ἐκείστω, &c.

* Origen tells us also, that "a strict examination was
made into the morals of the Christians; and that perfous
were appointed to inquire into the former conduct, and
principles of every one, before he was admitted into the
Christian Congregation." This proves, that not every cri-
minal or profane could gain admission into the Christian so-
ciety at his pleasure, as Mr. G. affirms, p. 479, 480.

author
author has well accounted for it*. Yet still it will not admit of a doubt, if we have any regard to the truth of history, both sacred and profane, but that the apostles, and their successors, addressed themselves to emperors and princes, and disputed with orators and philosophers, as well as preached to the mechanic and slave: “King Agrippa was almost persuaded,” by the reasoning of St. Paul, “to become a Christian.” And Felix, though a governor, “trembled” at his authoritative reproof. His eloquence was more than a counterbalance for the rhetoric of Tertullus, and Athens was puzzled by, and astonished at, his understanding.

Julian the Emperor was made to know, by these mean and ignorant Christians, the danger of his apostacy; and Constantine was converted to the faith. The Empress Mammoea did not disdain to listen to the eloquent exhortations of “Origen,” and her son Alexander favoured the Christians.

These effects were not to be brought about by “private loquacity,” or silly babbling; nor “by mingling with the rude and illiterate crowd” alone. The disciples of Christ “preached aloud, upon the house-tops,” disputed in the learned synagogues, and harangued in the public streets and market places. This they did, though reproved, though punished for their conduct, and still did they persist in spite of human authority, and opposition. In fact, these obscure illiterate

* “Such is the constitution of civil society, that whilst a few persons are distinguished by riches, by honours, and by knowledge, the body of the people is condemned to poverty, ignorance, and poverty. The Christian religion, which addressed itself to the whole human race, must frequently collect a far greater number of professedly from the lower than from the superior ranks of life.” P. 513.
teachers spoke too publicly for the eloquence of infidelity, and reasoned too powerfully for the philosophy of paganism.

II.

But Origen furnishes Mr. G. with another piece of evidence, which he expresses in a note.*

"It may be hoped, that none, except the heretics, gave occasion to the complaint of Celsus, (ap. Origen, I. ii. p. 77.) that the Christians were perpetually correcting their gospels."

In opposition to this reflection, I shall content myself with fairly stating the accusation of Celsus himself, which, however malignant and groundless, does not authorize our historian to say, that "the Christians were perpetually correcting their gospels."

The translation of his words is this:

"Afterwards, Celsus says, that some of the believers, as if they were inebriated, allowed themselves to alter the gospel from its first copy; and this, three, or four, or even many times: and that they transformed it to have wherewith to deny the accusations alluded against them.

But I know of no others," replies Origen, "that altered the gospel, than the Marcionites, and Valentiniens, and I think also the Lucaniens. However, this charge we are speaking of does not affect the gospel itself, but relates to those only who have dared to erase and corrupt it."

We

* Note 185, c. xv.

† Origen, lib. II. p. 77. Spencer Ed.

μετατάστα τινάς τῶν πειρατῶν φανεῖ ὡς εἰ μένης ἔχουσίν εἰς τὸ ἰδίον αὐτοῖς, μεταχαράτας εἰς τὰς πρῶτας γραφὰς τὸ ἱσαργήλιον

ΤΡΙΧΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΤΡΑΧΗ, ΚΑΙ ΠΟΛΛΑΧΗ, η μεταπλάττων, "τὴν ἐκώσαν πρὸς τοὺς ἲδίχως ἀπαίδευσαι" ΜΕΤΑΧΑΡΑΧΩΝΤΑΣ ἔκ τό 'Εγγέλειον ἀλαύνεις οὐκ ὥσπερ, ἐποιεῖτο ἀπὸ

Martiou, 1859
We here see that Celsius himself only accuses some of the believers of altering the gospels; and who they were Origen informs us, strictly confining the charge to particular heretics*. And as the heathens seldom made a distinction between the heretics and the orthodox Christians, the accusation is easily accounted for: Yet Mr. G. would convey to his reader the idea, that Celsius extended "his complaint of perpetually corrupting the gospels" to the Christians in general, as if it had been a practice perpetually adopted by the whole body of believers. A charge this much to our author's favourite purpose of drawing a most odious picture of the religion of Christ.

"The learned Origen," says Mr. G. "who from his experience as well as reading, was intimately acquainted with the history of the Christians, declares in the most express terms, that the number of martyrs was very considerable†. But the general assertion of Origen may be explained and confirmed by the particular testimony of his friend Dionysius, who in the immense city of Alexandria, and under the rigorous persecution of Decius, reckons only ten men and seven women who

* Eusebius (l. v. 28.) is also referred to by Mr. G., chiefly, I should suppose in confirmation of the observations in the text of his history. At least, the words of Eusebius, "they fearlessly altered the sacred Scriptures," χραφάει καὶ Ζήτας ἀράδων ἔμποροστραβερικας, can relate to the heretics alone of whom he had been speaking.

Beaufobre, Histoire de Manichée, &c. (tom. i. c. iv. § 2. p. 306, &c.) though a strenuous advocate for the sectaries, allows the truth of this charge.


"suffered
"suffered for the profession of the Christian name."

It has been already judiciously observed by the author of the remarks †, that the testimony of Origen is insufficient to prove the above assertion: which therefore may be considered as a third instance of our author's misrepresentation of that Father.

I mean now to shew that his eager desire to lessen the number of martyrs, has not permitted him to give the testimony of Dionysius fairly and impartially as it stands in Eusebius.

Misrepresentations of Eusebius.

The testimony of this historian is appealed to by Mr. G ‡, in confirmation of his assertion "that the number of martyrs was very inconsiderable."

Our author is not very accurate in giving the exact number of the martyrs, specified by name in Eusebius, when "he reckons them to be only ten men and seven women:" But a matter of this little consequence I shall not insist upon.

Let us rather notice, what is much more material, that he only enumerates those persons who are expressly said to have lost their lives; concealing from us, that in the same place mention is made of several who underwent the severest tortures. For instance, four Christians, in particular, are said to have been delivered up to the magistrate ‡: And Dionysius speaks also of "a whole band of soldiers, who presented themselves before the tribunal,

† P. 69. "Because Origen lived before the time of the longest and severest persecutions which the Church experienced," namely, "those of Decius and Diocletian."

‡ Note 74. c. xvi. Eusebius, l. vi. c. 41.

‡ Hero, Ater, Isidorus, and Dioscorus, οἰκυδίκησαν.
"...and professed openly that they were Christians." We read then, "although the soldiers thus rushing in, affrightened the judges and the court, yet they made the condemned Christians more ready and courageous to bear their sufferings." By this we should understand, they were destined to cruel torments, if not to death itself.—I might too insist on the many intimations there are of others, whom death released from their severe servitude and lingering tortures. I might observe, that he speaks of many whose stronger constitutions could bear the oppressive burden; or who, in the benevolent language of Mr. G., suffered "only the milder punishments of exile, imprisonment, slavery, or working in the mines;" with which their humane magistrates were content to punish them. Very different then would be the number of these suffering martyrs. But that many more Christians laid down their lives in so long and severe a persecution than those who are here specified by name, is plainly demonstrable from the narration of this historian. It was not for Mr. G.'s purpose, to acquaint his reader with this. As a few in number were particularly pointed out by name, it afforded him a specious pretext for bringing in Dionysius, as affirming that no others had suffered. However, as a second misrepresentation,

II.

Our author, happy to have an opportunity of shewing that a zealous professor of Christianity

* ἈΘΡΟΩΝ ἐπὶ συνέχεια πρακτικῶς, Ἀμπαλνύνας Ζήνων καὶ Πτολεμαίων ἑκατόντας τῶν εὐθυγένεως Θεοφίλους, ἤτοινε κατὰ τὸν δικαστήριον.
† ἐκ τῶν μὴ κακομαινόντων ἰδανυσίατων, "ad ea quae perpessi erant promptissimi et confidentissimi: says Valesius.
† Page 545.

could
could at the same time lead a very profligate life, has taken special care to select from the number of these martyrs, one, who "was likewise accused of " robbery," to use his own words *. But the Greek historian here makes an essential addition: "† He was accused indeed, but falsely," says he, "as being an associate with thieves: He was ac-" quitted," continues he, "of this most foreign " and malicious charge, and being indicted, be-" cause he was a Christian, was burnt to death " among the other criminals."

One can hardly think, that any one, who had looked into the original, would dare thus absolutely to contradict the plain testimony of the author he pretends to follow.

For Mr. G. should be reminded, that the original word συνηφασάτηθα means, "he was falsely ac-" cused:" it is translated by Valesius † (whose edition he uses), "falso accusatus fuerat," and pro-" perly, as § Scapula and Budæus will inform him:

* Note 74. c. xvi.
Dionysius (apud Euseb. l. vi. c. 41.)

† Νυμαίων δὲ τις, κακίστος Ἀργυρίτης, ἐξυκοφαντήθη ἡ ΜΕΝ, μεί δὲ σπουδίας λυτῷ ἀποδύσαμένος δὲ τὰ γενναῖα παρὰ τὸ μακαριότατον ΤΗΝ ἈΛΛΟΤΡΙΩΤΑΤΗΝ ΚΑΤ' ΑΙΤΙΟΤ "ΔΙΑΒΟΛΑ'Ν. ΚΑΤΑΜΗΝΟΥΕΙΣ ΩΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΟΣ, ἢ μα-" μωθαὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἡγομνον. ἢ δὲ ἀδικατάτοις διπλαίς ἀντοι ἡ ταύς λεγας " ταῖς τε βασανὶς ἢ τοῖς μάρις λυπημάρις, μεταξὶ τῶν λυπῶν κατάρατοι.

† Page 240.

§ Scapula translates the word συνηφασάτω "falso criminor; "I am falsely charged with a crime." Budæus says (p. 13-), that this vero is used "when we speak of an innocent perdon; "qui de infonte dicitur." It is made use of in this acceptance also in the New Testament, the style of which the Fathers generally imitated; for a part of St. John the Baptist's charge to the seldiers (Luke iii. 14.) is μαίν συνηφασάτον, "neither " accuse any one falsely." The above are evident proofs that it can be taken in no other sense.
But, above all, what Eusebius himself subjoins, though our impartial historian thinks proper to conceal it from us, that "this very person was acquitted of the false accusation, even before the centurion, his enemy," must at once clear up every doubt of the kind.

What possible evasion then can Mr. G. have recourse to, to convince the world that I have falsely accused him of a gross misrepresentation of Eusebius?

III.

Our historian says, "The bishops of the most considerable cities were removed by exile, or death; the vigilance of the magistrates prevented the clergy of Rome, during sixteen months, from proceeding to a new election." For this he appeals to Eusebius.

Yet this Father says only, that "in the persecution of Decius, when Fabianus, bishop of Rome, suffered martyrdom in that city, Cornelius was elected to his bishopric." So that Mr. G. has no reason to say, from the testimony of Eusebius, that "the clergy of Rome were prevented, during sixteen months, from proceeding to a new election."

It should be remarked likewise, that Eusebius imputes "the resentment, by which Decius was actuated against the favourites of his predecessor Philip," to be the cause of his raising this per-

* Page 560.
† Note 121. c. xvi. Eusebius, l. vi. c. 39.
‡ Ἰονᾶς Φαβιανὸς ἐκ τῶν Πάπων μαρτυρῶν τελευτήτος Κορήλιος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς διαβεβεβληται.
§ Ἰοᾶ περὶ τῆς Φίλιππου ἐκθέους ἐπικα διαγέμενοι κατὰ τῷ ἐπισκοπῶν ἐγκαίρῳ.
secution against the church. Now this is directly contrary to the assertion of our author.

IV.

"The revolt of Maxentius," as Mr. G. asserts, "immediately restored peace to the churches of Italy and Africa, and the same tyrant, who op-

pressed every other class of his subjects, shewed himself just, humane, and even partial towards the afflicted Christians†.

In support of this, he appeals † to Eusebius, and continues his note in these words: "But as Max-

entius was vanquished by Constantine, it suited the purpose of Laetantius to place his death among those of the persecutors."

Our author here, in the strain of Middleton, introduces his favourite expression it suited the purpose of Laetantius, in order to insinuate to his readers that this father, as well as the others, was ready at all times, without the least regard to truth, to adopt any fact that tended to promote the design he had in view. I need not however dwell on this, as I have something of greater consequence to remark; which is, although Mr. G. represents these two Fathers, as contradicting each other in their accounts, yet this is so far from being true, that the testimony of Eusebius coincides with, and cor-

roborates, that of Laetantius. For Eusebius says, "Although Maxentius at first favoured the Chris-
tians with a view of popularity, yet afterwards, "being addicted to magic and every other iniquity,

* Page 560. "The virtues of Decius will scarcely allow "us to suspect that he was actuated by a mean resentment "against the favourites of his predecessor, &c."
† Page 577.
‡ Note 167. c. xvi. Eusebius, l. viii. c. 14.
he exerted himself in persecuting the Christians, in a more severe and destructive manner than his predecessors had done before him.*

From these words it appears, that not only Lactantius, but Eusebius also, ranks this emperor amongst the number of the persecutors. This being the case, Mr. G. must quote other authority to prove "the justice, humanity, and kind partiality of Maxentius towards the afflicted Christians." But surely if he had been acquainted with any such authority, he would not have exposed himself to the charge, which I now bring against him, that it suited his purpose here to falsify the testimony of Eusebius.

V.

Our author, unwilling to interrupt the long calm of prosperity which he describes the church as enjoying, by any violent act of the emperor Aurelian; would have us be of opinion, that "only some hostile intentions are to be attributed to that emperor †.

To corroborate this, he cites the testimony of several of the Fathers; but says, "their language is in general so ambiguous and incorrect, that we are at a loss to determine how far Aurelian had carried his intentions before he was assassinated."

† Page 561.
‡ Note 124. c. xvi.
However, one of the authorities he appeals to, Hieronym. in Chron. p. 177, makes against his assertion, by saying, "When Aurelian had raised a persecution against the Christians, a thunderbolt rushed down near him and his attendants, and not long after he died."

This plainly implies much more than hostile intentions: It absolutely says, that a persecution was begun by him, and speaks of the time past, as if he was deterred by this circumstance from pursuing these hostile measures. Our author has not only thus perverted the fact, but also has been guilty of a gross blunder, in quoting the Chronicon of Jerome, instead of that of Eusebius, which he should have called it; Jerome being only the interpreter of it. This was the consequence of his looking no farther than Dodwell for this remark, and not rightly understanding his reference.

VI.

Mr. G. says, "On some particular occasions, when the magistrates were exasperated by some personal motives of interest or resentment, when the zeal of the martyrs urged them to forget the rules of prudence, and perhaps of decency, to overturn altars, to pour out imprecations against the emperors, or to strike the judge as he sat


P. 177. "Aurelianus cum adversum nos persecutionem moriisset, solmen juxta eum comitique ejus frui, ac non multo post occiditur."

† This is far from being compatible with the truth of history: For we know from the authority of Tertullian, and other Fathers; nay, from Mr. G.'s own words, that the Christians always prayed for the safety and welfare of the Emperors and of the State.

"on
"On his tribunal, it may be presumed that every
mode of torture, which cruelty could invent, or
constancy could endure, was exhausted on those
devoted victims."

To illustrate this, he adds the following note:
"The behaviour of Aëdesius to Hierocles, præfect
of Egypt, was still more extraordinary, λογος
τε και ἐργος τον δίκαιον . . . . . περιβαλων.
Εὐσεβ. de Martyr. Palæstin. c. 5."

We cannot but remark the partiality of this ac-
count. Mr. G. takes care to omit the reasons or
provocations assigned in this very passage by Eufè-
bius, which might be some justification of the be-
behaviour of Aëdesius.

Eufebius, speaking of that judge, says, "§ he
not only punished the Christians beyond the li-
limits of his power, but treated the most venera-
ble men with every varied disgrace; violating
the chastity of the Christian virgins, and women
of the utmost modesty, by delivering them up
to be defiled and prostituted by whoresmongers."

* Page 583.
† Note 178. c. xvi.
‡ This word ἐργος is forcibly rendered 'smiting' by Mr. G.
in his text; but a candid reader might well understand it, from the sense and connection of the whole passage, to imply only
some menacing gesture.
§ Eusèb. de Martyr. Palæstin. c. 5.

σαμποτὶ τὸ χρόνον ὑπερο̂ν — Ἀδίσιος. μετὰ μυρίας ὠνάς ἀμολο-
γίας καὶ πολυχρόνως ἐδόθη τὸ κακώς. ἔγημοντες τὴν ἀποφάσιθα, ἂς
τὸν κακὰ παλαιώτατο ἐδοταῖ μεταλλοῖς.——τελευτῶν ὑπὰ ἑαυ̂ς τῶν
Ἀλεξανδρίνων πόλεως τῶν αὐτῶν συμμετεοτα Ἰωσαφάτους,
πρὸς τὶς τῶν φροντισμῶν ἑρμαρακμένας. ἐς τοὺς μὲν σωμαῖς ἀνθρώ-
pολίτας ἐνεχύζουσα. τοῖς δὲ γυναικῶν συμμετεόρχησε τὶς ἀνθρώπων ἥ
ἀυτοπαράξειας αὐτοτροπίᾳ τῶν ἄνδρων, ὃς ὄν ἀφέθη ἑαυ̂ς αὐτῷ τὰ
γυναικῶν ἑδόμενοι, πορευμένοι Ἡσαβάθους περαποιήσαντα.
ταύτω ἐκεχερεύσας τὸν ἀδελφὸν, ὅτι ὁ ἐφέρθη ἑαυ̂ς αὐτῷ τὰ
gυναικῶν ἑδόμενοι, πορευμένοι Ἡσαβάθους περαποιήσαντα.
λόγοι τὸν ἐκ ἐργοῦ τὸν δίκαιον αἰχμῆνα ἐκ αἰτίας ἀπειθη-
κατο, ἔλαλητη παραβολής τελεύτη.
"On beholding these intolerable grievances, the courageous Ædesius approached with magnanimous confidence, and by his words and actions raised in the judge both shame and disgrace: For which, being seized and fettered, he endured with constancy every torture, which cruelty could invent, and was at last thrown into the sea."

This being the case, it became Mr. G. to lay it open before us; it was his duty, as an impartial historian, not to have left the reader at liberty to imagine the insult was unprovoked. For, on viewing the horrible picture here given of the judge, the behaviour of Ædesius will not appear to be so very extraordinary as our author would represent it: But we are almost tempted to applaud his zeal.

VII.

"Each of these sects," (namely, "of the Gnostics, the Basilidians*, the Valentinians, the Marcionites, and the Manicheans,"), says Mr. G., "could boast of its doctors and martyrs†." To confirm this he cites the authority of Eusebius‡.

Now the chapter referred to by Mr. G. in Valeius's edition, "treats principally of the martyrdom of Polycarp §: One Germanicus also is particularly mentioned: And twelve other Christians, Eusebius tells us, were martyred together

* Mr. G. seems to speak very inconsistently with this in his note on this passage, where he says, "Some of the Gnostics, (the Basilidians) it seemed, declined and even refused the honour of Martyrdom." How then could these same Basilidians be said to boast of their martyrs?

† Page 462.

‡ Note 33, c. xv. Eusebius Hist. Ecclesiast. l. iv. c. 15.

§ P. 129. Vale. Ed. τότες ἐξεῖς ἐμέ τὶς στῆνες ἐν τῷ Πολυκαρπῷ διηρήσας τὸ κατὰ τὸν λαμπρὸν αὐτοῦ μάρτυραν, "with
with Polycarp*. One Marcionite is instanced as
crowned with martyrdom, and another man
named Pionus †." These are all that are re-
corded by the historian; and no mention is made
of any sect but that of Marcion.
We now see that Eusebius does not give our au-
thor those sufficient grounds for his remark, which
he would represent him as giving.
Nay elsewhere, when Eusebius says that "many
of the followers of Marcion had suffered martyr-
dom ‡," he does not intimate that the other sects
could boast of their martyrs: Nor is he quoted
even by Beausobre §, the great apologist for the
sects, in a more extensive view than relating to
the Marcionites. It is more probable, therefore,
that the thought was suggested to our author by
Beausobre in the above passage, or else by Bayle,
whom he here quotes, and whose words are not
very unlike Mr. G.'s " They boasted of their pre-
tended martyrs." The long note which Bayle
has on this subject, might readily furnish him with
the reference to Eusebius.

VIII.

Our author refers to Eusebius for a passage, to
which his reference does not direct us. His words

* P. 135.—τοιαύτη τά κατά τώ μακάριοι Πολύκαρφον σύν
τούς ἀδελφον Φιλάδελφιάς διδόια, τοῦ ἐν Σμύρνῃ μαρτυρούσατο.
† ἀλλα μαρτύρια συνήστω κατά τόν αὐτόν Σμύρναις περιεχό-
μένα εἰς τόν αὐτόν περίοδον τού χρόνου τῆς τοῦ Πολύκαρφου μαρτυρίας.
‡ Bayle, Hist. Eccl. Hist. i. c. 16.
§ Histoire de Manichée, &c. tom. ii. livre iv. c. 8. § 3.
afe, "But he" (Flavius Clemens) "had scarcely
finished the term of his annual magistracy, when,
on a slight pretence, he was condemned and ex-
cuted. Domitilla (the wife of Clemens, the
niece of Domitian) was banished to a desolate
island on the coast of Campania," &c. To
illustrate this passage, he adds the following note,
(§ 2. c. xvi.) "The isle of Pandataria, according
to Dion. Brutius Præfens (ap. Euseb. iii. 18.),
banished her to that of Pontia, which was not
far distant from the other," &c.
In opposition to this, as an additional instance
of our author's miseducation, I assure the
reader, that there is no mention made of Brutius
Præfens in Eusebius, lib. iii. c. 18. (See Valerius'
edition.) Can we think it probable then, that any
person who had consulted Eusebius, would have
made such an assertion? or how can we excuse
such a vain affectation of learning? I doubt not
but I shall be able hereafter to account for this
error, to the satisfaction of the reader.
I shall close these proofs of our author's unfair
quotations of Eusebius, by the following reflec-
tion:
Whatever may be thought of the accusation
thrown out by Mr. G. against this historian, "of
suppressing all that could tend to the disgrace of
religion;" surely every body must agree,
though Mr. G. himself does not confess it, that,
by the artful management of his quotations, as we
have seen in the above instances, he suppresses
whatever might do credit to religion.

† See the vindication of Eusebius from this aspersion by the
author of the remarks, p. 70 and 76, &c.
Misrepresentation of Justin Martyr.

Mr. G. in stating the "three methods of escaping martyrdom," begins with the following as the first:

1. "A modern inquisitor would hear with surprise, that whenever an information was given to a Roman magistrate of any person within his jurisdiction who had embraced the sect of the Christians, the charge was committed to the party accused, and that a convenient time was allowed him to settle his domestic concerns, and to prepare an answer to the criticism that was imputed to him."

In confirmation of this account he says, that, "In the second apology of Justin, there is a particular and very curious instance of this legal delay," &c.

The reader will observe, that Mr. G. does not make a particular reference to any section or division of this part of Justin's works; with what view, we may shrewdly suspect, when I tell him, that, after an accurate perusal of the whole second apology, I can boldly affirm, that the following instance is the only one that bears the most distant similitude to what Mr. G. relates as above on the authority of Justin.

What I find in Justin is as follows: "A woman being converted to Christianity, is afraid to associate with her husband, because he is an abandoned reprobate, left she should partake of his sins. Her husband not being able to accuse her, vents his rage in this manner on one Ptolemaeus, a teacher of Christianity, and who had converted

* Page 553.
† Note 98. c. xvi.
"her. The Centurion being his friend, throws "Ptolemaeus into prison, and is afterwards per-"suaded to bring him forth, and to put the usual "question to him, whether be is a Christian, or "not? Then, upon his true and faithful confes-"sion, that he was a Christian, the Centurion caused "him to be fettered, and he was punished in prison "for a long time."

Shall this then be called "an instance of legal de-
“lay?” a delay of punishment it could not be, for he was not only confined for a long time, but was "chastised, or tortured during his imprisonment; nay, even previous to his trial. Is there any thing said here of "the charge being communicated to the "party accused? or was there any time allotted him "to settle his domestic concerns?" Why then does Mr. G. attempt to obtrude upon us a sentiment of his own, as that of Justin? Though he takes every opportunity to pass encomiums on the humanity of the Roman magistrates, it is incumbent on him to produce better evidence than this of their being content to put in force only their milder punishments, as he is pleased to stile them; left, when the comparison is drawn between them and the modern inquisitor, it should not appear to be much in their favour.

* Justin Martyr. Apolog. ii.

« δῆ ταύτας στοτι ἀνερ, ἀφὸς εἰκόνα μετὰ μεθανήματος ταχύν ἐν λόγῳ, ἀφὸς Πτολεμαίων τινος ἐν Οὐσείω ἱκολάσθητο, διδάσκαλος εἰκόνας τῶν χριστιανῶν μάθηματι γνώμων, ἑταρέας, διὰ τοῦτο τὸν τρόπον. ἱστοπόταιροι ἐν διαμάχη ἱκολάσθα τῶν Πτολεμαίων, φίλοι αὐτῶν ὑπάρχοντα, ἀπου ἠλθονται τῶν Πτολεμαίων καὶ ἑνωτίσθησαν καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο μόνο χριστιανός ἐγείρετο τῶν Πτολεμαίων, χριστιανῆς ἡμᾶς. ἡ ἤμα τὰ Πτολεμαίων, ἠπειρίω σαλ. ἡ ἐκτόπισιν ὑπῆ αὐτοῖς ἵκολοι τῶν φανῶν ἑντο, ἰκολούθωσαν ἑναυτὸ ἑυμήρια, ἑν διάμοιραι γίνονται ἡ ἱστοπόταιρος ἐπιτυχεὶται, ἡ ἐγείρετο τοῦτο χριστιανος τὸν ἱκολούθησαν ἑντο. Εὐδ. Θύρλη, p. 109.
Misrepresentation of Optatus.

On the authority of this Father, Mr. G. informs us he makes the following note: "The ancient monuments published at the end of Optatus, p. 261, &c. describe in a very circumstantial manner, the proceedings of the governors in the destruction of churches. They made a minute inventory of the plate, &c. which they found in them. That of the church of Cirta, in Numidia, is still extant. It consisted of two chalices of gold, and six of silver: six urns, one kettle, seven lamps, all likewise of silver; besides a large quantity of brass utensils, and wearing apparel."

Mr. G. in the preceding note had referred to Dupin's edition of Optatus; we therefore justly expect him to adhere to it in this note: But I do not find any of the above particulars specified at page 261 in Dupin's edition †, and only some of them in other places.

In the annotations of Balduinus, where he is speaking of the ornaments of the church, we read these words,—"I pass over many traces of ecclesiastical antiquity which occur in this book of Optatus: As, for instance, what is afterwards written in it, that the churches of Africa had very many ornaments (as he calls them) of gold and silver in the time of Maxentius. But it is still more astonishing that Optatus signifies, there were such also in the African churches, at the time they were afflicted by impious tyrants. So also Augustin says, that in the time of Dio-

* Note 159. c. xvi.
† Fol. edit. Antwerp. 1702. In this edition, p. 261 relates to a different part of his work.
cletian, and of the persecution raised by him.
the church of the Donatists at Cirta had two
golden chalices, and six of silver, and a silver
lamp."

Besides the above, there is no further enumera-
tion of the ornaments of the church in this
place.

Neither do I find anything similar to what Mr.
G. relates "in the edict of Diocletian and Maxi-
mian," as given us by Optatus, "respecting the
subversion of churches †," in which, however,
it is natural to expect that "the proceedings of the
governors would be described."

Again, though there is a particular description of
Cirta, in Numidia, given us in Optatus ‡; yet we
do not meet with "this minute inventory" which
our author specifies.

These several reasons must strongly incline one
to suspect that Mr. G. never consulted the original;
it is at least undeniably plain, that he did not use
the edition he quotes. Have we not, therefore, a
right to say, his presumption deserves censure?

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* Annotationes Balduini.
P. 126. "Præterea multa, quæ in hoc Optati libro oc-
current vestigia Antiquitatis Ecclesiasticae: veluti, quod in
"ec scriptum deinde ess, Ecclesiaram in Africam, tempore
"Maxentii, fuisse quamplurima (ut vocat) ornamenta ex auro
"et argento." —— Sed mirum magis est, quod Optatus sig-
nificat talia etiam fuisse in Africanis Ecclesiis, quo tempore
"alioquin Ecclesia sub impiis tyrannis afflicta jacebat. Sic et
"Augustinii lib. 3. contra Crescon. cap. 29. indicat, tem-
pore Diocletiani, et persecutionis ab eo excitata, Cirtensem
"Ecclesiam Donatitarum babuisse calices duas aureas, et fix
"argentos, et lucernam argentam," &c.

† De Ecclesiaram Eversione, cap. ii. p. 143. 145.
‡ Histor. Carthaginensi Collationis, p. 344, 345.

Misere-
Misrepresentations of Laestantius.

I.

Mr. G. says, "The principal eunuchs, Lucian and Dorotheus, Gorgonius, and Andrew, who attended the person, possessed the favour, and governed the household, of Diocletian, protested by their powerful influence the faith which they had embraced. Their example was imitated by many of the most considerable officers of the palace, who, in their respective stations, had the care of the imperial ornaments, of the robes, of the furniture, of the jewels, and even of the private treasury; and though it might sometimes be incumbent on them to accompany the emperor when he sacrificed in the temple, they enjoyed with their wives, their children, and their slaves, the free exercise of the Christian religion.

The above passage he grounds on the sole authority of Laestantius. But it is strange that Mr. G. should appeal to this author, as his testimony makes much more against his assertion, than for it.

For Laestantius says, that "when the Christian officers, who attended the emperor at his rites of divination, had, by marking their foreheads with the sign of the cross, disturbed these rites, the chief of the Soothsayers informed Diocletian, that he could give no answer, because profane persons were present. The emperor then, being very superstitious, was highly incensed with them, and gave orders, that not only those Christians who waited on him during his religious performances, but all the other Christians who were in the palace, should offer sacrifice; and conse-

* Page 564.

† "Note 133. c. xvi. Laestantius de M. P. c. 10."
"manded that those who refused should be beaten with stripes."

Now the only part of Mr. G.'s assertion, which Laactantius corroborates, is, that some of the Christians of the palace "accompanied the emperor when he sacrificed in the temple." Surely then this passage cannot be alleged as a proof of the favour shewn to the Christian officers: Nor can they be said to "have enjoyed the free exercise of the Christian religion," when we read in Laactantius that they were obliged to offer sacrifice to a heathen divinity, or on refusal were so severely punished.

What apology can be made for thus asserting, on the sole authority of Laactantius, facts which Laactantius so expressly denies?

I shall hereafter shew, how much Mr. G. is here again indebted to the learning of Dodwell, though he has spoiled the remark of that author, by his attempt to disguise it.

"De mortibus persecutorum c. 10. Quam vero causam persequeendi habueris, exponam. Cum aeger Diocletianus in partibus orientis, ut erat pro timore scrutator rerum futurarum, immolabat pecudes; et in jecoribus eorum ventura querebat. Tum quidem ministrorum scientes Dominum, cum adhiberent immolanti, impoferent frontibus suis immortales figulum. Quo facto fugatis daemonibus facra turbata sunt, Trepidabant aruspices, nec solitas in extis notas videbant; et quasi in mon lisaent, sepius immolabant. Verum identidem magis hostiae nihil offendeant, donec magister ille aruspicum tages, seu suspicione, seu vitia, ait idcirco non respondere facra quod rebus divinis profani homines interfissent. Tunc ira furens, sacrificare non eos tantum qui facitis ministribant, sed universos qui erant in palatium, jussit, et in eos si dextabissent, verberibus ani- madvertit." P. 858, edit. Spark. Oxon.

II.
II.

Mr. G. says, in a note where he treats of the persecution of Maximin*, "These writers" (Eusebius and Laëntanius) "agree in representing the arts of Maximin; but the former relates the execution of several martyrs, while the latter expressly affirms, "occidi servos Dei vexit." (that is, he forbid the servants of God to be slain.)

Our historian, in this instance, makes a fresh attempt to set these two ecclesiastical writers at variance, probably hoping to overthrow, at least to invalidate the testimony of both. But it will appear that Laëntanius and Eusebius "do not disagree in their representations of the arts of Maximin," if we trust not to the "mutilated representation" of author, but consult the original passage.

For Laëntanius says, "Although Maximin did indeed forbid the Christians to be slain, under the old pretext of Clemency;" yet, as the sentence proceeds, "be gave express orders for them to be maimed and tortured. In consequence of which, the eyes of the confessors were scooped out, their bands and feet chopped off, and their nostrils and the flaps of their ears cut through."†

I now beg the reader will particularly observe, how totally the sentence of Laëntanius is altered, by the artful and unfair method in which Mr. G. has quoted him. That part of the sentence which he

* Pages 581, 582.
† "Note 175. c. xvi. Eusebius, l. viii. c. 14. l. ix. c. 2—8."
Laëntanius de M. P. c. 36."
† "Laëntanius, de Mortibus Persecutorum. c. 36.
lays before us, is manifestly connected with the subsequent words, which, as not being suited to his purpose, he treacherously conceals. If the whole sentence had been transcribed by our impartial historian, we should then have seen that Laætantius does not essentially differ from Eusebius, as he expressly says that, by Maximin's command, the Christians suffered such excruciating tortures, as could not but frequently terminate in their death.

III.

There remains still a third instance of Mr. G.'s misrepresenting and perverting Laætantius, perhaps more flagrant than the last.

"There were some governors," says he, "who from a real or affected clemency, had preserved their hands unspotted with the blood of the faithful," &c. To give this the air of truth, he again appeals to a passage of Laætantius; which gives a reason for this conduct of the governors; the translation of which is as follows:

"That they might have it in their power to boast, that they had put no innocent persons to death, for I myself have heard some boasting, that during their magistracy they had not shed innocent blood."

Mr. G. has here again picked out a short passage from Laætantius, without laying before us the words with which it is connected, that he might support his odd fancy of being the apologist for the heathen magistrates. To prove this to the most

* Page 585.

† Note 183, c. xv. "Ut gloriari possint nullum se innocentium peremissi, nam et iple audivi aliquos gloriantes, quia administratio sua, in hac parte, fuerit incruenta." - Laætiant. Institut. Divin. v. 11.
inadvertent reader, I need but transcribe the whole passage from Laërtianus.

"But that punishment," says he, "is of the worst kind, which is disguised under the false appearance of clemency; he is the more severe, he the more savage executioner, who has resolved to kill no one: It is on this account that words cannot express, what great, what excruciating kinds of tortures, judges of this opinion have invented to accomplish their resolutions. Nor do they act in this manner so much, that they may have it in their power to boast, that they have slain no innocent persons (for I myself have heard some boasting, that their administration had been, in this respect, unstained with blood), but for the sake of envy; left they themselves should be overcome, or the sufferers obtain the glorious reward of their virtue. Therefore they think of nothing but overcoming us in the punishments they invent. I saw in Bitbynia, a magistrate wonderfully elated with joy, as if he had conquered a nation; because one who, for the space of two years, had with great fortitude withstood his tortures, at length seemed to yield. They strive, therefore, to overcome us; and inflict the most exquisite pains on our bodies: Yet they are only solicitous lest the tortured wretches should expire. As if death alone could make us happy, and not torments also; which, by how much the more severe they have been, are by so much the more virtuously glorious. But they give orders, with foolish obstinacy, that strict care be taken of the tortured, that their limbs may be repaired for other racks, and their blood be recruited afresh for punishment.

G 2"
"What can possibly be so pious, so kind, so humane?"

Let the humane reader for one moment reflect what a different strain this is from the representation of our author. Who could think any one could be so ingenious as to pervert and wrest such a passage as this is, to prove that "some governors, through a real or affected clemency, had served their hands unstained with the blood of the faithful?"

* P. 451. "Illud vero pessimum genus est, cui clementiae species falsa blanditur; ille gravior, ille savor est carnifex, qui neminem fiatuit occider. Itaque dici non potest, hujusmodi justi, quanta et quam gravia tormentorum genera excogitaverint, ut ad affectum propositi fuerent. Hae autem non tantum ideo faciant, ut gloriaris possint, nullum se innocentium peremisse, (nam et ipsae audire aliquos gloriantes, quia administratio sua in hac parte, fuerit incruenta,) sed et invidiae causa; ne aut ipsi vincantur, aut illi virtutis suae gloriam confecissent. Itaque in excogitatibus panarum generibus, nihil aliud quam victoriam excogitant. Sciant enim certamen esse illud et pugnam. Vidi ego in Bithynia, precestor gaudios mirabiliter elatum, tanquam barbarorum gentem aliquam sobegissit; "quod unus, qui per biennium magna virtute restiterat, postremi sedere visus est."

Conendunt igitur, ut vincant; et exquisitis dolores corporis bus immittant; et nihil aliud devitant, quam ut ne torti moriantur. Quasi vero mors tantummodo beatos faciat; ac non etiam tormenta, quae quanto fuerint graviora, tanto majorem virtutis gloriam pariant. Illi autem pertinaci nulliisia subjacent, curam tortis diligentem adhiberi, ut ad alios cruciatus membra renoventur, et repararet nosus sanguis ad panam. "Quid tam pium, tam benigne, tam humanum hieri potest? Non curalet tam folicite, quos amaret. Hae est Deorum disciplina. Ad haec opera cultores suos erudiunt; haec fœca deriderant."

† It is necessary again, particularly to point out to the reader, that there is no full stop in Lactantius after the word "incruenta," ("unstained with blood") to compleat the sentence, as Mr. G. has unfairly represented it.

Had
Had Mr. G. asserted this as his own notion of the clemency of the heathen magistrates, we might not have been so astounded; as he seems to put off the feelings of humanity, when he speaks of the suffering Christians. But surely the more moderate part of mankind will think there is nothing to glory of in sparing the life of an innocent person. And hardly the most savage barbarian could boast of humanity, because, after torturing a wretch to the verge of death, he would not suffer the excruciated soul, worn out with the most cruel tortures, to be released from its intolerable anguish by death, but caused the decayed spirits to be refreshed, in order to endure again the lingering agonies of the rack.

I had collected many other instances of our author's perverting and misrepresenting the testimony of the Fathers, besides those I have already produced. But the reader will perhaps rather blame me for having produced so much, than require me to produce more evidence*. I shall therefore close this head of the Misrepresentation of the Fathers, with a passage, which the reader cannot think misapplied to Mr. Gibbon, as it was at first particularly aimed at another infidel, Mr. Toland.

"When I observe a pernicious ranfacking and muss-tering together all the silly trumpery of the an-

* The above proofs of the shameful usage which the primitive Christian writers have met with from Mr. G. most fully verify the complaint of their apologist Cave.

"Si quis in eorum libris occurrit: detectus mov angueret et amplificatur, si vel levissima haec sit ut exagerraret, et in portentosum eiusrum praebetitur: hic rum litterarum interpretationes ab ini adhibit, quam ludicrae, insipidae et plane "aporgi

"futilia, fcelulm, imbecillia exhistantur. Quid veiba mulia? prae fecundis saltem, sublimibus, acutissimum nosiri tem-

*poris ingenii a plerisque irribentur." Epistola Apologetica.
cient heretics, grossly misrepresenting the books be
cites, only with design to satisfy a bigotted humour
cagainst the Christian religion, I am obliged, by
my regards to the profession I make of the name
of Jesus, to lay open such vile imposture.*

As I have at great length dwelt on our author's
misquotations of the Fathers, my learned reader
perhaps will not be displeased, if I vary the scene,
by producing two or three of his classical friends,
to shew what art Mr. G. has used to suit their au-
thority to his purpose of throwing an odium on
Christianity.

Missrepresentation of Dion Cassius.

I have already given a curious instance of our
author's asseriting, on the authority of Dion Cassius,
a fact not mentioned by that historian; I shall now
produce a very singular proof of his endeavouring
to conceal from us a passage really contained in
him.

Mr. G. says, "In the various compilation of
the Augustan history (a part of which was com-
posed under the reign of Constantine), there are
not six lines which relate to the Christians; nor
has the diligence of Xiphilin discovered their
name in the large history of Dion Cassius †."

This note is introduced to confirm his assertion,
"of the careless indifference, which the most co-
pious and the most minute of the pagan writers,
have shewn to the affairs of Christianity ‡."

It happens unluckily for our author, that this
note, which he produces to support his observa-

* See the "Full Method of settling the Canonical Autho-
"rity of the New Testament by Mr. Jeremiah Jones."
† Note 24. c. xvi.
‡ Page 530.
tion, tends only to overthrow it: Since the truth of it must be inevitably destroyed, though not without the justest impeachment of his veracity or learning. For though in this place he dares to assure us, that "the diligence of Xiphilin has not discovered even the name of Christians in the large history of Dion Cassius," yet, what is remarkably astonishing, hereafter he inconsiderately contradicts himself, by referring to a passage in Dion where the word appears*. That historian, speaking of Martia, says, "She is reported to have exerted her utmost endeavours in behalf of the CHRISTIANS; and to have benefited them greatly, as having great influence over Com-"

What shall we say now? Do we not discover the name of Christians in the history of Dion? With what assurance then can Mr. Gibbon, after asserting a fact manifestly untrue, lay claim to the merits of "diligence and accuracy, the indispensable duty of an historian?" Or can he expect us to credit his assertion, that "he has carefully examined all the original materials?"

With regard to what he says of the Augustan history, he cannot surely mean that no mention is made of the Christians in that compilation. Or would he insinuate, that there are not six lines together, in one passage, which respect the Christians. This is but a pitiful evasion, if intended; and if he did not mean it, he must acknowledge, that his false assertion is overthrown by the frequent notice

* Note 106, c. xvi. Dion Cassius, l. lxii. p. 1266.

† ἵππος ταῖς ἰμήροις ἑορταστικοῖς, καὶ πάντας ταὐτός ἰσορροπικαί, ἀπὸ χτενὶ τῆς Κομψύχης πάν ἔναρκτον.
taken of them in several passages of that history, which he himself has had occasion to cite.

I might particularly urge what is there related of the worship paid to Christ by the emperor Alexander Severus, recorded by Lampridius; and the law of the emperor Severus, forbidding the Christians, as well as the Jews, to make proselytes to their religion.

Misrepresentation of Epictetus and Marcus Antoninus.

Our historian does not fairly state the words of Epictetus and Marcus Antoninus, with regard to the sentiments which the philosophers entertained of the Christians.—He says,

"The behaviour of the Christians was too remarkable to escape the notice of the ancient philosophers; but they seem to have considered it with much less admiration than astonishment. Incapable of conceiving the motives which sometimes transported the fortitude of believers beyond the bounds of prudence or reason, they treated such an eagerness to die, as the strange result of obstinate despair, of stupid insensibility, or of superstitious phrenzy."—In support of the above, he appeals first to a passage of Epictetus, where mention is made of the Galilæans; but adds, "there is some doubt whether Epictetus alludes to the Christians." He afterwards cites the testimony of Marcus Antoninus.

* c. xv. note 136. c. xvi. notes 110. 113, &c.
† Page 552.
‡ Note 94. c. xv. Epictetus, l. iv. c. 7.
§ Marcus Antoninus, l. xi. c. 3.
Mr. G. himself considers this observation of Epictetus as relating to the Christians*; I shall therefore proceed to shew, that the philosopher does not make their conduct the result of such motives as are here represented. For, in this chapter, "on intrepidity," he says, "those persons are capable of it who are either insensible of their danger, or involved in calamity; or those who have acquired an indifference to every thing in life:" Then he adds the particular sentence alluded to by Mr. G. which I shall give in the translation of Lardner.—"Is it possible that a man may arrive at this temper, and become indifferent to those things, from madness, or from habit, as the Galilæans? And yet that no one should be able to know, by reason and demonstration, that God made all things in the world †?"

The philosopher here accounts for the indifference of the Galilæans, as if it were the effect of habit. He could not speak of their intrepidity as the effect

* Dr. Lardner—Testimonies, vol. ii. p. 107; 3. speaks of this passage of Epictetus, as relating to the Christians.

† Some have thought, that by Galilæans, are here meant the followers of Judas of Galilee. I should rather think, that Christians are intended: of whose sufferings there are such accounts in Tacitus and Suetonius, as may assure us, that Epictetus and Arrian could not be unacquainted with them. The followers of Judas of Galilee were extinct before this time."
of madness; for he expressly says, that it arose from their peculiar mode of life. I appeal to the learned reader, if Epictetus does not make a proper distinction, "Some," says he, "are intrepid through madness, some acquire this indifference by custom, as the Galilæans." Our very candid author conceals from us that any such distinction is here made; in order, no doubt, to have a pretence for giving us, on the venerable authority of the stoic, a sentiment hatched in his own infidel school, that to be a Christian and to be mad, are synonymous expressions.

Mr. G. has also quoted the authority of Marcus Antoninus on this occasion *. But he does not appear to me to have faithfully translated the phrase of that author. Caußabon very accurately renders it, "not merely through obstinacy." But I appeal to the learned reader, whether Mr. G. could, with any shadow of truth, give us, as the expressions of Antoninus, his strange mixture of "obstinate despair, stupid insensibility, or superstitious phren-zy."

It is not indeed easy to say, what idea we can conceive of such different affections, as those of obstinacy and of despair conjointly: It is like our author's causing the same objects, at the same time, to "excite" the benevolence of "compassion," and the arrogance of "contempt." These pompous, but unmeaning words, which, I will suppose, Mr. G. introduced for no other reason but to round his period; his tribe of admirers, who believe every

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* Marcus Antoninus, 1. xi. c. 3.
μὴ κατὰ γαλιᾶν μαθήτας αὐς ὁ Χριστιανός.

† "Non ex simplici obstinatisme." Caußabon.

§ Page 538.
thing but what is contained in the Bible, will, no doubt, adopt as the genuine expressions of the philosophic emperor.

I would observe also, the strange inconsistency of our historian on this subject.—We have just read what he says in this place; that "the behaviour of the Christians was too remarkable to escape the notice of the ancient philosophers:" He before spoke "of the supine inattention of these philosophers to Christianity *; and of their rejecting it." He tells us also, "of the careless indifference which the most copious, and the most minute of the pagan writers, have shewn to the affairs of the Christians †."

Yet after all, he informs us again, that "the philosophers, who now assumed the unworthy office of directing the blind zeal of persecution, had diligently studied the nature and genius of the Christian religion ‡."

*Misrepresentation of Pliny.*

Our author says, "Some of these apostates had yielded on the first menace or exhortation of the magistrate; whilst the patience of others had been subdued by the length and repetition of tortures. The affrighted countenances of some betrayed their inward remorse; while others approached with confidence and alacrity to the altars of the Gods §."

For this the first authority he quotes is Pliny's Epistles, x. 97¶. But Pliny has not particularized that difference of conduct which Mr. G. here de-

* Page 516, 517. † Page 530.
‡ Page 530. § Page 554.
¶ Note 101. c. xvi. scribes:
scribes*: Yet his name stands at the head of those authors whom he has cited on the occasion. It is allowed indeed, that this distinction is made by the other authors; but as Pliny, the first referred to by Mr. G., gives him no cause or reason to use them; it is certainly very reprehensible in our author, thus to confound their testimony, and to make a needless and improper reference.

**Misrepresentation of Orosius** †.

Our author, after speaking of the fire of Rome, says, "the vigilance of government appears not to have neglected any of the precautions, which might alleviate the sense of so dreadful a calamity. The Imperial gardens were thrown open to the distressed multitude, temporary buildings were erected for their accommodation, and a plentiful supply of corn and provisions was distributed at a very moderate price," &c. And again, "But all the prudence and humanity of Nero were insufficient to preserve him from the popular suspicion, as having been the incendiary of his own capital ‡.”

Not one of the several authors quoted by Mr. G. on this occasion, give him the least foundation for ascribing the virtues of prudence and humanity to the abandoned Nero §. But why Orosius should be

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* I need not quote the passage from the original, as it is so well known to every admirer of the classics.

† Though this writer was a Christian priest, and a disciple of St. Austin; yet, being best known as a compiler of history, and, as such, cited by M. G. this induced me not to insert this instance of misrepresentation, amongst those of the Fathers.

‡ Page 532.

§ Impartiality requires us to inform the reader, that Mr. G. has paid that deference to the general sense of mankind, and
be appealed to*, is indeed wonderful; for, excepting the single fact of there having been such a fire, there is the most express disagreement between the circumstances related by this author, and those produced by Mr. Gibbon.

Orosius gives this dark character of Nero: "That he not only equalled, but surpassed, his uncle Caligula in every vice and crime; disgraced by petulance, luft, luxury, avarice, cruelty, and every wickedness.—He adopts the story likewise of his playing on his harp at the sad catastrophe;" and adds, "so unbounded was his avarice that, after the fire was extinguished, be would permit no one to go to his few goods which remained; but be himself caused, whatever the flames had spared, to be carried away."

the authority of history, as to make the following alteration in his third edition: "But all the prudence and humanity affixed by Nero on this occasion, was insufficient to preserve him from the popular suspicion." (P. 637. 3d. edit.)

This correction was indeed necessary, to avoid a striking inconsistency with what immediately follows; for, otherwise, how could Mr. Gibbon call him humane whom he admits to be "the afflicto of his wife and mother?" Q. how could that person "be deemed incapable of the most extravagant folly, who," as he tells us, "prostituted his person and dignity on the theatre?"

* Note 28. c. xvi. Orosius, vii. 7.

† P. 470, 471. "Caii Caligulæ avunculi sui erga omnium vitia ac fœlera fectator, immo transgressior. petulantiam, libidinem, luxuriam, avaritiam, crudelitatem, nullo non fœlera exercuit, &c.

"Quod" (scil. incendium Romae) "ipse ex altissima illa Mæcenatiana turre prospectans, hæcque flammæ (ut aicbat) pulchritudine, tragicō habitu iisdem decantabant.

"Avaritiae autem tam præruptæ exhitit, ut poft hoc incendium urbis, quam fæ Augustus ex lateritia marmoream reddidisse jactaverat, seminem ad reliquias rerum suarum adire permiferit, cuncta quàm flammæ quoquo modo superfuerant, ipse absulit." 4to edit. Havercamp. 1738.

I now
I now appeal to the reader, if he really thinks Mr. G. would have cited Orosius, at a place where he is endeavouring to whitewash the character of Nero, if he had ever looked into that author.

Misrepresentation of Bayle and Fabricius.

Our author says, "Notwithstanding it is probable that Tacitus was born some years before the fire of Rome, he could derive only from reading and conversation, the knowledge of an event which happened during his infancy, &c."*

These words he supports by an appeal to the following authors in this note: "See the lives of Tacitus by Lipsius, and the Abbé de la Bletterie, Dictionnaire de Bayle à l'article TACITE, and Fabricius Biblioth. Latin." (tom ii. p. 386. edit. Ernest †.)

Mr. G. has here quoted four authors, as concurring to establish his assertion; whereas they vary in their sentiments. "Bayle reproves Lipsius, and his method of computing the age of Tacitus ‡." And Fabricius does not all treat of the time of Tacitus’s birth; "but after mentioning his family and descent, proceeds to speak of the order of his work §."

It is plain, therefore, that Mr. G., with the view of displaying extensive reading, has heaped toge-

* Page 535.
† Note 36. c. xvi.
‡ "J’avais quelques fautes à reprocher à Juste Lipsius."
"Il nous apprend qu’il a dû être à peu-près l'année natale de Tacite, &c. Bayle, tom. ii. partie ii. p. 1117. Tacite, Not. H.
ther quotations as corroborating the same fact, which, when examined, are found to differ very widely.

*Misrepresentations of Grotius.*

I.

The words of Mr. G. relative to this author are emphatical,—"The learned Grotius," says he, "ventures to insinuate, that, for wise purposes, "the pious deception" (namely, of the Millen-

nium, and of the approaching end of the world) "was permitted to take place*.

I now venture to affirm, that our author has little reason for giving us this as an insinuation of Grotius. Though for a good and weighty reason he has not thought proper to guide us by a reference to any particular book, chapter, or page; yet I have been able to trace the opinion of Grotius concerning the Millennium, which will be sufficient to convince my reader how groundless the words of Mr. G. are.

Grotius, in his comment on St. Luke's gospel, speaks thus on the above subject:—"And indeed partly from the prophecies which I have spoken of, partly from the prerogative of the martyrs in the resurrection, the opinion of the Millennium seems to have been framed, which, as received from the successors of the apostles, Justin and Irenæus, authors of great character, defend; who were followed by Melito, Apollinaris, Tertullian, Victorinus: Whose opinion, though it appears to be intermixed with some human error, (since they do not all explain that felicity in the

* Note 59. c. xv.

"same
"she manner) yet, perhaps, is not totally to be re-
"jected."

Grotius here speaks a very different language from what Mr. G. has represented it: He does not venture to insinuate that this doctrine of the Millen-
nium was a pious deception. What apology then can our author make, for fathering a sentiment of his own on an eminent writer, who really does not espouse it? As this is the case, we cannot surely doubt, but that the fear of detection prompted our author not to specify the passage by any particular reference.

But I may now venture to insinuate, in his own words, that, though his purpose was wise, the de-
ception, which can hardly be called a pious one, was not permitted to take place.

II.

"The fervour of the first proselytes," says Mr. G. "prompted them to sell those worldly posse-
sions which they despised, to lay the price of
"them at the feet of the apostles, and to content
"themselves with receiving an equal share out of
"the general distribution."

* "Et sane partim ex his quae dixi vaticiniis, partim ex
"praepositiva martyrum in resurrectione consecrata videtur
"sententia illa de milie annorum felicitate, quam ut ab apo-
tolorum successoribus acceptam tuentur magni Audaces Ju-
"tinus et Irenaeus, quos secuti sunt Melito, Apollinaris,
"Tertullianus, Victorinus: quorum opinio, quanquam admis-
tum aliquod habere videtur humani erroris (quando no:
"omnis illam felicitatem pari modo explicant) forte tamen non
446.

† Page 495.
He confirms this, by appealing in a note* to the
Acts of the Apostles, c. ii. 4, 5. with Grotius's
commentary.

So far indeed the testimony, which he cites,
confirms his assertion; but for the words which
immediately follow in his history, he has neither
the authority of Scripture, nor that of Grotius.
Mr. G. thus proceeds, "when the progress of the
Christian religion relaxed, and gradually abo-
lished this generous institution, the converts who
embraced the new religion were permitted to re-
tain the possession of their patrimony."

The infinuution contained in the last passage is
what I would particularly point out, as most oppo-
site to the sentiment of Grotius: For though he
speaks of a general distribution in his comment, yet
he is far from asserting that there was any obligation
on the first proselytes to sell their worldly posses-
sions: and, therefore, no permissive dispensa-
tion was necessary. The translation of his words
is this:

"While it remained, was it not thine
own? It was not required of thee by us to sell
thine estate, but thou mightest have retained thy
property. And when sold it was still in
thy power. To wit, the price: Even after
thou hadst fold thine estate, it was lawful for
thee to keep the whole price, and dedicate no-
thing of it to God."

This

* Note 128. c. xv.

† Acts v. 4. Οὐχὶ μίνον γὰρ ἤμοις. "Nonne mānem tibi ma-
 nebatur?"

"Licebat tibi per nos non vendere prædium, et ejus pro-
prietatem retinere."
This sentiment is so directly the reverse of Mr. G.'s, that it must overthrow what he has said. But it is his usual crafty evasion, to cite the testimony of some great writer on a trifling and indifferent point, and then to extend it to a material reflection, which he takes care to make soon after. So, in this case, Grotius may give him authority for saying, that "the Christians who sold their possessions were content with receiving an equal share out of the general distribution." Yet, as we have seen, he gives him not the least shadow of a pretext for making the following assertion: That, "when the progress of the Christian religion relaxed—the converts who embraced the new religion were permitted to retain the possession of their patrimony."

But though Grotius does not give Mr. G. authority for his remark, it is still very consistent with his plan of accounting for the rapid progress of the gospel, by secondary causes; as he considers the general distribution of goods, adopted by the first Christians, as "an institution which materially conduced to the progress of Christianity." And, "that the prospect of immediate relief, and of future protection, allured into its hospitable bosom many of those unhappy persons whom the miseries of want, of sickness, and of old age."

For, if this was the case, it was certainly great policy, in them, not to permit the new converts to retain their possessions, but to make this general distribution, till Christianity had made some consi-

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Kai ἐν οἷς ἐστὶν ἡ ἑσοδία ὅνειρος;
"Et venundatum in tua eras potestate."] "Nempe in tuis;
"(pretium.) Etiam postquam vendideras fundum, pretium totum;
"reinere tibi licebat, ac de eo nihil Deo vovere."

* Page 498.
derable
derable progress: It is in this view, I suppose, Mr. G. added the misrepresentation of Mosheim's opinion, in these words of his note:

"Mosheim in a particular dissertation attacks the common opinion with very inconclusive arguments."

The most common opinion, which the learned Mosheim attacks in this dissertation, is Mr. Gibbon's; namely, that the community of goods was a chief cause of the rapid progress of Christianity. This opinion, common enough, indeed, among infidels, he does attack; but with arguments, which I must beg leave to call, in deference to our author's superior judgment, very conclusive. His words, on this occasion, are as follow †:

"What St. Luke has written of the first church of Jerusalem, that there was no poor in it, might be truly said of all the families of the primitive Christians. Since, as they were all upon an equality, and acknowledged each other as brethren; it was a necessary consequence, that they should suffer no one to be in want of those things which life requires: But that they would supply out of their abundance, in a humane and friendly manner, what some stood in need of. This beneficence of the first Christians towards their poor, many in our days, who, in their own conceits, far exceed all other persons in discernment, have blemished with a suspicion of imprudence; asserting, that the Christians, by this liberality, sup-

* Note 128. c. xv.

† As I find the same sentiment, on this subject, expressed in a concise and forcible manner in his history, which he has more copiously treated in his dissertation; I doubt not, but it will be a sufficient apology for my having adopted his words there expressed, in preference to a prolix quotation from his dissertation.
plied the means of idleness and pleasure: They add
also, that this great care of the Christians towards
the poor, should be ranked as one of the chief
causes of the quick propagation of the Chris-
tian religion. For, say they, men addicted to
froth, impatient of labour, given up to pleasures,
struck in great numbers to the Christians, that
they might live in a convenient and fumptuous
manner, without toil and anxiety, on the offerings
of the new converts. But it is astonishing, that
this should be said by men who wish to appear, in
the eyes of the world, as persons acquainted
with the writings of the apostles, which
are extant: Which, if they had ever read over
with attention, they could not be ignorant, that
the liberality of the Christians to their poor, was
guarded by the most wise laws, left the church
should suffer any detriment, or feel the least in-
convenience from it.

He then appeals to the second epistle of St. Paul
to the Thessalonians, c. iii. v. 6—12. and 1 Timo-
thy, v. 3. 16. and having descanted on these pas-
sages, mentions other regulations respecting the
poor*

I may

* "Quod de príncipe omnium ecclesiá Hierosólymitana
scriptum reliquit LUCAS, ACTOR. iv. 34. nullum in ea
pauperem fuisset, id de omnibus prímorum Christianorum
famíliae veritíme dicitur. Quum fecit oríogem pares te 
fratres agnoferent, necesse erat, ut nullum in łuém, quá
vita poscit hominum, penuria verfìri patenter, verum ex
copia fuá quod deérat quibusdam amici ac humaniter
suppeditarent. Eam vero uerum Christianorum erga pau-
peros benefíciantiam inter eos, qui sapientia super caetros
emitere supré vidéntur, multi sedé in suspiciéndis imprü-
dentiae vocánti, contendénti, ignóvit et voluptatis amor
liberalitate jux Christianos fúnta subjicié: cui addunt, in
causis tam celérité propagatíis Christianí-
æae hoc ipsum pauperum stúdiúm prímo locú collocári débere :
hómines
I may therefore, surely, with great reason, appeal to every candid reader, whether the only common opinion attacked here by Mosheim, is not that espoused by Mr. G.—But, indeed, it suited our author's purpose, to represent Mosheim's arguments as inconclusive; as he must be conscious, that a fair view of them would have exposed his own false assertion.

I shall now proceed to shew how small, and how trifling, the authority is, which our author really has for his very important remarks on the doctrine of "the condemnation of the wisest and most virtuous among the Pagans." I have already shewn, that the testimony of Tertullian, the only

"homines enim inertes, laboris impatientes, voluptarios, magno numero ad Christianos accurriss, quo cum suis laute, con.
"in:et, sine labore & curis, ex quorum fraternum numeris vivere possent. Mirum vero bac dici a viris, qui apollo-
"lorum, quae extant, scripta evolviisse videri volunt. Quae si attente legiissent, non ignorarent, liberalitatem Christiano-
"rum in pauperes sapientissimis legions leptom tuisse, ne quid inde incommodi & detrimenti redundaret in ecclesia. Pri-
"num differre sua PAULI lege numero pauperum excludebatur omnes, qui victum finimet ipsi, quom possent, qua-
"rere, & laborare nolebant: nec pauperum tantum numero, verum etiam fraternum excludabantur. Omnes item, qui e-
"cus vivebant, quam decrebat CHRISTI dicipulos, suas sibi res habere jubebantur & Christiane caritatis fructu cureu.

2 Theol. iii. 6. —— Alia lege, aequa clara & duxita, singula Christianorum familiis officium imponebatur pauper-
"res suos alendi, nec permitting, ut ecelesia oneri esset.

1 Tim. v. 3. 16. —— Altera lege cavebatur, ne maii homines beneficia ecclesiae in vitiarum alimenta converterent: altera providebatur, ne publicorum pauperum numerus praeter modum crescere & loculos piorum nimis gravaret. Igitur non omnium, cui aut nulla res erat, aut angulla, pauperis nomine venerando honetitabatur in prisa ecclesiae; verum pauper erat vir Dei, hominemque amans, qui nec sua sibi victum in-
"duetia comparare, nec a necessariis & cognatis opem fieri re-
"poterat." Hitt. Christian. loc. i. p. 142. § 45.
Father he quotes, does not tend to corroborate his assertion: My next step is to examine what he adds besides on this subject. "And yet whatever may be the language of individuals, it is still the public doctrine of all the Christian churches. The Jansenists, who have so diligently studied the works of the Fathers, maintain this sentiment with a distinguished zeal; and the learned M. de Tillemont never dismisses a virtuous emperor without pronouncing his damnation. Zuingleius is the only leader of a party who has ever adopted the milder sentiment, and he gave no less offence to the Lutherans than to the Catholics."

It is here evident, at first sight, that testimony is produced only for a small part of this very material note. The sentiment of Zuingleius is all that we find in Bossuet, at the place referred to. He is here spoken of "as a bold man, of more fire than judgment;" and though "no one of the reformers explained their thoughts in a manner more precise and uniform; yet, at the same time, no one carried them to so great a height, nor with more boldness," than Zuingleius. To prove this, Bossuet instances his "admitting into heaven, even the heroes and demi-gods of the Pagan mythology." On which he well observes, that "such notions as these are not to be considered as those flights of imagination which escape men in the heat of argument: For Zuingleius was writing a confession of the faith; and a plain and precise explanation of the Apostles' creed: A work, the nature of which requires, above all

* Note 68. c. xv. Bossuet Histoire des Variations des Eglises Protestantes, l. ii. c. 190—22.
"others, a mature consideration, exact doctrine, and settled meaning."

The above passage may give some reason for the offence which this doctrine of Zuinglius occasioned. However, I must particularly observe, that no authority is cited to confirm the former and most material part of the note, that this is still the public doctrine of all the Christian churches. Indeed it would have been a hard task for our author to have obtained testimony for the bold assertion. For with the author of the remarks, I dare to say, as a member of the church of England, that she holds no such doctrine. We do not presume to set limits to the mercy of God. The light of nature being their guide; by that test, the Scripture informs us, they will be rewarded or condemned—" For as many

* "Zunglius Paleur de Zurich a commencé à troubler "l'Eglise, à l'occasion des indulgences, autant bien que Luther,
"mais quelques années après. C'était un homme hardi, &
"qui avait plus de feue que de savoir. Il y avait beaucoup
"de nette dans son discours, & aucun des Prétendants Ré-
"formateurs n'a expliqué ses pensées d'une manière plus pré-
"cise, plus uniforme, & plus suivie; mais aussi aucun ne les
"a pouffées plus loin, ni avec plus de hardiesse. Comme on
"connoîtra mieux le caractère de son esprit par ses sentiments
"que par ses paroles, je rapporteray un endroit du plus ac-
"compli de tous ses ouvrages."

"C'est la Confession de Foy, qu'il adressa un peu devant sa
"morte à François I. Là, expliquant l'article de la vie éter-
"nelle, il dit à ce Prince, qu'il doit espérer de voir l'assem-
"blée de tout ce qu'il y a eu d'hommes saints, courageux, fi-
"deus, & vertueux dès le commencement du monde," &c.

"Vous y verrez Hercule, Thésée, Socrate, Aristide, Anti-
"gonus, Numa, Canille, les Catons, les Scipions," &c.

"Ce n'est point par ces traits qui échappent aux hom-
"mes dans la chaleur du discours: il écrivit une Confession
"de Foy, il voulut faire une explication simple & précise du
"Symbole des Apôtres; ouvrage d'une nature à demander
"plus que tous les autres une mesure confidération, une doc-
"trine exacte, & un sens rassis." Bossuet Histoire des Va-
"riations, &c. l. ii. c. 19—22. p. 25. &c. 8vo, edit. à Liège.

H 4 " as
as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law: And as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.*"

Misrepresentation of Ignatius.

Our author throws out a false accusation against this Father, in the following words:
"It was impossible," says he, "that the Gnostics could receive our present gospels, many parts of which (particularly in the resurrection of Christ) are directly, and, as it might seem, designedly, pointed against their favourite tenets. It is therefore somewhat singular, that Ignatius should chuse to employ a vague and doubtful tradition, instead of quoting the certain testimony of the evangelists."*

I cannot find any passage, that bears the least similarity to what Mr. G. observes, in the whole epistle, which I have read over more than once. Ignatius advises, on the contrary, "to pay particular attention to the prophets, but more especially to the gospel, in which the passion of our Lord is made manifest unto us, and his resurrection perfectly demonstrated."

* St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, ii. 12. See Whithy, Hammond, Locke, Taylor, &c. See also Bishop Sherlock's Discourse, i. vol. i.
† Epist. ad Smyrn. Patr. Apostol. tom. ii. p. 34.
‡ Note 34. c. xv.
§ Ignatius Epist. ad Smyrnæos.
Προεικαν δε τοις προφηταις, εξαιτίας δε της ευαγγελίων, ει το ταῦτα δεν δηλώσται, και τα απάρατα τιτλιωται. p. 4.

Sept. V. "Оι τις αγρευτικες οφεινται, μαλλον δε την οσιοσεως αυτων, ὅτι της αληθειας, ους εικος ἐπισταντες εις προφητειας, ουδ' ὁ τό αλτος Μωσαιος, αλλ' ουδε μικρη μη το ευαγγελιον, διδυ της ἁμαρτια των κατ' αιθα παραιματα. P. 44, edit. Russel.

Again,
Again, he says, "There are some who, being ignorant of Jesus Christ, deny him, or rather have been denied by him, being advocates of his death, rather than of the truth—whom neither the prophecies, nor the law of Moses, nor even the gospel have persuaded, to this time."

Now with what truth can Ignatius be said to employ a vague and doubtful tradition, when he founds the truth of our Saviour's passion and resurrection, on the authority of the prophets and the evangelists? May we not then naturally conclude, that if our author had ever looked into this epistle of the Father, which he cites with a parade of learning, he could not have been guilty of so gross a misrepresentation?

Misrepresentation of Le Clerc and Mosheim.

I have already given one proof of Mr. G.'s misrepresenting Le Clerc, in treating of the Jewish opinion concerning a future state. I now proceed to another instance of his unfairly stating the opinion of this writer with regard to the epistles of Ignatius.

* I have here adopted the interpretation of the original word τίτλησται, which the learned Beaufobre has given. His explication of the whole passage, and his defence of this Father from the misrepresentation of Mr. Simon, is truly ingenious. It will be hereafter shewn, that a part of this explication probably gave rise to the remark of Mr. G.; but had he fairly represented the whole of it, it would have appeared that St. Ignatius himself complains of those persons who were to particularly fond of vague and doubtful tradition, as not to receive the scripture itself without its authority. It must be owned, our historian is very expert in misrepresentation. See Beaufobre. Hist. de Manichée, &c. tom. i. partie ii. livre ii, ch. vii, § 8, p. 450, &c. 410 edit.
His words are, "Ignatius* is fond of exalting the episcopal dignity. Le Clerc † very bluntly censures his conduct."

I shall first observe Mr. G.'s inaccuracy, in referring to chapter iii. of Ignatius's epistle to the Smyrneans, for this subject; whereas he should have appealed to chap. viii. and ix. to which particular chapters Le Clerc himself refers, and indeed he is so far from bluntly censuring his conduct, that he, on the contrary, is really his advocate; as will plainly appear from these his words:

"Although in the former epistles, except that to the Romans, Ignatius exhorts the Christians to obey the governors of the church, yet on no occasion does he speak of it so earnestly as in this epistle to the Smyrneans."

Le Clerc then quotes the passage, and makes the following observations on it.

"Ignatius was acquainted with the sound doctrine and holy manners of Polycarp, by whom nothing could be said, or done, which was not consonant to the Gospel. If he had been guilty of teaching unsound doctrine or of corrupt morals, or suspected of inconstancy, the bishop of Antioch would never have used such language. After it was found from experience that the Christian bishops, as in the time of Arius, Neftorius, or Eutyches, had deviated from the Gospel both with regard to doctrine and practice, no doubt they, who differed from them in opinion, did not think it was their duty to obey them in all things. These (injunctions) therefore are not to be looked upon, says Le Clerc, as mathematical axioms, which admit of no exception:

* Note 411. c. xv. Ignatius ad Smyrnæos, c. 3, &c.
† Hist. Ecclesiast. p. 569.

"And
"And we may say the same of the other precepts of Ignatius, which relate to the honour due to truly Christian bishops."

This certainly does not appear like blunt confusion, but rather friendly construction, and apology; for he first gives the reasons why Ignatius should use this language, and then puts in a necessary restraint, shewing how these precepts were, and should be respected; namely, as general rules, but not without exception.

By the above interpretation, an agreement is formed between this and a previous apology, which Le Clerc makes for Ignatius.

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"Quamvis in superioribus Epistolis, exceptâ eâ qua ad Romanos data est, Ignatius Christianos ad obiequium erga Rectores Ecclesiae hortetur; in nulla tam graviter ea de re agit, quam in hac ad Smyrnæos epistolæ, ubi sic c. viii. locuitur, "Omnès episcopum sequimini, ut Jesus Christus Patrem, & Presbyterium, ut Apostolos. Diaconos autem vereamini, ut Dei mandatum", (hoc est, "Apostolorum ac proinde Dei mandato institutos") "Sine Episcopo nemo quidquam eorum, quæ ad Ecclesiam pertinent, faciat. Firmæ Eucharistiae ea habeatur, quæ sub episcopo fuerit, vel quam ipse permiferit. Ubi comparuerit Episcopus, ibi multitudine fit: quemadmodum ubi fuerit Jesus Christus, ibi est Catholica Ecclesia. Nec baptizare, neque agapam celebrare, sine Episcopo licet: sed quiquid ille probaverit, Deo gratum est, ut tumum ratumque fit quiquid agitur."

"Norat, nempe Polycarpi sanam doctrinam & sanctos modores; à quo nihil doceri, aut fieri poterat, quod non esset Evangelico consentaneum. Si suisset præviae doctrinae, aut morum minus causatorum reus, aut inconstantiae suspectus, nunquam intra loquitus esset episcopus Antiocenus. Certè postquam Christiani Episcopi, ut temporiibus Arii, Nestorii, aut Eutychis, nec doctrinam Evangelicam, nec mores eis consentaneos retinuisse compertum est; iis per omnia obsequi oportere; qui aliter sentiebant, non crediderunt. Non sunt ergo haec inlati axiomaticum Mathematicorum, quæ nul- lâ exceptione laborent, habenda: uti nec sequentia quæ ad verè Christianorum Episcoporum honorèm pertinent."

"I am surprised," says he, "that this should appear to learned men as difficult to be credited; and therefore, that the epistles of Ignatius are to be rejected." "What if Irenæus, Epiphanius, and others, should not have mentioned such men as these, it does not therefore follow that there were none, since these writers themselves are not so very accurate as to make no omissions."

This must be allowed to be an apology even stronger than the former: Therefore Mr. G.'s expression that Le Clerc bluntly censures Ignatius, has no other foundation than in his own fancy.

But the misrepresentation of Mosheim's opinion on these epistles is still more flagrant. "Mosheim, with a more critical judgment," says he, "suspects the purity even of the smaller epistles" of Ignatius.

The real case is, Mosheim, at the place cited by Mr. G., tells us, "he knows not which are genuine, but speaks of some of the epistles as having an undoubted claim to veracity." His suspecting the purity, even of the smaller epistles, according to Mr. G., seems to imply a total rejection of the larger. Mosheim's words are exprestly the reverse, that "the longer epistles are of greater value: this opinion may be objected to," adds he, "but can never be confuted."

* § 28. "Quare miror hoc viris doctis * difficile credita "visum; proptereaque Ignatius Epistolas esse rejectas.
"Quod si Irenæus, Epiphanius, alique non meminerint ejusmodi homininm, non sequitur propter rea nullos sibi; cum non "usque id ad accurat illi scriptores sit, ut nihil omittant.”
See also p. 571. § 31.

† Note 111. c. xv.


Again,
Again, he says, "Whatever edition we prefer, we shall never be able to remove every corruption and interpolation. In his opinion, therefore, the contest respecting these epistles is not nor can be determined till other copies be found to throw more light on the subject. That these epistles are very ancient, it is most certain," continues Mosheim, "and that the whole of them are not forged, is so credible that nothing can be more so: But how far they ought to be received as genuine, I think is totally inexplicable.*"

To prove that it was the constant sentiment of the learned and judicious Mosheim, that the epistles of Ignatius were not to be rejected, and that some of them were genuine; I shall subjoin this further proof, which he gives in the first volume of his dissertations.

"He desires to know the reasons, for which his opponent deemed the epistles of Ignatius to be spurious and forged. That it materially concerned him, as he had lately made use of the authority of these epistles in writing against To-"
land: And had then, after an accurate examination, found no reason to decline making use of them; thinking the arguments of Pearson, and others, in favour of them, unanswerable. Wherefore, says he, if you have any thing which will overthrow their authority, do not refuse to communicate it: And if I perceive your arguments to be well grounded, I will expunge every thing I said to corroborate their authority in my former work.*

We find him also, in a subsequent dissertation, giving it as his judgment, that "the epistles of Ignatius are of the highest antiquity, as they con-

* "Video ex Dissertatone Tus 'de columba ex Polycar-
pi, rego evolante" omnes IGNATII & POLYCARPI epist-
lolas spurias & confectas esse, TE persuasimum habere. 
Ae tua etiam POLYCARPI omnino a TE rejiciuntur. E te 
mea est, ut cognoscam, quibus rationibus in hanc induc
"his opinionem. Nuper cum adversus celeberrimum TO-
LANDUM antiquae Christianorum disciplinae vindiciae 
conscriberem, etiam has in auxilium vocavi epistolam, mag-
"namque demonstrationis partem ope earum conexui. Se-
rio in falsitatem & veritatem earum inquirenti nibil tum oc-
currebat, quod me a proposito iis utendi dimoveret. PEAR-
SONI potius, alienoque rationes inviolatas esse opinabar. 
Sed homines sumus, qui non raro fallimur. Facilium quidem 
quare aliquid salut, quam quare verum cernimus; sed & 
interdum, quam res nostra agitur, nimirum celebiter, quare ali-
quid verum sit, perspicimus. Quamobrem, VIR AMPLE-
SIME, si quid habes, quo adiutoriam harum epistolaram 
evertere possit, invidera nobis noli. Omnia interret ut 
ex illis tandem fluctibus emergamus, quantive hae epistolae 
ahabendae sint, cognoscamus. Ego quidem, si rationes TUAS 
immotae esse confexero, teotes mentem veterem exuam, 
ominique quae in vindiciis meis chartis illis innotuntur, ex-
pungam. Permanebit veritas, etiam si hae cadant. Quod 
"si vero labefactari eas baud posse post institutum deliber-
tionem intelligero, adversarium me, sed modicum & pacifi-
cum, habebis."

Dissertationum ad Historiam Ecclesiasticam pertinentium, 
vol. i. De Joanne in servos oleum coniecto, p. 530, &c. 8vo 
ed. 

" tain
tain traces of that ancient simplicity not to be
found in later writers*.

Nay, we are sure, that he never saw reason to
change this opinion. For, when at a more ad-
vanced period of his life, he published an edition
of his dissertations, with his last corrections, he
expressly tells us:

"Whatever I advanced in my dissertation on
St. John's being cast into the burning cauldrong
of oil, however juvenile my judgment was,
which age has now improved, I mean to confirm;
as I have intentionally made no alterations in it.
Neither do I now perceive, that I made any mis-
take, nor do I reject anything at present, which I
then embraced †." And yet this was the disserta-
tion in which Mosheim gave judgment in favour of
the epistles of Ignatius. Surely now, after all this
accumulation of evidence, Mr. G. will be more
cautious than to say that Mosheim, with a critical
judgment, suspects their purity.

Misrepresentation of Le Clerc and Mosheim.

There still remains another instance of Mr. G.'s
misrepresenting both these authors, as well as
Cyprian, on the same subject.

* "Atque vel hanc propter causam vetustissimas esse judi-
co IGNATII epistolæ, quoniam antiquæ huic simplicita-
tis rara in sequentibus scriptoribus vestigia reperio." Dis-
fertation, "De Gallorum Appellationibus." § xi. p. 600.

† "Inteclam & hanc, & precedementem de Johanne in fervens
olum coniecto Commentationumculam reddere consilio lectori-
bus volui, ut qualis juvenis fuerim ingenio & quatenus me
 sapientiorem, melioreque atas fecerit, fature valent.
In universum nihil à me peccatum est, quin stiam semio, nec
quae olim judicavim, bodie repudio." Addenda ad primum volumen Dissertationum, &c. p. 767.

"The
"The bishops of Italy, and of the provinces," says he, "were disposed to allow them," (that is, the Roman pontiffs) "a supremacy of order and association (such was their very accurate expression) in the Christian aristocracy.*"

He then appeals by note to the following writers: "Irenæus adv. Hæræ III. 3. Tertullian de Praescriptione, c. 26. and Cyprian. Epistol. 27. 25. 71. 75." To which he adds this remark, "Le Clerc (Hist. Eccles. p. 764.) and Mosheim (p 258, 578.) labour in the interpretation of these passages. But the loose and rhetorical style of the Fathers often appears favourable to the pretensions of Rome†."

The expression which our author here adopts, that "Le Clerc and Mosheim labour in the interpretation of these passages," seems to imply, that it is with great difficulty they can maintain their point. With how little foundation Mr. G. has laid this, will appear from the following just representation; and it will prove, that the loose and rhetorical style of the Fathers does not so often appear favourable to the pretensions of Rome.

It is remarkable, that neither Le Clerc nor Mosheim do at all appeal to the authority of Cyprian, as we should imagine they did from Mr. G.'s words, "they labour in the interpretation of these passages," by which, I suppose, he means these passages he had just cited, among which the greater number are from Cyprian. But as neither Le Clerc nor Mosheim have cited these passages of Cyprian, let us see what reason Mr. G. had for quoting them.

* Page 494.
† Note 122, c. xv.
He first appeals to epistle 27. which (in the Oxford edition, Fell.) is addressed to "The presbyters and deacons of Rome, whom Cyprian only consults, asking their assistance against Lucian."

Pamelius' edition, epist. 27. speaks indeed of the dignity of bishops in general, and so may be interpreted of the see of Rome in particular, by a person that way inclined. Yet the note says otherwise: "So far was Cyprian from intending these words to be understood of the prerogatives of the Roman church; that from hence be grounds and asserts his own rights, and those of all the other bishops."

However it must not be denied, that some passages in epist. 55, &c. do indeed seem to intimate a supremacy.

Yet, in epistle 71, we find Cyprian arguing against it, "For," says he, "Peter himself, whom the Lord first made choice of, and upon whom he built his church, when Paul afterwards disputed with him respecting circumcision, did not insolutely claim, or arrogantly assume, any thing to himself, by saying, that he held a supremacy, and ought to be obeyed by younger and succeeding bishops."

* Mr. G. has specified this particular edition; he ought therefore, for conformity, to adhere to it, at least to inform us when he makes use of another edition.

† Epist. 33. edit. Oxon. Fell.

1 "Tertum abeit ut verba hæc tenerit Cyprianus de ecclesiæ Romanae prærogativis sufficienti intelligenda; ut eminé sua et aliorum omnium episcoporum jura stabiliat atque afferat."

§ "Nam nec Petrus quem primum Dominus elegit, et super quem edificavit ecclesiam suam, cum secum Paulus de circuncisione postmodum disceptaret, vindicavit sibi aliquid insolidum, aut arroganter assumit, ut dicercer se primatum tenere; et obtemperari a novellis et posteris, sibi potius oportere."

Page 194.
We may therefore conclude, that the passages of Cyprian, to which our author refers us, do not appear favourable to the pretensions of Rome. The sentiment of the learned Dodwell deserves attention, as he has written many judicious dissertations on the epistles of Cyprian.

He says, "It was impossible that Cyprian could ever have allowed a supremacy; because that very argument which he inflicts on, and constantly repeats, that every bishop was supreme in his own diocese, was totally inconsistent with the principle of their acknowledging one as the center of union: So that neither the opinion nor the reasoning of Cyprian, is so favourable to the Romanists as they imagine."

I come now to the arguments of Le Clerc. There are some who think it manifest," says he, "from

* "Quid quod absoluta illa episcoporum in sua cujuscunque diocesi suprema in toties a Cypriano, inter aetas etiam disputandi, non agnita modo sed asserta etiam atque insculata non patiur ut eundem exilimuthus unum aliquem inter illios agnoscite unitatis principium, a quo utique qui ecclesiae Catholicae unitatem illibaram vellet, pendere omnino, et decreta ejus agnoscerem debueint. Ita nec sententiam habebimus Cypriani, nec ratio cationem, ita, quam existimant, Romanists propitiam." Dodwell. Dissert. Cyprian, p. 175, 176.


Seft. 13. p. 763. **Sunt qui velit ex Irenaeo confisare non aliter sensisse veteres de ecclesia, quam nunc vulgo sensient pontificii Romanosque ecclesiae, et veterum sententiam, primatum, ut loquentur, debitum suffis; ita ut auctoritate eae polieret, quee nulli alii inerat ecclesiae. At veteribus haereticis, qui scripturae et apostolorum auctoritatem nihil faciebant, jure opponi poterat continent ecclesiarum Christi, ab apostolis olim conditarum. Verum, non eadem est ratio eorum, qui a ducentis propius annis ab ecclesiae Romana secererunt; cum scripturae et apostolorum auctoritatem fidei sua unicum fundamentum esse statuunt; nec secessionem secerint, nisi quia fundamentum illud, quod immutum esse opusuit, labefactum "ab
From Irenæus, that the fathers were of the same opinion as the present Papists, that a primacy is due to the church of Rome; so that it enjoys an authority that is inherent in no other church. But though the consent of the Christian churches, founded long since by the apostles, could be justly ab iis, quibus valedixerunt, putabant. Itaque arma quibus utitur Irenæus contra veteres hereticos, in eos, qui hodie dissentiant ab ecclesia Romana, moveri non posseint.


Quomiam ad id locum est, in hoc tali volumine, omnium ecclesiænum numeratæ successiones, maximæ et antiquissimæ et omnibus cognitæ, à gloriôssimis duobus apostolis, l'eto et i'aulo, Rome fundatae et constitutæ ecclesiae, eam, quam habet ab apostolis traditionem et administratam hominibus fidem, per successiones episcoporum, pervenientem usque ad nos indicantes, confun dirimus omnes eos, qui quoque modo, vel per fidi placentiam, vel vanam gloriam, vel per caecitatem et malam sententiam, praeterquam oportet, colligunt. Ad hanc enim ecclesiam, propter potiorum principalitatem, necesse est ommem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est, eos qui sunt undique fidèles; in quâ semper ab his, qui sunt undique, conservata est ea, quæ ab apostolis traditio.

In hoc vero loco, plura interpretatione indigent; itaque minerimus, oportet, I. Romanam ecclesiam suisse maximam, antiquissimam et notissimam ecclesiârum tantum Occidentalium; omnem enim Asiæ ecclesiae, quæ annam LXI. quo Romam primam venit Paulus, conditione fuerant, et presbyterum quidem Ierosolimitana, et Antiochena, Romanâ antiquiores erant, nec initio minore credentem numero abundabant; ac proinde si ratio tantum antiquitatis habenda fuit, eas ecclesias Romanæ suisse praeponendas; sed dixi Irenæum de Occidentibus ecclesias loqui videri:—II. confundi in Occidente meriti potuisse homines, qui, repudiati apostolorum scriptis, novam doctrinam veluti oræ à necio quibus discipulis Christi aut apostolorum acceptam; cum ipsis opponeretur ecclesiae Romanae traditio, quæ minimum tam erat fide digna, quâm obscuri necio cujus hominis accepta ab ipsis, ut aiebant, doctrina:—III. Aliquot successionis, inter his res â sentientes Christianos, rationem tamen habitam non esse, quasi sola effect veritatis argumentum; quod videre licuit in controversia de Paschate, in qua successionis Romanae traditio neque ab Asiaticis ecclesiis, neque ab ipso Irenæo auditæ est.—IV. Pro vocibus per fidi placentia, ut 12 habet.
habet Codex, quem sequuta est Parisiensis editio, alio habere (r) per fabi placentiam, hoc est, etsi vix audiremus, quod fortè melius est.—V. Potiorerum principialitatem videri, ut diximus in (†) notis ad ann. CLXXIII. 2, esse pro Graecis xiropsis agiariata; potiorum antiquitatem, idque confirmari elogio ecclesiae Romanae; quae antiquissima ab Irenae dicitur;rimium ut monuimus in Occidente:—VI. Quod additur ad banc necesse est omnem consueture ecclesiast, videri perinde esse ac, si qua nascetur controversia, confundam susisse (†), non quasi aliorum Christianorum sudei dominam, sed ut ejus conficiendum audiretur, conferreturque cum omnium sententias; quod contigit in controversia de Paschate, in qua tamen omnibus ecclesiis eam sequi necesse non fuit:—VII. Qui sunt undique fideles, esse totius terrarum orbis Christianios, qui vocantur in sequentibus qui sunt undique; dicunturque in omnium ecclesiis, conservasse tam, quae est ab apostolis, traditionem:—VIII. Si quid sit minus adcuratum, in Irenaei rationatione, memores nos esse oportere, patrum argumentationes non esse demonstrationes mathematicas, quae semper et per omnia, fine exceptione uially, sunt vere, sed his esse aliquo seniu esse veras, quod et in omnium scriptorum interpretatione obfervandum norunt critic."
thority as the only foundation of their faith; nor would they have separated, if they had not thought that the foundation which ought to be immovable, had been shaken by those whom they left. The weapons, therefore, which Irenæus uses against the ancient heretics, cannot be wielded against those who at present dissent from the church of Rome.

He then makes several remarks on the passage in Irenæus, which I have abridged as much as possible.

Having previously noted, that "we have not the original Greek, but only the translation of a rude interpreter," he remarks the obscurity of the passage: And that "the Roman church was the greatest, most ancient, and celebrated of the western churches only; for all the Asiatic churches, especially those of Jerusalem and Antioch, were planted before St. Paul first came to Rome; and therefore, with respect to antiquity, claimed a preference."

That the orthodox Christians themselves did not look on this argument of succession as infallible; which is manifest in the controversy respecting Easter; in which the tradition of the Roman succession was not heard by the Asiatic churches, nor by Irenæus himself.

That the original Greek words, which are translated more desirable principality, might perhaps mean only more excellent antiquity, "which agrees with the eulogium of Irenæus on the church of Rome, that it was the most ancient."

That what Irenæus adds, "it is necessary for every church to repair to this," appears to mean that when a controversy arose, it was to be consulted, not as the mistress of the faith of other Christians; but that its sentiment might be heard and compared
compared with the opinions of all the rest.
This was the case in the controversy about
Easter, in which, notwithstanding, it was not
necessary for the other churches to follow her
sentiment. Lastly, if there are any inaccuracies
in the reasoning of Irenæus, we should remember
that the reasonings of the Fathers are not ma-
thematical demonstrations, which are every
where, and always true, without any exception,
but that it is sufficient that they are true in some
sense; which rule critics know should be observed
in the interpretation of all authors."

In a note on this passage he justly observes, that
perhaps the ignorant interpreter did not rightly
understand the meaning of Irenæus. Perhaps,"
says he, "it is a fault of a greater kind, a wilful
corruption, so that we read in Irenæus more than
he himself ever wrote."

It must then certainly be allowed, that this diffi-
cult and obscure passage, when cleared up and il-
lustrated, is not favourable to the pretensions of Rome.
And no ingenuous person would construe the skill
of the critic into a laboured interpretation.

The interpretation of this passage of Irenæus, by
Moshim, is indeed diffuse and minute; but it is
by no means wrested or laboured.

Our learned advocate Moshim, after speaking
of the equality of the primitive churches, adds,
that a preference was afterwards given to the judg-

* Note 22. "Quod et in omnibus. Vide hac de arte crit-
ticæ postremam ed. p. ii. sect. i. cap. iv. 15, & seqq. Ce-
terum optandum est flect locum hunc Irenæi Graecé exiare, nam
barbarus interpremen tem ejus fortæ non sitis est ads. quantus,
et fortæ etiam libraris in versione ejus exscribenda peccatur;
nisi sit hic peccatum majoris abolition ut ille loquitur, quo
factum sit ut legatur in Irenæo, quod in eo scriptum non sit."
ment of the churches founded by the apostles*. In his note he copiously examines the vain pretensions of the church of Rome to a supremacy, from the authority of the Fathers, more especially of Irenaeus and Tertullian; and gives the following reasons for such passages appearing in their writings: As, first, the dispute between the Gnostics and the orthodox Christians; in which, the latter, to prove the truth and authenticity of their doctrines, appealed to the institutions and precepts of the apostles, preserved with a sacred veneration by their successors. To this reasoning, says he, the Gnostics could make no other objection than by saying, that the churches which the apostles had founded, had gradually deviated from their tenets; that others, ignorant of the true apostolical doctrine, had forcibly succeeded to the place of the first bishops, instituted by the apostles themselves. Which Irenaeus foreseeing, shews, that the bishops of the church of Rome, which, for the sake of brevity, he singles out, descended in an uninterrupted series from the apostles; and that their succession was neither disturbed, nor debased, by the intervention of any foreigner, or of any one who swerved from the opinions of the apostles.

"This single observation throws great light on the manner of his disputation; and alone shews, how greatly they err, who at present call in the assistance of tradition and apostolical succession, contending that they do it by the example of the first teachers of the church†."
He observes, that "neither Tertullian, nor Irenæus, assign more authority to the church of Rome, than to other apostolical churches*."

In Tertullian's words he speaks of the church of Rome, as "enjoying a greater felicity in being honoured with the particular presence of St. Peter, St. James, and St. John; but no pre-eminence."

He remarks too, that "both these writers pass over in silence the first of the primitive churches, which was that of Jerusalem, the head and chief of all."

Having thus shewn wherein Irenæus and Tertullian agree, he proceeds to point out wherein they differ. "The former, Irenæus, bestows many privileges on the church of Rome, while the latter, Tertullian, only allows it a superior happiness."

The reason of this diversity in their sentiments he imputes to the many favours Irenæus had received from that church." The important passage, on which the Romans lay such stress, which they represent as "most galling to all who have shaken off the yoke of the Roman church," and by

"sententiiis eorum senisim defeciisse, atque vi primorum episcoporum ab ipsis apostolis institutorum locum succesiisse alios veræ disciplinæ apostolicae ignaros. Quod prævidens IRENÆUS, offendit, ecclesiæ Romanæ, quam omnium infar esse brevita-tis causa jubes, episcopos non interrupta ferie ab apostolis de-scendere, successioneque eorum nullius hominis peregrini at-que a dogmatibus apostolorum devi interventu turbatam et contaminatam esse. Hæc una observatio plurimum lucis huic disputandi rationi affert, solaque offendit, quantum admittant errorem, qui hodie traditionem et apostolicam successionem in auxilium vocant, seseque exemplo primorum ecclesiæ doctrinam hoc facere contendunt."

"Nullo, quod apertum est, discrimine has ecclesiæ aposto-licas disjungit TERTULLIANUS: Omnibus eadem auctoritatem et dignitatem tribuit: Romana ecclesiæ non major ipsi videtur et ad dirimendam litem illam cum Gnosticiis potentior "Ephefina, Thessalonicensi, Corinthiaco," et c. p. 260.

which
which "she esteems herself more eminent than all other "churches," is contained in the words of Ire-
naeus*

"It is necessary that every church, that is the "faithful, who are everywhere, should come to this, "i. e. the church of Rome, as having a more desira-
"ble principality, and as preserving that tradition "which is from the apostles†.

On which he remarks‡, 1st, "The obscurity of "what Irenæus means, owing to the ignorance of "the

* "Celebre illud, quod apud Irenæum est, ecclesiae Ro-
"manæ elogium, quod Rem. Massuetus "molestissimum" "dicit esse omnibus, qui "Romanae ecclesiae et catholicæ fideli "jugum excusserunt." In quo Romani Pontificis amici maxim-
"mum posse et cenfent praedidum potentiae, qua se super "omnem ecclesias eminere Romana putat, &c." p. 261.
† "Postquam Irenæus dixerat, se unius Romanae ec-
clesiae ex omnibus Apostoliciis auctoritate ac disciplinam "Gnosticas obducere velle, quoniam brevissati studendum sibi "esse, hæc subjicit: "Ad hanc enim Ecclesiam (Romanensem) "propter potiorum principalitatem necesse est omnem convertire "ecclesiam, hoc est, eos, qui sunt undique, fideles in qua jemper "ab his, qui sunt unidue, conservata est ea, quæ est ab Aposto-
"lis traditio." Hæc ilia ve:ba sunt, quæ tot subtrices & labori-
"osas disceptationes pereneum. Atqui hoc postllum "fulcro n niitur ille illud, quod in omnibus reliquis ü illius-
"orum societates sibi arrogat hodierna ecclesias Romana, meo "quidem judicio propius a lapsu remtuem est."
‡ "Animadvertamus, ne hoc temere dicam videatur, in "universum (1.) solum verborum Irenæi propriam esse obscu-
"rum, neque ex Latinis parum sciti ac poéti interpretis orie-
tione intelligi clare posse, quænam vis vocabulis illis subjecta "sit, ex quibus sententia tantus enunciati pendet. Quod, quæso "est potior principalitas? Quod fidei vult hæc formula; Con-
"venire ad ecclesiam Romanam? Frustra litigamus de tenticia "hujus loci, dum Graecus Irenæus aliquid in lucem pro-
"feratur. (11.) Agere Irenæum de illa, quæ docere potest, "omnes episcopos & doctores suos in illa disciplinæ, quæm e-
"trus & Paulus tradiderunt, permanisset."

"Hoc igitur ad hodiernam ecclesiam Romanam trahere "velle, idem profecto est, ac si quis Imperatorum Germanico-
"rum, qui Romani etiam nominantur, jura ac potestatem ex "

OCTAVII,
"the Latin translator; so that," says he, "as it is in vain to contend about the purport of this passage, till the Greek words of Irenæus can be produced."

Octavi, Augusti, Tiberii, Caiculi, Claudii, primorum ex Augusta Familia Imperatorum Romanorum juribus & rebus geritis demonstrare velit. Bellum vero, hominum & sibi, quemam aut Taciti locum, de Augusti aut Tiberii auctoritate producit, atque confite et illo disputet quia sive erga Franciscum I. Germanorum hodie principes esse oporset? Quod huic homini juris publici consulti respondebant, id nos illi, qui ex Irenæi loco cogitati poste censeat, quamam potestatem Benedictus XIV. Pontifex maximus Romanus prædixit fit.

III. "Privati hominis hoc testimonium esse, exiliis cojusdam & ante paucos annos natae in Gallia ecclesiæ episcopi, hominis praeterea, qui non pauca in libris suis edidit documenta rationis parum purgata, mentisque in disputando non fatis sibi relitae. Esquis vero statuat vir prudens & rerum peritus, ex privatore hominum dictis & praepetis, & quod majus est, ex hominum parum consideratorum, erroresque non unius convidorum sententiae & judicis iura rerum publicarum & ecclesiæ publica metienda & demonstranda esse. "Juistum vero si quis hoc esse velit, habemus qui cum Irenæo conferri potest, hominem judicio & ingenio illo non inferiorum Tertullianum, qui negat, ualla re alia, quam felicitatem Romanam ecclesiam reliquis excellentiorem esse. Quod igitur auctoritate Irenæi Romanæ Ecclesiæ clientes affirmat, id nos Tertulliani auctoritate negabimus."

"Nunc attentius inspiciamus Irenæi verba. Ait ille; "Necesse est omnem ecclesiæ convenire ad ecclesiæ Romanam;" idque binas propter causas: Primum, "propter potestatem principalitatem." Deinde, "Quia semper in ea conservata est Apostolorum traditionem."

Præcepti ipsis quærum fit sententia, non fatis i quert. Veri tamen sanctimonialitum est: "convenire ad ecclesiæ Romanam," idem esse, quod accedere ad Romanam ecclesiam, seu consolere ecclesiæ Romanam, atque Irenæum hoc dieere velle; Christianos omnes inibus dubius ad religionem pertinentibus explorare debere sententiam ecclesiæ Romanæ, et illius quidem, quæ tum existebat, eo quod omnium ecclesiarii occidentis antiquissima maxima, & ab Apostolis fundamenta est. Hoc sibi sancti ho-"
zely, "He says, "Irenæus treats of that church of Rome which existed in the second century; and which could assert, that all its bishops and doctors had continued in the discipline of Peter and Paul. But to transfer this to the modern church of Rome, is the same as if the emperors of Germany, merely because they call themselves Roman emperors, should endeavour to assume the rights and powers of Octavius or Tiberius. And it would be extremely ridiculous if any


"writer
writer should produce a particular passage from
Surtonius or Tacitus respecting the authority
of Augustus of Tiberius; and argue, that from
thence it is evident, what allegiance the present
princes of Germany should give to Francis I.
The same reply that the lawyers would make to
such a person, do we make to those who think it
may be ascertained from a passage of Irenæus,
on what grounds the authority of the present
pope is founded."

He, 3dly, observes, That "this is but the testi-
mony of an individual, and of one who, from
his writings, appears to have been ill qualified
for controversy, and of moderate abilities. But
what prudent man could imagine, that the pub-
lic rights of states and churches are to be mea-
fured, or proved, by the words or injunctions of
individuals; especially of those who have been
convicted of more than one error in their judg-
ments? But if any one should deem this equita-
ble, we have one who may be compared with
Irenæus, I mean Tertullian, a man not inferior to
him in judgment or understanding; who denies
that the church of Rome is more excellent than
others in anything but felicity. What, there-
fore, the advocates of the church of Rome shall
affirm on the authority of Irenæus, that will we
deny on the authority of Tertullian."

Let us now more attentively consider the words
of Irenæus——"To meet or go to the church of
Rome, is the same as to consult it, and Irenæus
means to say, that all Christians, in doubtful
cases relating to religion, ought to enquire what
is the opinion of the Roman church, as it then
existed; because it was the greatest and most an-
cient of the western churches, and founded by
the apostles.——If this is the meaning of the holy
man, and that it is, the reasons annexed prove
almost
almost to a demonstration, there is nothing which can be of such great assistance to the church of Rome: Nor will the most subtile disputant ever make it out, that Irenæus intended his words to be understood of the church of Rome of all ages. We, on the contrary, can evidently prove from the latter reason he gives for his opinion, that he speaks only of the ancient and first church of Rome of his time. For, he says, we are to repair to the church of Rome, because the tradition of the apostles hath ever been preserved in it. He clearly speaks of the past time. If he had thought that the church of Rome of all times should be heard, he would have written, in which the tradition of the apostles hath been, and ever will be preserved.

With respect to his first reason, "a more desirable principality, it is totally obscure. For the word principality, being applicable to so many things, its ambiguity involves the sentence in impenetrable darkness.—I am of opinion, that by this word Irenæus signifies the four great ornaments of the church of Rome, its magnitude, antiquity, celebrity, and apostolical origin: the which he had just before enumerated. Neither did he think of any future state of it. At least this interpretation has more evidence than any other: I desist, therefore, though other arguments are at hand. It is a disgrace certainly to wise and learned men, to found the public prerogative of the whole Christian church, and the form of its government, prescribed by Christ himself, on the obscure and doubtful words of a private man; and who, though a good and pious bishop of one poor small church, yet was endow'd with a moderate share of discernment and judgment."

I hope my reader is now convinced, that the loose and rhetorical style of the Fathers, thus cleared up and
and explained, does not appear so favourable to the pretensions of Rome as Mr. G. would persuade us.

I have dwelt long on this point. But a Protestant, writing principally to Protestants, could not omit this confession of Mr. G.'s insinuation in favour of the pretensions of Rome: And I shall leave it to himself, or to others, to account for this strange and unnatural alliance of infidelity and superstition, and for his more than once becoming the advocate of Popery, while he is attacking Christianity.

I have already given three instances of Mr. G.'s misrepresenting Mosheim on subjects in which other authors received the same ill treatment: I come now to a fourth instance, in which this writer alone is concerned.

IV.

After passing some encomiums on his favourite divine Dr. Middleton, our historian endeavours to traduce the just character which Mosheim gives of him, by stiling it indignation.

"From the indignation of Mosheim," says he, "(against Middleton) we may discover the sentiment of the Lutheran divines."

This representation does not lead us to expect the words of Mosheim to be so impartial and free from invective, as the following are;—he says,

"Some years ago there lived a man in England, in other respects of an excellent genius, and en-

dued with a more than common share of learn-
ing, named Conyers Middleton, who, hav-
ing published a volume sufficiently large, con-
demned the whole body of Christians of Levity, for giving such easy credit to miracles, and was bold to pronounce all those things to be false,

* Note 78. c. xv. "concerning
concerning the extraordinary miracles of the first ages, and the gifts of the holy spirit, which have been handed down to us by the testimony and writings of so many of the ancients. A Free Enquiry into the miraculous Powers, &c. Lond. 1749, in 4to *.

Mosheim also judiciously remarks, that "the divinity of the Christian religion does not depend on the credit of the miracles, which are said to be wrought in the second and third ages; but is sufficiently established, provided it be certain that Christ and his followers had the power of changing the laws of nature. But to a person attentively reading the learned author's treatise it is manifest, that while he seems only to aim at more modern miracles, he strikes at those of Christ and his apostles; and wishes to overthrow the credit of all events exceeding the powers of nature †."

The candid reader, acquainted with Middleton, will not easily discover with Mr. G., any indignation here expressed. Does not Mosheim allow him to have an excellent genius, and uncommon share of


† "Neque enim divinitas Christianæ religionis ex sâe miraculorum pender, quæ secundo & tertio saeculo facta dicuntur saeculo, sed firmata fatis est, modo Christum, ejusque amicos potestate valuiisse naturæ leges mutandi consens. Verum viri eruditi librum attente legenti peripicium sit, eum per latus recensionum miraculorum, Christi & apostolorum miracula petere, omniumque eventuum naturæ vires excedentium fideliam labefaciare velle."
learning? He gives us merely an account of the
treatise, and passes his judgment on it: How just
it is, and free from indignation, I leave those to
judge who have considered the matter; and who
have seen the treatises written against it. But, I
suppose, as Mosheim takes off the veil, and lays
open the design of this work to the eyes of the
world, it might appear as very severe treatment
to his admirer and copier Mr. G.

V.

Mr. G. says, "The want of discipline and hu-
man learning was supplied by the occasional as-
ittance of the prophets; who were called to that
function without distinction of age, of sex, or of
natural abilities; and who, as often as they felt
the divine impulse, poured forth the effusions of
the spirit in the assembly of the faithful."
To this he adds the following note.

"For the prophets of the primitive church, see
Mosheim, Dissertationes ad Hist. Eccles. perti-
nentes, tom. ii. p. 132—208." This author,
he appeals to, does not corroborate the whole of
what he says respecting the prophets. Mosheim's
principal design is to prove, that "the gift of pro-
phesy was not confined to foretelling future
events, nor yet to interpreting the scriptures
alone," as some understand it; but he is far
from excluding the assistance of human learning.
As a proof of this, I shall lay before my reader only
the following passage.

"To profess my opinion freely," says Mosheim,
"of those who are stiled prophets in the New Tes-
tament, I think they were men called and
moved by God in an extraordinary manner, su-

* Page 488.
† Note 104. c. xv.
pernaturally illuminated, and taught by God, and
course, according to the need of the rising Chris-
congregation, either for instruction, or ad-
correction, as most tended to its wel-
In this concise account of his opinion, Mosheim
we see takes no notice of a deficiency in human
learning, which these prophets were to remedy.
Neither does he once intimate it through his whole
dissertation. His words rather imply, that the
Christian congregations had teachers in ordinary,
whose capacities to teach were acquired in the usual
way. But Mr. G. would represent the first Chris-
tian congregations as entirely destitute of discipline
and human learning; to agree the better, I should
imagine, with the description he has given of their
meanness and ignorance.

VI.

In this instance, I mean to shew that our author
gives only a part of Mosheim's opinion with regard
to the progress of the Gospel.
"But neither the belief," says Mr. G., "nor
the wishes of the fathers" (in their account of

* "Hinc illos, qui in Novo Test. Prophetæ appellantur,
"ut plane sententiam meam profitear, homines suisse, opinor,
"extra ordinem a Deo vocatos & excitatos, supernaturali modo
"illuminatos & de voluntate divina eodoctos, actosque, ut
"eam pro diversa nascentis costus Christiani ratione, vel ad
"erudiendum, vel ad commonendum, vel ad corrigendum in

† See St. Paul's epistle to Timothy, c. iv. 13. "Give at-
tendance to reading." This injunction was hardly necessary,
if "the occasional assistance of the prophets supplied the want of
"human learning," as our historian is pleased to assert.
the amazingly extensive progress of the Gospel) "can alter the truth of history. It will still re-
"main an undoubted fact, that the barbarians of
"Scythia and Germany, who subverted the Ro-
"man monarchy, were involved in the darkness
"of paganism; and that even the conversion of
"Iberia, of Armenia, or of Æthiopia, was not
"attempted with any degree of success, till the
"scepter was in the hands of an orthodox empe-
"ror." In support of the above, he refers us to
"the fourth century of Mosheim's history of
"the church †.

The learned historian does indeed observe, that
"as Constantine and his successors exerted their ut-
"moost endeavours to enlarge the limits of Christi-
"anity, it is no wonder that so many nations, be-
"fore barbarous and savage, subjected themselves
"to Christ."

Yet it should be noted also, that he says, in the
very next sentence, that "the less as well as greater
Armenia had the light of Christianity brought
"to them not long after its first rise, is probable
"from many circumstances. But the church re-
"ceived its form and establishment in this age †.

Again he adds, "Part of the Goths, who in-
"habited Thracia, Moesia, and Dacia, had re-

* Page 512.
† Note 176, c. xv.
‡ Instit. Hist. Ecclesiast. fac. iv. pars i. c. r.
Sect. 19. "In proferendis civitatis Christianae finibus, quot
"non mediocrem Constantinus ipse cum filiis & successori-
"bus collocaret industriam, non mirum est, populos multos, bar-
"baros ante & immanes, Christo se & subiectis.
"Armeniae tam minori, quam majori, religionis Christianae
"lucem non diu post initia civitatis Christianæ illiam esse, mul-
tis rebus probable sit. Firmatatem vero & formam hoc demum
"faculo ecclesiae acceptit Armenica."
ceived the Christian religion long before this cen-
tury: And Theophilus their bishop was present
at the council of Nice.*

Mr. G. has plainly adopted but a part of Mos-
heim's sentiment, while, from his reference, we
should imagine he had the authority of that skilful
writer for the whole of his observation. The par-
tiality of the extract, therefore, is not the only
thing blameable. Our author has presumed to alter the truth of Mosheim's history, that he might have
an opportunity of contradicting the belief and wishes
of the Fathers†.

VII.

This partiality seems to be generally adopted by
our historian, in his use of Mosheim, as will ap-
pear also from this instance:

"The most sceptical criticism," says he, "is
obliged to respect the truth of this extraordinary
fact, and the integrity of this celebrated passage
of Tacitus (namely, on Nero's persecution).
The former is confirmed by the diligent and ac-
curate Suetonius, who mentions the punishment

* Sect. 21. "Gothorum Thraciam, Moesiam, Daciam in-
coelentium pars jam ante hoc saculum Christianam religionem
recepserat: & Iheopnillus episcopus eorum in Niceno con-
cilio præfens erat." This council was assembled by Constan-
tine, A.D. 325.

† I would here point out to my reader, though our cenfor of
the Fathers looks on their testimony as insufficient, nay even as
false, that the candid Mosheim, to whose authority Mr. G. ap-
peals, admits them, as unexceptionable witnesses in this case.
He says, "Ad quas figuratim provincias, vel in orbe Romano,
vel extra illum, lux veri coelestis hoc saculo primum pervene-
tit, veterum monumentorum penuria distinete commemorare
vetat. Adjunt, qui docent, testes exceptiones superiores, in uni-
verso fere Oriente, inter Germanos, Iberos, Celtas, Britannos,
& alios populos Christian pro Deo cultum suisse." Tertullian-
us, Irenæus, &c.

K 2

"which
which Nero inflicted on the Christians; a test of
men who embraced a new and criminal superstiti-

tion." He then cites, in a note, "Sueton. in
"Nerone, c. 16." and continues it thus:
"The epithet of malefica, which some sagacious
commentators have translated magical, is consi-
dered by the more rational Mothesim as only sy-

nonymous to the exitiabilis of Tacitus †.
Mothesim does not represent these terms as sy-
nonymous: He only says, that there might be the
same reason for each historian to adopt that lan-
guage ‡.
The literal interpretation of his words is, "on
this account," (that is, "because the Christians
despised the religion of the Romans, and en-
deavoured to convert men from it; and be-
cause this was prejudicial to the welfare of the
republic, which had a necessary connection with
the religion of Rome") "Tacitus reproaches
the Christians with a hatred for all mankind: Nor
do I think that he had any other cause for call-
ing the Christian religion superstitionem exitiabi-
lem; nor Suetonius for stiling it maleficam §.

* Page 534.
† Note 34. c. xvi.
‡ The learned Maclaine translates these words thus, "a poi-

sonous or malignant superstition." This is rather different from
the epithet of Mr. G., "a new and criminal superstition."
See Maclaine's translation of Mothesim's Ecclesiastical History,
vol. i. p. 57. 8vo. edit.
§ "Hoc illud est," (nempe, "quod Chrisiani publicam rei-
publicae religionem, cujus summa erat cum forma civitatis
Romanæ. necestudo & conjunctio, contemnent & detestab-
untur) quod TACITUS Chrlhianns exprobat, odium generis
"humanæ: Nec alunde putem duci debere, cum idem Christi-
norum religionem superstitionem exitiabilum, SUETONIUS au-
"tem maleficam nominet." InstiIt, Hist. Eccle. sec. i. pars i.
c. v. § 6.
From these words, Mr. G. cannot prove, that Mofheim looked on these epithets of Suetonius and Tacitus as synonymous: And though our author throws out a sneer by calling those persons sagacious who differ from him in not adopting the rational interpretation of Mofheim; it should be remembered, that the translation, magical, has been dignified by the authority of many learned and able men. It should be noted too that Mr. G. guides us by no particular reference; perhaps he would not wish to refer us to a place in Mofheim, where we might read how groundless the reasons were, which each of the historians had for using such language; perhaps it was left we should discover he had strained the words of Mofheim, in order to corroborate his assertion.

VIII.

"The learned Mofheim," says our advocate for the heathens, "expresses himself (p. 147. 232.) "with the highest approbation of Pliny's moderate and candid temper "."

In opposition to this we may affirm, that Mofheim does not give his approbation indiscriminately of the whole conduct of Pliny, as our author has done; but highly blames and reprovés even his letter to the emperor respecting the Christians: For he speaks of it as "unjust and quite unbecoming so judicious a man ". These can hardly be called with

* Note 56. c. xvi.

† "Plinius scripsert ei (Traiano) ipsum Christianorum perleventiam crimen sibi visam esse morte luendam, tamen nihil in religionem, quam dimittere nolabant, desiderari posset. "Neque enim dubitabam, quaecunque esset quod faterentur, perwiscaciam certe & inflexiblem obliviscationem debere puniri."

K 3 "Eam
with propriety, expressions of the biggest approbation. He passes also a similar judgment on the answer of Trajan to Pliny, saying, "That he was guilty of no small fault in adopting the advice of Pliny, and condemning the Christians to death, who had forsaken the religion of their ancestors, and would not apostatize." In the same strain of disapprobation he speaks, in his General Church History, of the inconsistent conduct of the Roman magistrates; of their cruel punishments, and the dreadful issue of the popular clamours. "To these indeed," says he, "the favourable edict of Trajan did set bounds;" yet this very edict caused many Christians to be put to death, even under the best emperors."

How widely different is this language of Mosheim from that of the biggest approbation, which our author represents him as bestowing on the governor. Nor does it differ less from Mr. G's encomium on the moderate Trajan's answer, which,

"Eam Plinii sententiam, injustam licet & viro tam perspicaci plane indignam, amplectebatur imperator, Christianosque propere non ut homines in Deos & sacra Romana peccantes, verum ut cives mandatis principis parere nolentes puniri jubebat." De rebus Christianis ante Constantin. M. p. 234, not.

* * * Peccavit quidem in eo non leviter (Trajanus), quod Christianos defertae majorum religionis convictos & cedere nolentes capelli pena justi affici," Institut. Hist. Ecclef. fac. i. pars i. c. v. § 9.

‡ See fac. ii. pars i. c. i. § 2. and c. ii. § 1.

† Sæc. 2. "Hæc Trajani lex inter publicas Romani imperii sanctiones relata, hodiurn Christianorum furori modum quem ponebat, at efficientem etiam ut sub optimis quoque imperiis multitudo Christianorum perirent. Quoties enim aderat, qui accusandi periculum haud formidabat, accusatus vero objectum crimen non dissibat; carnis trafrat poterat, si a Christo deliciere nollet. Constantia ergo in religionem Christianam ex lege Trajani capitale delictum erat."
in his opinion, "displays not the implacable zeal of an inquisitor," but "discovers as much regard for justice and humanity as could be reconciled with his mistaken notions of religious policy."

IX.

Our author assumes to himself the most unaccountable liberty of cenfuring Mosheim for an assertion which he does not really make. It is thus introduced:

"The leisure of the two empresses, of his" (Diocletian's) "wife Prisca, and of Valeria his daughter, permitted them to listen with more attention and respect to the truths of Christianity, which in every age has acknowledged its important obligations to female devotion."

On this passage he makes the following note:

"The expression of Lactantius (de M. P. c. 15.) "sacrificio pollui coegit," implies their antecedent conversion to the faith; but does not seem to justify the assertion of Mosheim, (p. 912.) that "they had been privately baptized."

Now the words of Mosheim are simply these:

"Prisca, the wife of Diocletian, being privately initiated in the Christian religion, had renounced the worship of the Gods." This expression, surely, need not be confined to the rite of baptism,
and may imply no more than our author's expression, "their antecedent conversion to the faith."

How then could Mr. Gibbon be so presumptuous, as falsely to charge such an eminent man with unjustifiable assertion? Besides, his reference to Molheim does not lead us to discover even the name of Valeria. We read only, "The palaces of the emperors themselves were filled with Christians; nor did any one obstruct them in their free and fearless profession of Christianity."

This is speaking only in general terms. Much less does the Christian Molheim give our infidel historian any pretext for inserting that illiberal malignant infinuation, "Christianity has, in every age, acknowledged its important obligations to female devotion." The remark is truly contemptible.

Misrepresentation of Dupin.

Our author, in treating of the discipline of the primitive church, has strained some passages in Dupin's Ecclesiastical History, to make them coincide with his own expressions. He says, "According to the circumstances, or the number of the guilty, the exercise of the Christian discipline was varied by the discretion of the bishops. The councils of Ancyra and Illiberis were held about the same time, the one in Galatia, the other in Spain; but their respective canons, which are still extant, seem to breathe a very different spirit. The Galatian who, after his baptism, had repeatedly sacrificed to idols, might obtain his pardon by a penance of seven years; and, if he had seduced others, only three years"

* "Plena erant imperatorum ipsorum palatia Christianis necque quidquam eos impediebat, quo minus libere ac fine formidine Christianum profiterentur ac coelest." Sac. iv. § 1.
more were added to the term of his exile. But
the unhappy Spaniard, who had committed the
fame offence, was deprived of the hope of re-
cconciliation, even in the article of death; and
his idolatry was placed at the head of a list of
seventeen other crimes, against which a sentence,
no less terrible, was pronounced. Amongst
these we may distinguish the inexpressible guilt of ca-
unnating a bishop, a presbyter, or even a dea-
con.*

In support of this sentence, he appeals to Du-
pin †; and thereby displays great inaccuracy, as
well as shameful misrepresentation. For though
the subject of penance is treated of in Dupin ‡,
under the life of St. Pacien, nearly where Mr. G.
refers us; yet none of the particulars, which he
specifies, are there mentioned. Instead of seven-
teen only three or four capital crimes are distin-
guished.

Dupin says, of this Father, "He first distin-
guishes sins from crimes: We must not think,"
says he, "that men are obliged to do penance for
an infinite number of small and more trivial
sins."—And thus, "having pardoned such, if I
may use the expression, there remains a small
number, which it is easy to avoid, and which
he condemns as meriting a severe punishment."

He makes these crimes relate to "idolatry, ho-
micide, and adultery. We are to comprehend
under these three crimes, their concomitants and

* Page 501.
† Note 146. c. xv. Dupin Bibliothèque Ecclesiastique,
tom. ii. p. 304—313.
‡ Page 299—311. 8vo. edit. Paris 1687.

It should be observed, that one of Mr. G.'s references, at
note 64. c. xv. answers to this edition: We might, therefore,
expect that all of them should answer to it.

"con-
consequences, which are of a wide extent. As to other sins, they are healed," says he, "by the practice of good works, and their contrary virtues. But for the three crimes specified, he recommends public penance in a particular manner.*"

It is now manifest that there is not a requisite similitude between the account which Dupin gives us, and that cited by our author as from him.

For a proof of the difference between the canons of the councils of Ancyra and Illiberis; between the punishment of the Galatian and Spaniard, for the same offence; on which Mr. G. harangues, he should have referred us to "the eighth canon of the council of Ancyra and Neo-Cesarea†; and the first canon of Elvira or Illiberis‡;" instead of the place in Dupin, to which he now inaccurately directs us.

But there still remains a more important charge, the misrepresentation he is guilty of in the words which close this paragraph: "Among these we

* "Dans la première partie il distingue les pechés, d'avec les crimes: Il dit qu'il ne faut pas s'imager que les hommes soient obligés à faire penitence pour une infinité de pechés légers, dont personne n'est exempt, &c.—Ainsi après avoir parlé, pour ainsi dire, une infinité de pechés, sans qu'il fût besoin de remèdes forts pour les guérir, il y en a un petit nombre qu'il estoit facile d'éviter, qui meritent une sevère punit.

† Dupin, p. 795. A. D. 304.
‡ Ibid. p. 770. A. D. 305. See also, "Canon 3. du Concile du Valence, p. 884.

may
may distinguish the inexpiable guilt of calumniating a bishop, a presbyter, or even a deacon." Even this does not occur at the place referred to. The authority our historian should have quoted, is, the 75th canon of the council of Elvira," which deprives of the communion, even at death, those who have falsely accused of crimes, a bishop, a priest, or a deacon.*

We should imagine, from our author's representation, that on the slightest expression in conversation, detracting from the character of a priest, this severe punishment was inflicted. Far otherwise is the real state of the case. It evidently implies a false accusation in public of some great crime, which is much more than what is commonly understood by mere calumny. But our author, as usual, candidly translates the original words to throw a sneer on the sacred order, even at the expense of his judgment; for the language will not allow the interpretation he has given. In order to make his assertion more specious, he is careful to mention, at the same time, certain crimes of a deep dye; which, he would intimate, a Christian might more safely commit, than be guilty of calumniating a bishop, or a deacon. But the words of Dupin strongly express that, to incur this heavy penalty, a person must first have falsely accused a priest, in a public manner, of some great and heinous crimes: Perhaps those of murder, idolatry, or adultery, and their attendants, which are really the crimes here specified, and not those which Mr. G. is pleased particularly to distinguish. Besides the crime of false accusation amounts to rank perjury in its utmost extent, for which, in

"Le 75 canon prive de la communion meme a la mort, ceux qui ont accuse de faux crimes, un Evêque, un Prêtre, & un Diacre."
those days, a severe penance was inflicted. We are to consider also, that it was not only an endeavour to destroy the reputation of an honest innocent man; but that the malignant aspersions were cast on the most respectable characters, the venerable personages on whom the fame and welfare of the Christian church chiefly depended; which was, at that time, a consideration of importance.

Lastly, let us remember what rigid punishments the clergy themselves were liable to, if the accusation appeared probable, or even suspicious; we may then see some necessity to enact a severe penalty to prevent and deter men from falsely accusing them, through envy, malice, or other iniquitous motives.

Misrepresentation of M. de Tillemont.

Mr. G. says, "Christianity must have been very unequally diffused over Pontus, for in the middle of the third century there were no more than seventeen believers in the extensive diocese of Neo-Cæsarea." He then quotes M. de Tillemont.

But he has very partially represented the case, and mentioned only one part of Tillemont's remark, to prove which, I shall transcribe the whole.

"The city of Neo-Cæsarea," says this author, "was either the capital, or one of the most considerable cities of the province, when St. Gregory was made bishop of it, and it was very populous, as well as all the neighbouring country. But all the inhabitants, both of the city and its environs, were still immersed in the darkness of paganism; and they could reckon no more than

* Note 154. c. xv.
† Memoires Ecclesiastiques, tom. iv. p. 675.
"seventeen Christians there. Notwithstanding the grace of God wrought in such a wonderful manner by St. Gregory, that he converted all the people both of the city and country, and only left at his death seventeen pagans.*"

Our author has fully answered his purpose of shewing the small number of Christians in the diocese, by laying before us only the first part of Tillemont's remark; and by concealing from our view the amazing increase of converts to the faith in Pontus, which this writer takes notice of in the very same connected passage †. It should be observed also, that Tillemont's authority relates only to the city and its environs; and that he does not speak of the whole extensive diocese, as Mr. G. has represented him.

Misrepresentation of Gregory of Tours.

Our speaking of the progress of the Gospel in this place, has induced me to reserve the following instance, on account of the connection of the subject.

Mr. G. refers to this Father, among other writers, in proof of "the slow progress of the Gospel

* "Elle, (la ville de Neo-Cæsarée) étoit donc ou la capitale, ou l'une des plus considérables villes de la province, lorsqu'e St. Gregoire en fut fait Evêque, & fort peuplée, auffi-bienque tout le pays d'alentour. Mais tous les habitans & de la ville & des environs estoient encor dans les ténèbres du paganisme, & l'on n'y pouvoit compter que dix-sept Chrétien. Cependant la grace de Dieu opera tellement par S. Gregoire qu'il conversa tout le peuple tant de la ville que de la campagne & n'y laissa en mourant que dix-sept payens." Partie 2de. p. 675. 8vo. edit.

† From this representation of Tillemont, we must infer, that our historian had little reason to question the veracity of Lucian's expression, when he says, that "his native country of Pontus was filled with Epicureans and Christians. This was under the reign of Commodus. Lucian. in Alexand. c. 25."
And that, "even as late as the reign of Decius, in a few cities only some scattered churches were supported by the devotion of a small number of Christians."

In direct opposition to this, Gregory says, that "under the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus many had even suffered martyrdom in the provinces of Gaul."

And again, that "under the emperor Decius there arose many persecutions against the Christians, and the slaughter of the faithful was so great, that they could not be numbered."

By this we are induced to reckon the number of Christians there very great, and deem that church to be populous which could afford so many martyrs.

The other writers, especially Mosheim, do indeed confirm the assertion of Mr. G.; but here again he has blended together such opposite testimony, that at once prove, he has not consulted the original authors; but has decked himself out with plumes that belong to another.

II.

There is still another misrepresentation of Tillemont. Our author says, "St. Jude the apostle was the brother of Jesus Christ." To account for this expression he adds, in a note,

"This appellation was at first understood in the most obvious sense, and it was supposed,

* P. 511. and note 171. c. xv. Greg. Turon. l. i. c. 28.

† "Sed et in Galli multi pro Christi nomine sunt per martyrium gemmis cælestibus coronati: Quorum passionum historia apud nos fideliter ulque hodie retinentur." l. i. c. 26.

‡ "Sub Decio vero imperatore multa bella adversum nomen Christianum exoriantur, & tanta frages de credentibus fuit, ut nec numerari quedat." Gregorius Turonensis Historia Francorum, l. i. c. 28. edit. Ruinart. Adrian & Antonin. Impp.

§ Page 538.

"that
that the brothers of Jesus were the lawful issue of 
Joseph and Mary*. " See Tillemont Memoires 
Ecclesiastiques, tom. i. part iii. and Beaufobre, &c."

But Tillemont is very far from saying that "the 
brothers of Jesus Christ were supposed to have been 
the lawful issue of Joseph and Mary: He speaks of 
the error of Helvidius as arising from this opi-
nion †." And in one passage he expressly makes 
use of words directly opposite to this opinion. 
For, speaking of St. Jude," he says, "Jude is 
called the brother of Jesus Christ (because he 
was the son of Mary, sister of the Holy Virgin, 
and of Cleophas the brother of Joseph ‡.)"

It is plain, surely, beyond a doubt, that Tillemont 
was of a very different way of thinking. Is 
it not then much more probable that Mr. G. took 
the whole of his note from Beaufobre §? Every re-
mark he makes on this topic, may be extracted 
from this writer, who, as he quotes Tillemont, 
might readily furnish him with his reference to that 
author. This suspicion is still more encreased by 
Mr G.'s having given us no particular reference to 
any chapter in Tillemont, which was probably done 
with a view to secure his credit.

* Note 47. c. xvi.
† "A donné lieu à l'erreur d'Helvide," tom. i. part iii.
‡ "Jude qui est appelé frère de Jesus Christ (parcequ'il 
était fils de Marie, soeur de la Ste. Vierge, & de Cleophas 
"frère de S. Joseph")."

§ Histoire Critique de Manicheisme, i. ii. c. 2.
There is, perhaps, some impropriety in our author's quoting 
both Tillemont and Beaufobre on this point; for Beaufobre cor-
rects the expression of Tillemont. 
See tom. i. liv. ii. c. ii. § 9. 4to edit. 
p. 360. &c.

Mis-
Misrepresentation of Pagi.

Mr. G. says, "Pliny was sent into Bithynia (according to Pagi) in the year 110." Now that accurate chronologist places it "in the year 102: See the fact recorded in his Critica Historico-Chronologica in Annales C. Baronii †." I appeal to my reader, if this anachronism does not plainly prove that our historian never looked into Pagi's chronology, though he has not hesitated to make a pompous reference to him in his note?

Misrepresentation of Lord Lyttelton.

Our author says, "Whatever opinion we may entertain of the character or principles of Thomas Becket, we must acknowledge that he suffered death with a constancy not unworthy of the primitive martyrs †." In confirmation of this, he cites the authority of Lord Lyttelton's History of Henry II. §

Now whoever turns to the noble author, will find that he gives Mr. G. no ground to make this comparison: But as his Lordship has drawn a dark character of this intrepid defender of papal and ecclesiastical authority, our historian would transfer it to the first Christians, in order to throw a stain on their memories; as if the same turbulence of disposition, which had exposed the one to assassination, had exposed the others to martyrdom.

* Note 155. c. xv.
† Anno Domini 102. p. 99. sec. ii. § 3.
‡ Note 82. c. xvi.

Besides,
Besides, by making this remark, he had an opportunity of paying a compliment to the papists, by representing Becker as a saint and martyr; while he gives a suspicious view of his character and principles, to pleae the protestants."

Having now laid before my reader such a series of misrepresentations and misquotations of the authors to whom Mr. Gibbon appeals; can there remain the least doubt, that he has not really consulted the original materials; though he so confidently assumes to himself this merit? He has doubtless some obligation to me for having given such satisfying proofs of his skill, in suiting to his purpose the arguments of every writer, whose name he thought would give credit to his remark. Every one who had ever looked into Mr. Gibbon's history must have instantly perceived, that his principal design was to paint Christianity in odious colours. But it was not perhaps so generally known, nor could it well be conceived, that, in order to finish his picture, he could have had recourse to such an extensive system of gross misrepresentation as I have exposed to the Public in the foregoing sheets.

Proofs of Mr. GIBBON's Inaccuracy.

In the former part of this examination, I occasionally took notice of some few of our author's inaccuracies, being such as were connected with his misquotations. A long list of them, however, which have no connection, still remaining, I am obliged to introduce these under a distinct head.

From the very nature of the charge, the instances which I shall bring in support of it, if separately
...y considered, have the appearance of being trivial. Nay Mr. G., though he cannot throw upon his printer the blame of the numerous misrepresentations above exposed, may avail himself of such an answer here. But I beg my reader would suppose me incapable of confounding mere errors of the printer with real mistakes of the author: And that such are the instances I now produce, may be confidently asserted; for they have all uniformly preserved their place in the three several editions of Mr. G.'s history*: I may therefore urge them

* It may be agreeable to my reader to have a view of the alterations and additions which Mr. G. has made in his last edition of his history, which, after an accurate collation of these two chapters, I can affirm to be as follows:

At note 10. 3d edit. he has quoted Numbers xiv. 11.—"How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? It would be easy, but it would be unbecoming, to justify the complaint of the Deity from the whole tenor of the Mosaic law."

At note 64. he has added, "Yet the curious reader may consult Dauid De Uso Patrum, 1. ii. c. 4."

He makes this addition to note 65. "The testimony of Justin of his own faith, and that of his orthodox brethren in the doctrine of a Millennium, is delivered in the clearest and most solemn manner, (Dialog. cum Tryphonte Jud. p. 177, 178. edit. Benedictin.) If in the beginning of this important passage there is any thing like an inconstency, we may impute it, as we think proper, either to the author, or to his transcribers."

An addition, which shall be afterwards mentioned, he has made to note 70. 2d edit.


I have already noticed the addition he has made respecting the prudence and humanity of Nero being affected.

He has inferred the following as the 32d note in c. xvi. 3d edit. "Odio humani generis convidi." These words may either signify the hatred of mankind towards the Christians, or the hatred of the Christians towards mankind. I have preferred the
them as a compleat body of proof, in support of
my general charge, that he must relinquish his
boasted claim to diligence and accuracy.

the latter sense, as the most agreeable to the style of Tacitus, and
to the popular error; of which a precept of the Gospel (see Luke
xiv, 26,) had been, perhaps, the innocent occasion.

My interpretation is justified by the authority of Lipsius; of
the Italian, the French, and the English translators of Tacitus;
of Moehl (p. 162.); of Le Clerc (Histories Ecclesiast.,
p. 427.); of Dr. Lardner (Testimonies, vol. i. p. 345.); and
of the Bishop of Gloucester (Divine Legation, vol. iii. p. 38.)
But as the word conuist a does not unite very happily with the
rest of the sentence, James Gronovius has preferred the reading of
conundri, which is authorised by the valuable MS. of Flo-
rence."

At note 42. 2d edit. "See Dodwell "Paucitat. Mart. i. xiii.
The Spanish inscription in Gruter is a manifest and acknow-
ledged forgery, contrived by that noted impostor Cyriacus of
Ancona, to flatter the pride and prejudices of the Spaniards.
See Ferreras, Histoire d'Espagne, tom. i. p. 192."

He has thus enlarged note 116. 2d edit. "Euseb. i. vi. c. 28.
"It may be presumed, that the success of the Christians had ex-
aaspered the increasing bigotry of the Pagans. Dion Cassius,
who composed his history under the former reign, had most pro-
ably intended for the use of his master those councils of per-
secution, which he ascribes to a better age, and to the favourite of
Augustus. Concerning their oration of Mecenas, or rather of
Dion, I may refer to my own unbiased opinion (p. 41.
note 25.) and to the Abbé de la Bléterie Memoires de l'Acad-
émie, tom. xxiv. p. 303. tom. xxv. p. 432."

At page 576. 2d edit. he has altered this sentence. "The
"motives of conversion, as they may variously be deduced from
"faith, from virtue, from policy, or from remorse, &c." he
now writes it, p. 691, 692. 3d edit. "The motives of his
"conversion, as they may variously be deduced from benevo-
"lence, from policy, from conversion, from remorse," &c.

He would enforce what he has laid at note 178. c. xvi. by
asserting, that "such is the fair deduction from two remarkable
"passages in Eusebius," &c.

There are some other alterations which I have omitted, as they
are very trivial.
I.

Mr. G. says, "the success of the Gnostics was rapid and extensive." To support this, he adds, in the following note: "Habent apes favos, habent ecclesias et Marcionitæ†;" is the strong expression of Tertullian, which I am obliged to quote from memory‡.

Mr. G.'s memory has, indeed, failed him here, for Tertullian's words are, "Faciunt favos & ves-PÆ; faciunt ecclesias et Marcionitæ§." Though his inclination prompted him to amend the simile in favour of the Marcionites, as much as the useful industrious bee is preferable to the obnoxious wasp.

II.

Mr. G. at note 11. c. xv. refers to "Exodus xxiv. 23," and adds, "See a very sensible note in the Universal History, vol. i. p. 603. edit. fol." But his subject, respecting the Jews appearing three times in the year before the Lord, required him to have referred to Exodus c. xxxiv. 23. or c. xxiii. 14 or 17 verses.

I wish also to inform my reader, that p. 603. in the Universal History, which contains the note on this topic, is in vol. ii. not vol. i. edit. folio:

III.

Our historian, in his third edition, has added this note.—"In order to ascertain the degree of

* Page 462.
† That is, "The bees have cells or honey-combs, the Marcionites also have churches."
‡ Note 35. c. xv.
§ "Even the wasps make themselves cells, or nests, and the Marcionites also form churches."
authority which the zealous African (Tertullian) had acquired, it may be sufficient to allege the testimony of Cyprian, the doctor and guide of all the western churches (see Prudent. Hymn. xiii. 100.) As often as he applied himself to his daily study of the writings of Tertullian, he was accustomed to say, Da mihi magistrum; "Give me my master." Hieronym. de Viris Illustribus, c. 53.

The xiiiith Hymn of Prudentius chiefly relates to the passion of Cyprian, and he is there spoken of as a great teacher; but I do not see what reason Mr. G. had to single out line 20: The words of which are: "Nec minus inviolat terris nec ab hoc recedit orbis."

IV.

Besides, his other reference in this note is false, as the words which he quotes are found in Hieronym. de Viris Illustribus c. 63.—επίδος τού διδασκάλου. "da magistrum."

Mr. G. therefore, would have done better not to have added this note, as he has only accumulated his inaccuracies.

V.

Our author, to confirm his remark, that "the community of goods—substituted in some degree among the ancres sect of the Essenes," appeals to Philo. de Vir. Contemplativ. But in this treatise, Philo makes but slight mention of the Essenes, and none at all of any commiunity.

* Note 73. c. xv.
† Page 475.
‡ Note 127. c. xv.

L 3

munity.
munity. He speaks of the Therapeutæ, as "with-

drawing themselves from this life, through the "
hopes and desire of immortality, and leaving "
their possessions to their children or relations "."

It is highly probable, therefore, that Mr. G. has 

mistaken the book, since in the preceding one, en-
titled, "Whoever studies after virtue, should be 

free;" we read the account of their community at 
at large: "Their benevolence," says Philo, "
equality of rank, and admirable community in 
every respect, are proofs of their philanthropy. "

No one has any peculiar property, which does 
not belong to all. They live in companies, and 
extend their beneficence to other societies: They 

have one common apartment, one table; their 
cloaths and provisions are common to all †.

Can we now entertain a doubt, whether, if our 
author had consulted the original, he could have 

made this gross blunder?

VI.

In confirmation of his remark on "the divine 
obligation of the Mosaic law, in the article of 

* Tò Θεοπατητικὸς γίνοις ——— (οί) διὰ τὸ τῆς ἁγαστῶν ἡ 

μακραίρες ζωῆς ἴμαρος τιτανιτικάς, τιμήσεως ἐκ τὸν ἦπτον βίοις, 

αυξάνωσε τὰς εὐεργείας, ὡς ἡ Συγκέλησις, οὕτω ἡ ἀλλοις συγκελήτω συνεκκομμόμεθα. Philon. de Vita Contemplativa. 

†. ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΣΠΟΚΘΑΙΟΝ. ΕΙΝΑΙ. ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΟΝ. 

(Quod liber εις quinquies vestri adex.) 
Τοῦ δὲ θεοπατητικοῦ γίνομα τοιοῦτοι ΙΕΟΘΗΤΑ, τῷ παντὶ λέγων 

κόινωνιοι ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΝ, ὡς ἐξους ἐκατῆς ὑπανθία ἑαυτῷ. 

Περὶ γὰρ τῆς καθαρτὸς ζωῆς, παρατετείχει καὶ τοῖς ἑπετέροις 

αποκεφαλασμοῖς τῶν ὀμοσείων. Εἰτ ἢτις ταχεῖος ἢ παλαιός, ἢ 

κοινῷ μει αὐδῆς, κοινῷ δὲ τρόφῳ συνεξία πνευμάτων, &c.

"tythes;"
"tythes*;" Mr. G. cites Irenæus adv. Hæresi. L iv. c. 27. 34. and Origen in Num. Homil. li. †

Now this subject is treated by Irenæus, l. iv. c. 13. 18. ‡ and by Origen Homil. xi. in Numerorum caput xxiii.

VII.

Mr. G., happy to have a pretext to cast a blemish on the writings of Eusebius, says, "There was, perhaps, some malice in the remark of Theodorus Metochita, that all who, like Eusebius, had been conversant with the Egyptians, delighted in an obscure and intricate style."

In support of this, he refers us to Valeius's note on Eusebius, lib. viii. c. v. § But the present matter occurs in the annotations of Valeius on l. viii. c. 9. where he says, "From this place we learn that Eusebius had been acquainted with Egypt, as Theodorus Metochita witnesses; who observes, that not only the Egyptians themselves, but those also who had been conversant with the Egyptians, made use of a certain intricate and obscure mode of expression in their writings; in the number of whom he ranks Eusebius not in the last place."

* P. 496.
† Note 130. c. xv.
§ Note 181. c. xvi.
We see that our author is not only inaccurate in this instance, but has strained the words of Theodorus Metochita, quoted by M. de Valois. The learning of this translator, probably, informed Mr. G. of the words of Metochita. We may surely return the compliment to Mr. G. and observe, without any malice in the remark, that, all who, like him, have been long conversant with the French, delight in a gaudy, superficial style; Which, like the gay and fimsy dress that distinguishes Gallic levity, makes up its ostentation what it wants in solid worth and real excellence, to recommend it to the man of sense and judgment.

VIII.

Mr. G., to corroborate his assertion respecting the Millennium *, has cited "Dupin Bibliothèque Ecclesiastique, tom. i. p. 293. and tom. ii. p. 366†.

The first reference directs us nearly to a passage which mentions Irenæus as favouring this doctrine, tom. i. p. 221, 222. † But the second reference gives no direction at all to any similar passage. Neither do we meet with the additional circumstances attending its gradual decline, which Mr. G. has specified, nor are reasons, like his, given for the decay of the doctrine §.

* Page 472. † Note 64. c. xv.
‡ 8vo edit. à Paris 1688.
§ We read of Irenæus holding this doctrine, p. 78. that it was rejected by Cains, as the heresy of Cerinthus, p. 340. by Cyprian, p. 534. and by Origen, p. 421. Dupin makes a lenient and candid remark at this place.
‡‡ Citons pardonnemmes ces forces d'opinions à tous les anciens auteurs du Christiauisme, n'y en ayant presque pas un seul, qui n'en ait eu de semblables.
"The philosophers," says Mr. G., "composed many elaborate treatises, which have since been committed to the flames by the prudence of orthodox emperors."

On this occasion he cites, as one authority, Codex Theodosian. I. i. tit. i. 113. 

I do not here mean to dispute the fact, but the incorrectness of this reference calls for severe animadversion. For, lib. i. tit. i. lex 3. Codex Theodosian relates to a very different matter: "The constitutions and edicts of princes."

Mr. G. probably ought to have quoted lib. xvi. tit. v. lex 34. which is, "We enact upon our authority, that the books of the heretics, containing the matter and doctrine of every wickedness, should be searched with the greatest exactness, and brought out; and afterwards be burnt with fire, in the presence of the judges themselves."

Surely this is a strong instance that our author did not consult this code of laws, otherwise he could not have made a mistake in quoting the very first page.

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Note 143 in xvi.

† "De Constitutionibus Principum et Edictis."

Omnia constituta non praeterhis calamitatem, sed futuris regulam imponunt. Cod. Theodosian, l. l. tit. i. l. 3.

§ De Haeresibus. "Codices sane eorum, scelestrum omnium doctrinam ac materiam continentes, summa facaciatis max quern ac prodexerat authority mandamus."


See also lex 66, &c.
X.

Our author refers us to "Seneca Quæst. Natur. I. 1. 15." &c. * where we are to find "recorded the great phenomena of nature, earthquakes, eclipses, &c. †"

But the last of these two references is, doubtless, false, as lib. i. c. 15. Naturalium Quæstionum Senecæ, treats of a very different matter from eclipses.

XI.

Our author says, "According to the maxims of universal toleration, the Romans protected a superstition which they despised ‡."

For this he refers to Cicero pro Flacco c. 23. § but on examination we shall find that the subject is contained in c. 28. ¶

XII.

He observes, that "the Jews were alarmed and scandalized at the ensigns of paganism which necessarily introduced themselves into a Roman province. **"

And adds, "see in particular Joseph. Antiquit. xvii. 6. xviii. 6. ‡‡"

Each of these chapters treats of a different subject. The point in question is discussed in lib. xvii. c. 9., in which Josephus relates "a fe-

* Note 195. c. xv. † Page 518.
‡ Page 414. § Note 5. c. xv.
¶ See the Oliphant, Glasgow, &c. Editions. ‡‡ Page 454. did. ‡‡ Note 7. c. xv.
"dition of the Jews after the death of Herod," and again we read of their tumults, lib. xvi. c. 4. 9.*

XIII.


But we find this description of Curubis in Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 160. § and in l'Afrique de Marmol. tom. ii. p. 434. || not 474. to which Mr. G. inaccurately directs us.

XIV.

"Simony," says our author, "was not un- "known in those times; and the clergy sometimes "bought what they intended to sell. It appears "that the bishopric of Carthage was purchased by "a wealthy matron, named Lucilla, for her ser- "vant Majorinus. The price was 400 folles." He then refers to Monument. Antiq. ad Calcem. Optati. p. 262. *

** See Hadrian's edition of Josephus, Oxon.
† In Patrick's edition of Cellarius, Curubis is described in c. xxvi. under the head of Africa Propria. Zeugitana, p. 117. His words are, "Curubis is situated on the promontory "of Mercury, now Cape Bona. "Curubis sita supra pro- "montorium Mercurii (Equainum) prope Capo Bona."

§ Note 87. xvi. ¶ Ed. Fol. Oxon. 1738.
|| 416 Ed. Paris 1667. ** Note 126. c. xvi.

Mr.
XV!

Our author, speaking of "the stupendous metamorphoses of St. James, from a peaceful friar, into a valorous knight," &c. \(\dagger\) cites Mariana "(Hist. Hispan. v. 10. 13.) \$\) But here, again, he has displayed great inaccuracy. For the circumstance alluded to by him is related in Mariana. (Hist. Hispan. l. xi. c. 13.) ¶

Mariana's account of St. James's arrival in Spain is l. iv. c. 2.—The story of his body being found

\(\text{XXV.} \)

"Our historian, speaking of "the gardens and circus of Nero on the Vatican," adds "on the same spot, a temple, which far surpasses the ancient glories of the Capitol, has been since erected by the Christian pontiffs, &c." The authority he cites is "Nardini Roma Antica, p. 387. \(\dagger\dagger\) But he has mistaken the page, for he should have cited l. vii. c. 13. p. 486, 487. \(\dagger\dagger\) "

\(\text{Note 156.} \) \(\text{xxvi.} \)

\(\text{†Monumenta vetera.}^{156} \)

"donarium hist. veterrinim." \(\text{Page 511.} \)

\(\text{§Note 149.} \) \(\text{xxvi.} \)

"Pol. edit. Folleti 1593. \)

\(\text{++ Page 514.} \)

\(\text{†† Note 33. c. xvi.} \)

\(\text{†† Ed. 2da in Roma 1704.} \)

XVII.
XVII.
Mr. G. in a note refers to "Theophilus ad Antolychum, ii. ii. p. 77," whereas he should have written it Antolychum, for that was the name of the Grecian nobleman: Besides, both the fact and page 77, are contained in lib. i. †

XVIII.

XIX.
Now he should have quoted vol. ii. p. 300, &c.

XX.
An inaccuracy of this kind occurs also at a note where he refers us to "Chrysoforom. Opera, tom. vii. p. 653. 810. Ed. Savil. ||" His authority is cited in confirmation of this passage:
"The ancient and illustrious church of Antioch consisted of one hundred thousand persons, three thousand of whom were supported out of the public oblations ***"
Now it is highly strange, that this reference exactly answers to the Benedict edition, but is not right in the Savil. Can we think then that Mr. G. ever consulted the Savilian edition?

Mr. G. brings discredit on his note 171. c. xv. by referring us to the "Geographia Sacra of Charles de St. Paul, with the observations of Lucas Holsteinus." Now the author's name, not unknown in the class of writers, is Holsteinus.

Mr. G. says, "Many, though very confused, circumstances that relate to the conversion of Iberia and Armenia, may be found in Moses of Chorene, l. ii. c. 78.—89." But it is c. 83. which contains the particular account.

Our author says, "It appears, however, that about forty years afterwards, the Emperor Valerian was persuaded of the truth of this assertion, since in one of his rescripts he evidently supposes, that Senators, Roman knights, and ladies of quality, were engaged in the Christian sects." In confirmation of this he appeals to Cyprian, epist. 79. §

* Note 176. c. xv.  † 4to edit. Whiston, Lond. 1736.
‡ Page 515.  § Note 188. c. xv.

But
But epistle 79th, in Fell's edition*, is addressed "to Cyprian from Felix Jader, Polianus," &c. and in Pamphilus's edition, from Lucius; yet no mention is made in the 79th epistle of either of these editions, of "Senators, Roman knights, or ladies of quality, who were engaged in the Christian sects."

XXIV.

Mr. G. refers us to "Aucta Concil. Carthag. apud Cyprian. Edit. Fell, p. 158.†" Yet in Fell's edition of Cyprian's works these acts occur at c. L, p. 229.‡

XXV.

He says, "See the sharp epistle from Firmilianus bishop of Cæsarea to Stephen bishop of Rome." Ap. Cyprian. epist. 75. §

In Fell's edition, this epistle is addressed to Cyprian. ||

XXVI.

He quotes also Cyprian's treatise de Unitate Ecclesiae, p. 75.—86. **: but in Fell's edition it is contained p. 104.—111.

* As Mr. G. has particularly quoted Fell's edition of Cyprian's work, and specified no other, it is but reasonable to expect his references to be adjusted to it; but, on the contrary, we find those disagreements which I here mention.

† Note 113. c. xv.

‡ "Per Joannem Oxoniensem Episcopum; & Annales Cy-

prianici per Joannem Cellriensem."

§ Note 123. c. xv.

|| The title is, "Firmilianus Cypriano fratri in Domino

"iulatum."

** Note 115. c. xv.
( 156 )

XXVII.

Again he refers to "Cyprian de Lapsis" p. 87.—98. edit. Fell*: Now in this very edition, the treatise is from p. 129. to 131.

I might have noticed many other inaccurate references of this kind, but I really am afraid lest I should have already wearied out my reader's patience in such minute remarks: The whole, collectively considered, must give evident proofs that, had our author consulted the original materials, he could not have made so many mistakes. And though these several instances, considered in a separate view, appear trivial and minute, like the scattered beams of the sun, diffusing warmth with a benignant but less sensible influence; yet, when the many proofs are considered as composing a great body, like the same rays, collected into folds; they make us instantly sensible of their great power and effect.

I should now proceed to my third charge of plagiarism; but as I have some other observations to make, which could not well be reduced under any distinct head, I beg leave to lay them before my reader at this place.

Though our historian descants upon "the universal toleration of polytheism," with the utmost exertion of his florid pen; yet his assertions are frequently inconsistent.*

* Note 89. c. xvi.
† These arguments of Mr. G., are opposed and confuted by Dr. Watton in his Apology (letter vi. p. 171, &c.) and by the Author of the Remarks (p. 47, &c.) who truly observes, that, "these pages of our author's disquisitions, (in c. xvi.) while they show of the conduct of the Roman government towards the Christians, contain in reality a laboured apology for it, rather than a disinterested relation of mere facts," &c.
‡ See a particular instance noted by Dr. Watton, Apology, p. 83.
He tells us, that "the Jews, and Christians also, justly forfeited the rights of toleration by their inflexible zeal for their religions, and by refusing the accustomed tribute of indulgence to Polytheism." Yet he himself speaks of "the benevolent, the innocent, the inoffensive mode of the Christian faith and worship, and extols them as the friends human kind."

In one place, our author speaks of "the reverence of the Roman princes and governors for the temple of Jerusalem, &c. But what a different strain is this, from what we meet with at the beginning of the 15th chapter: "According to the maxims of universal toleration, the Romans protected a superstition (that is, the Jewish) which they despised."

And though he adds, "the polite Augustus condescended to give orders, that sacrifices should be offered for his prosperity in the temple of Jerusalem:" Yet we find a contrast in his note on this very passage. "Augustus left a foundation for a perpetual sacrifice: Yet be approved of the neglect his grandson Caius expressed towards the temple of Jerusalem."

-- The same author has refuted Mr. G.'s favourite reason, which he assigns for the cause of the persecutions, namely, that as "the rights of toleration were held by mutual indulgence: they were justly forfeited by a refusal of the accustomed tribute, which the Jews first, and the Christians afterwards, inflexibly refused."

This his argument teaches us what the humane toleration of Polytheism was; to persecute all those who were of a different persuasion.

† Page 519. 537. † Page 521.
In order to extricate himself from the difficulties with which he is embarrassed in endeavouring to give a specious pretext for the polite Romans having persecuted the Christians; Mr. Gibbon has made use of an argument, not only inconsistent with the avowed principles of free-thinking, but even with those of the reformation. "It was incumbent on them," says he, "to persevere in the sacred institutions of their ancestors: By embracing the faith of the Gospel, the Christians had incurred the supposed guilt of an unnatural and unpardonable offence. They dissolved the sacred ties of custom and education, violated the religious institutions of their country, and presumptuously despised whatever their fathers had believed as true, or bad reverence as sacred." These are the weak arguments which popery so strenuously urged to maintain its establishment. The validity of which, had our forefathers acknowledged, we had still languished under its yoke; nor ever tasted the sweets of our glorious liberty in church and state. No wonder after this, that Mr. G. should speak of impossibility, that "circumstances could authorize religious persecutions by the most specious arguments of political justice and public safety." I cannot

* Page 523.

† As our author, with a view to prejudice Christianity, represents it as necessarily containing something very criminal, that it could compel the polite and humane people of Rome to persecute those who professed it, I shall obviate any such suspicion in the words of Moheim.

"Qui hodie Christianæ religionis divinitatem oppugnans, uti avide captant omnia quæ suspiciones aliquid gignere in mentibus imperatorum possunt: ita etiam Romanorum erga Christianos odium adhibent ad invidiam religiones Christianæ creandam. Sapientissimus, aiunt, qui post orbem conditum fuit, populus,
I cannot help observing that unfeelingness which Mr. G. shews, though not without the greatest inconsistency, whenever he has occasion to speak of the sufferings of the persecuted Christians. That we may be more convinced of this, I have collected his sentiments on the subject dispersed through his work.

Though he himself admits the scandalous accusations raised against the Christians to be unjust and malicious; yet he enlarges on the topic with an apparent pleasure; and talks, with satisfaction, of their "deserved infamy, and just punishment." Unmoved with compassion, he relates the horrid persecutions raised against the Christians in obedience to the popular clamours, which "doomed them to the severest tortures." Yet our author, unknowing how to feel for Christian woe, "applauds the humanity of the Roman magistrates, and the excessive lenity of the governors, who, usually, were inclined to gratify the inclinations of a licentious people, by whom the voice of compassion was not heard; and to appease the rage of an exasperated populace, by the sacrifice of a few obnoxious victims." Thee obnoxious victims were the Christians; obnoxious, because "they abhorred the false gods of mankind," (that is, the idols of Rome) "and by their ab-


* Page 526—529. † Page 533, 534.
"fence and melancholy on these solemn festivals, "seemed to insult or lament the public felicity.*"

These he elsewhere calls "elegant ceremonies "and innocent devotion †:" While every one, the least versed in pagan mythology, cannot be ignorant of their profane ceremonies and obscene devotion; and even Mr. G. acknowledges, that "they "contributed to extinguish humanity."

What a medley of inconsistent reflections have we here in the very words of our author? How hostile a disposition does he discover to Christianity? What feeling person but must express astonishment, to find such cruel proceedings dignified with the title of humanity?

I might insist on the impropriety, nay fallacy of his expression, that "the Christian religion grew up "in silence and obscurity ‡." This is by no means consonant to the received opinion of mankind, both Jews and Gentiles. It is certain, on the contrary, that this religion made every possible noise in the world that its nature would admit of. We see the whole nation of the Jews in commotion in its infant state, and the Gentile powers shortly after united against it. So that we may say, in the words of the royal Psalmist, which probably were dictated by inspiration, with a prophetic and secondary view to this great event: "The kings of "the earth set themselves, and the rulers take "counsel together, against the Lord, and against "his anointed §."


See Dr. Horne's comment on this psalm; and Bishop Atterbury's Sermon I. vol. iii. "This thing was not done in a corner." See also Sermon III. IV. vol. i.

I could
I could oppose his assertion, that "The obligation of preaching to the Gentiles the faith of Moses, had never been inculcated as a precept of the law; and that the Jews were not inclined to impose it on themselves as a voluntary duty," with the sentiment of the learned Le Clerc, who says, that "the Jews strained every nerve of their ingenuity to recall the heathen from idolatry.”

Besides, our Saviour’s speech to the Pharisees, "Ye compass sea and land to make one profite," must surely overthrow this sentiment of Mr. G’s. And we may ask, how it happened, that they ever had any profest, if this mode of conversion was neglected? For what reason likewise, were the several laws enacted by God, respecting the stranger and profvae, if he and his people were so indifferent, as Mr. G. represents them, with respect to admitting the Gentiles into covenant with him? Yet it cannot be denied, that the whole Mosaic law abounds with such precepts. We may, therefore, safely conclude, that the “Jews did really preach the faith of Moses to the Gentiles,” in hopes of converting them.

I might justly censure our author’s having absolutely condemned the passage of Josephus, respecting our Saviour, as "an example of no vulgar forgery;” because many learned and judicious

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* Page 453.
+ "Cum is effet gentis Judaice status, multa poterant Ju- daei o jici ab Ethniciis, quibus ægræ respondebant; unde finé dubio fierat, ut paciores multo profestas ad se adjicerent possint. licet omnes ingenii nervos ad Ethnicos ab idolatria revocandas intendent." Le Clerc, Prolegomen. c. vi. § 1.
+ St. Matt. xxiii. 15.
§ Note 35. c. xvi.
persons acknowledge its authenticity*. And though we should allow it to be an interpolation, in compliance to the judgment of some great critics; yet the ingenious and able Bullet has assigned very sufficient reasons, which might have induced Josephus not to mention this well-known fact†; and

* See what may be advanced in favour of this passage, set forth in a learned and ingenious manner, in a late publication entitled "Vindicia Flaviana."

† The original is written in French; I have extracted the translation of the particular passage.

"This historian (Josephus) either believed, that the whole account of Jesus's disciples, concerning their master, was false, or he believed that it was true. In the first case, he would not have been silent. Everything led him to speak on such an occasion; the interest of truth; zeal for his religion, the foundations of which the Christians tapped by their impostures; love of his countrymen, whom the disciples of Jesus accused of having put to death, by a malignant and cruel jealousy, the Messiah, the Son of God. By detecting the imposture of the apostles, Josephus would have covered the enemies of his people with confusion, rendered himself agreeable to his countrymen, conciliated the favour of the emperors, who would fain have stifled Christianity in its birth. He would have engaged the applause of all those who held this religion in abhorrence, and undeceived those very Christians, whom the first disciples of Jesus had deluded. Now, is it possible to believe, that a man, well acquainted with a cheat, which it is so much his interest to publish, should be so scrupulously and profoundly silent upon it, especially when so natural an occasion offered itself to mention it? If false miracles should be vented among the people, tending to unsettle their faith, with what zeal would our writers labour to detect the imposture, and to prevent their seduction? Would they not think, and with good reason, that silence on such an occasion was a criminal prevarication? It seems evident, therefore, that, if Josephus believed, that what the apostles said of their master was false, he would have taken care to make it known. If he did not believe it to be false, he believed it to be true. And it was nothing, but the fear of displeasing his own nation, the Romans, and the emperor, that stilled his
and has thereby proved, that no disadvantage can
refute to Christianity from his having passed it over
in silence.

I might urge, on the authority of the learned
Lardner, the improbability, if not impossibility, that
the Christians, as being called Galileans, could be
confounded with "the sect of the Gaulonites."* Our
author's intention in confounding them was
manifestly to asperse the character of the first
Christians, by supposing them so criminal as to be
capable of being mistaken for "the new and perni-
cious sect of the Gaulonites."

I might observe, that as the Spanish inscription
in Gruter, is not so universally granted to be false
as Mr. G. intimates†; it stands as a proof, that
Nero's persecution of the Christians spread itself
from Rome into the provinces, and was authorized
by public edicts ‡.

I might say, with good reason, that Dr. Lard-
ner's suspicions of bigotry in Pliny's conduct,
seem well grounded §; though our author has
censured them ℓ.

"mouth: In which case, his silence is as good as his testimony,
"and equally serves to authenticate the truth of the fact: upon
"which Christianity is founded." History of the Establishment
of Christianity.

* Note 42. c. xvi. Gruter, p. 238. No. 9.

† Dr. Lardner, though he allows the inscription to have been
esteemed as false by some persons, and nor without probable rea-
sons; yet seems to argue the point with great desire to establish
its authenticity: And asserts, on the authority of Tertullian,
Laetantius, and Sulpicius Severus, the univer-
fality of Nero's persecution, in the words I have quoted from him. Vol. i.
§ Vol. ii. c. ix. Testimonies, p. 45; 46.
Ⅳ Note 56. c. xvi.

M 4 I might
I might justify Mosheim in his refinement, as Mr. G. is pleased to style it*, on the worship of Alexander Severus, by conclusive arguments†.

I might assert, that our author, by adhering too strictly to the sentiment of Dodwell, has greatly diminished the real number of martyrs: The candid Mosheim seems to fix the proper boundary between legendary fiction and sceptical diffidence‡.

I might ask, on what authority our author informs us, that “both Dr. Burnet and Mr. Moyle were unacquainted with the passage in Chrysostom,” which he quotes §? This I know, that Burnet||; and, if I remember right, Moyle likewise, refers to it. I am, therefore, more inclined to think that Mr. G. is only acquainted with the passage in Chrysostom from their reference and quotation; which suspicion receives a great degree of probability, from his having made such a gross blunder, in quoting one edition of Chrysostom, while his references answer to another.

* Note 115. c. xvi.
‡ I shall briefly extract the particular passage.
|| Burnet’s Travels into Italy;
I might ask, in what respect Christianity had corrupted the purity of Roman manners?

This system of love and benevolence (which even Mr. G. allows it to be) might indeed have humanized the brutal ferocity which distinguished the purity of Roman manners; and might have taught the heart of Decius to pity and redress the cruel treatment of the Christians.

But why is it more reasonable to believe, that "Decius, in the prosecution of his general design "to restore the purity of Roman manners, was de-" sirous of delivering the empire from what he con-" demned as a recent and criminal superstition;" than to believe "that he was actuated by a mean "sentiment against the favourites of his prede-" cessor*?" Surely, if "his virtues will scarcely "allow us to suspect" the latter; his being actuated by the former motive, will bring his virtues themselves into suspicion.

I could prove, that Mr. G., like Rousseau, one of his famous predecessors in infidelity, while he hypocritically launches out in the praise of revelation, and affects to treat it with reverence and esteem; really endeavours to expose and place it in a ridiculous light. For he represents it as springing up at a time when "the weakness of polytheism, being fully exposed and exploded by the scepticism of the pagans;" "the fall of this "system of mythology would probably have been "succeeded by the introduction of some other mode of "superstition:—if, in the decisive moment, the "wisdom of Providence had not interposed a ge-"nuine revelation, fitted to inspire the most ra-"tional esteem and conviction; whilst, at the same "time, it was adorned with all that could attract
the attention, the wonder, and the veneration of the people."

From the words of Mr. G. one would think, that the mode of Christian superstition casually sprung up in a lucky moment, and succeeded of course to the drooping mythology of paganism; and that the essence of Christianity consisted in the performance of numerous rites and ceremonies in superb temples, to attract the wonder of the gazing crowd.

Observe also, with what impious disrespect he speaks of the Mosaic law: "The law of Moses might be for the most part frivolous or absurd."

Though I entirely agree with our author that the conquests of Rome prepared and facilitated those of Christianity; yet I might easily confute his assertion, that the Christian missionaries did not encounter any of the obstacles which

* Page 502—505. † Page 523. ‡ Page 505.

The Christian may hence learn to admire and adore the all-seeing and all-powerful ways of Providence: that God should thus employ the secondary means of weak men, without their intent, to facilitate the progress of his religion. Our elegant historian, Dr. Robertson, has described, in most nervous and graceful language, the manner in which the union and tranquillity of the Roman empire conduced to the rapid progress of Christianity. "The noblest people," says he, "that ever entered upon the stage of the world, appear to have been only instruments in the divine hand, for the execution of wise purposes, concealed from themselves. The Roman ambition and bravery paved the way, and prepared the world for, the reception of the Christian doctrine. They fought and conquered, that it might triumph with the greater ease. Howbeit they meant not so, neither did their hearts think so: But it was in their hearts to destroy and cut off nations not a few. Isaiah x. 7."

See his Sermon "On the Situation of the World at Christ's Appearance, p. 13, &c."
"usually retard or prevent the introduction of a foreign religion into a distant country." He talks of the great service of the Roman highways, as opening an easy passage for the propagators of Christianity; as if the inconveniences and impediments of travelling were the only obstacles they had to surmount. And yet he himself relates those dreadful persecutions which must cause other breasts to heave with the commiserating sigh; and speaks of such severe punishments which they suffered, that from other eyes must draw the sympathetic tear.

I might refute his whole plan of accounting for "the rise and progress of Christianity from secondary causes," in the words of another eminent writer, whose conversion does as much honour to Christianity, as his candid avowal of it does to his heart. "The propagation of this religion," says he, "was not less extraordinary, than the religion itself; nor less above the reach of all human power, than the discovery of it was above that of all human understanding.*"

I might expatiate at large on each of these, and on several other topics; but my reader will, I hope, excuse my having thus cursorily mentioned them; it not being my object, in this examination, to attack our author upon his principles, but to convict him of unfairness in his method of supporting them.

If, in spite of the numerous instances of misquotation and inaccuracy, which I have produced, it be possible for any one still to credit the boast of Mr. Gibbon, that he has consulted all the original materials; to put the matter beyond all doubt, I proceed now to shew within how narrow a circle

* Mr. Spame Jevyns.—Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion, p. 19., and 104.
his erudition, however pompously displayed, is confined. This will be easily done, by laying before my reader, extracts from a few modern writers; from which it will appear evident, even to a demonstration, that our historian has not only the same chain of thoughts, but often that his very expressions are borrowed: And a single glance of the eye will convince us, that his pompous quotations of the Fathers, and other learned authors of antiquity, are but transcribed from the marginal references of these writers.

My reader may, perhaps, be surprised that I should mention a similarity of thoughts as a proof of plagiarism: But if we consider that Mr. G.'s talents shine most conspicuously in the elegance of language, we must naturally imagine, that he would not constantly adopt the very words of the author, as he could so easily set off the sentiments in new and more graceful expressions, which would, at the same time, serve to disguise the plagiarism. Besides, it being my intent to prove to the Christian world, that our author has, in fact, produced no new objections against our religion, and that his boasted attack is made with arguments and reflections long ago exploded; to convict him of a similarity of sentiment fully answers this purpose.

I proceed now to the proof of my charge; and, for the sake of the English reader, shall begin with Dr. Middleton.

**Instances of Plagiarism.**

When I gave an instance of Mr. G.'s misrepresentation of Irenæus, I promised to inform my read-

- The sentences and expressions which Mr. G. has more closely copied, are distinguished by Italic. To which, if my reader directs his eye, he will be infinitely sensible of the plagiarism.
er how he was betrayed into it: Without consulting the Father, he had contented himself with the representation of Middleton; who was not himself very remarkable for accuracy of quotation, as Dr. Pearce has demonstrated †.

MIDDLETON says, The Words of Mr. Gibbon are,

I.

"Irenæus, however, declares it (the gift of foreign languages was all kinds of languages) to have been indulged to many in his days. But it is very remarkable, that this primitive bishop, who ascribes it so liberally to others, appears to have been in great want of it himself, for the propagation of the Gospel in his own diocese, among the Celtæ or Gauls; where, as Dr. Cave interprets his words, "it was not the least part of his trouble, that he was forced to learn the language of the country, a rude and

† See his two replies to Dr. Middleton's letter to Dr. Waterland.

* P. 475. Our author, in a note, makes an observation with respect to these words of Middleton, though he is far from acknowledging that he borrowed any thought from him; hoping, no doubt, by this indirect method, to which he frequently has recourse, to evade the accusation of being a plagiary.

His words are, "Dr. Middleton (Free Inquiry, p. 96, &c.) observes, that as this pretension of all others was the most difficult to support by art, it was the soonest given up. The observation suits his hypothesis." Note 72. c. xv. "bar."
"barbarous dialeft, before he could do any good upon them.""

MIDDLETON.

"As to the first, and principal indeed of all miracles, that of raising the dead; it was frequently performed, as Irenæus affirms, on necessary occasions; and men, so raised, had lived afterwards among them many years, &c." Irenæus, l. ii. 56 *.

In the very same age, when one Autolycus, an eminent heathen, challenged his friend Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, a convert and champion of the Gospel, to shew him but one person who bad

GIBBON.

"In the days of Irenæus, about the end of the second century, the resurrection of the dead was very far from being esteemed an uncommon event; that the miracle was frequently performed on necessary occasions, by great fasting, and the joint supplication of the church of the place, and the persons thus restored to their prayers, had lived afterwards among them many years." Irenæus, l. ii. 56, 57. l. v. c. 6.

At such a period, when faith

† Vol. i. p. 245. 246. 8vo edit.

* I here mean to point out to my reader the false grounds on which Dr. Middleton, and his servile transcriber Mr. Gibbon, build this presumptuous assertion. The words of Irenæus do not give them authority to say that, in his days, the resurrection of the dead was frequently performed on necessary occasions. The Father speaks of this, and other miracles, as having been done in times past. Our author, in thus taking for granted the assertion of Middleton, has been as greatly deceived, as the credulous traveller who pursues an Ignis Fatuus as his guide. But I need not enlarge on this matter, for the fallacious argument of the Free-Inquirer has been long ago totally refuted and exploded, by Dr. Jortin, in his "Remarks on Ecclesiastical History," vol. ii. p. 14, &c. And by Dr. Douglas in his Criterion, p. 374, &c.

‡ Note 75. c. xv.
 faithful could boast of so many wonderful victories over death, it seems difficult to account for the scepticism of those philosophers, who still rejected and derided the doctrine of the resurrection. *A noble Grecean* had rested on this important ground the whole controversy, and promised Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, that if he could be gratified with the sight of a single person, who had been actually raised from the dead, he would immediately embrace the Christian religion. It is somewhat remarkable, that the prelate of the first eastern church, however anxious for the conversion of his friend, thought proper to decline this fair and reasonable challenge †. Theophilus ad Autolycum, lib. ii. p. 77 ‡.

Mr. Dodwell, however, from this single authority of Irenæus affirms the miraculous powers of the second century to be superior even to those of the first. Dissert. ii. in Iren. § 42. p. 165."
"The whole system of pagan idolatry was believed by the Fathers to have been managed by the craft and agency of dæmons,—for the sake of deluding and destroying mankind. They imagined them to assume the names, and to act the parts of, the heathen gods: Vagrant jugglers imposed the tricks of their art as the effects of supernatural power, on a multitude already persuaded that they lived on magic ground, exposed at every step to snares and charms, contrived by malicious spirits perpetually haunting them*, &c.

The most curious, or the most credulous, among the pagans, were often persuaded to enter into a society which asserted an actual claim of miraculous powers. The primitive Christians perpetually trod on mystic ground, and their minds were exercised by the habits of believing the most extraordinary events. They felt, or they fancied, that on every side they were incessantly assaulted by dæmons, comforted by visions, &c.

"When pious Christians are arrived to this pitch

"It was the universal sentiment, both of the church and of heretics, that the dæmons were the authors, the patrons, and the objects of idolatry. That they were still permitted to roam upon earth, to torment the bodies, and to seduce the minds of sinful men; that they had distributed among themselves the most important characters of polytheism, one daemon assuming the name and attributes of Jupiter, another of Aesculapius, &c. § The most curious, or the most credulous, among the pagans, were often persuaded to enter into a society which asserted an actual claim of miraculous powers. The primitive Christians perpetually trod on mystic ground, and their minds were exercised by the habits of believing the most extraordinary events. They felt, or they fancied, that on every side they were incessantly assaulted by dæmons, comforted by visions, &c.

* Page 194. § Page 463. • Page 195.
pitch of credulity,—their very piety will oblige them to admit as miraculous whatever is pretended to be wrought in defence of the Gospel, and so make them of course the implicit dupes of their own wonder-workers.*

They so frequently believed themselves to be the objects, the instruments, or the spectators, very happily disposed them to adopt with the same ease, but with far greater justice, the authentic wonders of the evangelical history, &c.”†

IV.

"Justin, Martyr frequently appeals to what every one might see with his own eyes, in every part of the world, and particularly in Rome, in the case of persons possessed with devils, who were cured and set free, and the devils themselves baffled and driven away by the Christians adjuring or exorcising them in the name of Jesus, when all other exorcists and enchanters had tried in vain to help them.‡

Tertullian challenges the heathen magistrates to call before their tribunals, any person possessed

* Page 195.
† Page 473.
‡ Page 131.
Middleton.

fee'd with a devil: and if the evil spirit, when exorcised by any Christian whatsoever, did not own himself to be a devil, as truly, as in other places, he would falsely call himself a god, not daring to tell a lie to a Christian, that then they should take the life of that Christian: and what is more manifest, adds he, than this operation; what more convincing than this proof? Apolog. c. 23."

Gibbon.

to confess that he was one of the fabled gods of antiquity, who had impiously usurped the adoration of mankind.†

Tertullian throws out a bold defiance to the pagan magistrates‡. And again, Tertullian alleges the confession of the demons themselves as often as they were tormented by the exorcists §. Apolog. c. 23."

V. "Irenæus affirms likewise the doctrine of the Millennium, in the grossest sense of it, &c. — Papias, a disciple of St. John, and companion of Polycarp, an ancient man, testifies, &c. || Irenæus, l. v. p. 455.

Irenæus then proceeds to confirm this doctrine by the testimonies of the prophets,

"One of the grossest images, respecting the Millennium, may be found in Irenæus, the disciple of Papias, who had seen the apostle St. John. Irenæus, l. v. p. 455."

Most of these pictures were borrowed from a misrepresentation of Isaiah, Daniel,

- Page 133.
† Note 74. c. xv.
|| Page 169.

† Page 475.
§ Note 38. c. 15.
prophets, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the Revelations of St. John, &c. Justin declares, that all the Christians, who were in all points orthodox, embraced and believed the doctrine of the Millennium;—and was followed in it by the Fathers of the second and third centuries: Yet the doctrine itself was afterwards exploded, as it well deserved, not only as absurd and monstrous, but as impious and heretical. Justin. Dial. par. ii. p. 315.

In all which, these two Fathers, whose principles I have been illustrating, were implicitly followed, for a century or two at least, by all their successors.

VI.

Mr. G. finds a passage extracted from Tertullian by Middleton, which he does not hesitate to translate and put in his text.

* Note 62. c. xv.  † Page 155.  ‡ Page 179.  § Page 471.
† Note 63. c. xv.  

N 2  "§"
MIDDLETON.

"Si Tiberis ascendit ad mania; si Nilus non ascendet in arva; si caelum stet; terra movit; si fames; si lux; sit, Christianos ad Leonem." Tertull. Apol. 40."

GIBBON.

"If the empire had been afflicted by any recent calamity, by a plague, a famine, or an unsuccessful war; if the Tiber had, or if the Nile had not, risen beyond its banks; if the earth had been broken, or if the temperate order of the seasons had been interrupted, &c. Tertull. Apol. 40."

VII.

"The divine censure does not cease to chastise us, neither by night, nor by day; for, besides nightly visions, even boys among us are filled with the Holy Ghost."

See also his words, that "the power of working miracles, was upon their pretended revival, committed not to the bishops, the martyrs, &c. but to boys, to women, and to private and obscure laymen."

"In one of the dialogues, commonly ascribed to Lucian, the Christians seem to be ridic-

"When their devout minds were sufficiently prepared by a course of prayer, of fasting, and of

• See p. 326, 327. 
† P. 542. note 60. c, xvi. 
§ P. 475. 
¶ Page 146.
MIDDLETON.

"ridiculed, on account
of their fasting, and
watching whole nights
in hymns and prayers,
as if they could infuse,
by that means, what
sort of dreams or vi-
fions they " thought
" fit."

Athenagoras expressly
says, "that while they were
under the divine im-
pulse, they were trans-
ported out of their senses, and delivered in ecstasy
what was inspired, being mere organs of the
" holy spirit, just as a pipe or flute is of him
" who blows into it." Athenagoras Legat. pro
Christ. §"

GIBBON.

"of vigils, to receive the
extraordinary impulse,
they were transported out
of their senses, and deli-
vered in ecstasy what
was inspired, being
mere organs of the holy
spirit, just as a pipe or
flute is of him who blows
into it. Athenagoras in
Legatione †."

Besides this we have the following remarkable
coincidence of reference:

Middleton says, at this place, "Justin Martyr
speaks of them in the same strain, &c. Cobort.
ad Gent.—" Tertullian also," &c. Adv. Mar-
cion. l. iv.

These quotations Gibbon has accurately transcrib-
ed into his note 78. c. xv. "Justin Martyr, co-
" bort. ad Gentes. Tertullian, adv. Marcion.
" l. iv."

Now what shall we say? Is it probable, I may
add is it possible, that two persons could translate
the original Greek so as to answer verbatim et literatim in this manner? It is obvious that the above passage was extracted by Mr. G. from Middleton; there is not a single reference but he affords it to him. And though our author does make an observation on Cicero, in a note on this place, we need only turn back a few pages in Middleton, and there we meet with the same thought, and the same reference.

**Middleton.**

"From these testimonies we may collect, that the prophecy of the primitive church by vision or ecstasy, was of the same kind, as to its outward appearance, with that divination by fury, as it was called among the Gentiles, &c. of which Cicero says, in way of raillery, "what authority can "that madness have, which you call divine," &c.

**Gibbon.**

"These descriptions are not very unlike "the prophetic fury, for "which Cicero expresses "so little reverence." De Divin. ii. 54.

**VIII.**

It was highly incumbent on Mr. Gibbon to say, that "the learning of Dodwell, and the ingenuity "of Middleton, have left scarcely any thing to "add concerning the merit, the honours, and the "motives of the martyrs." For if we compare these authors together, we shall find that Mr. G. has not advanced a single thought of his own on

† P. 323, 224.  * Note 73. c. xv. † Note 89. c. xvi.

IX.

MIDDLETON.

Middleton speaks of Cyprian's heavenly visions, of his flight and retreat from persecution; that it gave great scandal, especially to some, as appears by the epistle of the clergy of Rome, on this occasion, to the clergy of Carthage; and that it is no wonder to find Cyprian and his apologist Pontius so solicitous to excuse it *.

"Dionyfius, bishop of Alexandria," says he, "has said, that in the time of persecution, he was commanded by God in a vision to retire from Alexandria, and was wonderfully preferred by him in his retreat †." Cyprian. Epist. 2. 9. Hist. Eccles. l. vi. c. 40.

Gibbon says, "Prudence suggested the necessity of a temporary retreat to Cyprian; that his extreme caution did not escape the censure of the more rigid Christians;" and appeals to the polite, but severe, epistle of the clergy of Rome to the bishop of Carthage."

He says also, that Pontius labours with the greatest care and diligence, to justify his master against the general censure ‡. Cyprian. Epist. 8, 9.

Mr. G. says, that "the example of several holy bishops, and the divine admonitions which, as Cyprian declares himself, he frequently received in visions and ecstasies, were the reasons alleged

* Page 227. † Page 230. ‡ Note 76. c. xvi.
in his justification *." He appeals, in a note, to the
examples of Dionysius of Alexandria, and Gregory
Thaumaturgus of Neo Cæsarea §. Euseb. Hist.
Eccl. l. vi. c. 40, &c.

X.

Compare what M. says on the Galileans, page
§32,—and what G. says of them, p. 536, 537.

XI.

MIDDLETON.  GIBBON.

M. says, "None of these venerable saints
have any where affirmed, that they themselves were
endued with any power
of working miracles," &c. †

XII.

Middleton speaking of the Sibylian books, says, "These forged
books are frequently cited and applied to
the defence of Chri-
stianity, by the most
eminent Fathers, as
true and genuine
pieces, and of equal au-
thority with the Scrip-
tures themselves:**

* Page 547.  § Note 77. c. xvi.
† See page 443.  † See p. 477. note 79. c. xiv.
§§ Page 74.  || Page 517.

Compare
Compare also p. 153, 157.—with note 191.
c. xv.

XIII.

See what M. says of the cure of the emperor Severus by holy oil, &c. Tertullian. ad Scapulam, c. 4. And what G. says of healing the sick by the use of oil, and of this cure by Præculus. Mr. G. also appeals to the epistle of Tertullian to Scapula.

XIV.

Compare what is said by Dr. M. of the Christians challenging the miraculous powers maintained in the heathen world, p. 201, 202.—and what our author says of the supernatural powers assumed by the church, p. 565. See also his notes 137, 138. c. xvi. of the cures performed at the shrine of Aesculapius.

XV.

Examine what M. says of the progress of the Gospel among the vulgar, and its gaining some few of rank, &c. p. 324, 325. Also what G. says of the reception it met with among the higher class of people, &c. p. 513—517.

Compare M.'s remark on the words of Suetonius at this place, and his reference to Sueron. in Ner. c. 16.—with the similar remark of G., p. 534. and quotation of Sueton. in Nerone, c. 16. See note 34. c. xvi.

* Page 203.  † Page 557.
† Note 107. c. xvi.

XVI. Mid.
MIDDLETON.

Translates Tacitus, as saying, that "the Chriftians were condemned not so much for their supposed crime of setting fire to the city, as for their hatred of all mankind: and though they deserved the most exemplary punishment," &c. Taciti Annales xv. 44. *

GIBBON.

Observe the similarity in G.'s translation, of the same passage, "Their guilt deserved the most exemplary punishment; they were convicted not so much for the crime of setting fire to the city, as for their hatred of human-kind." Tacit.† annal, xv. 44.

XVII.

See what is said by Dr. M. on Pliny and his conduct, p. 325. where he cites Plin. Ep. x. 97. —Compare with this our author's words and reference, p. 540. Plin. Ep. x. 97. ‡

XVIII.

Compare what is said in the Free Inquiry, p. 326, 327.—and what we meet with in G. p. 513. 528.


XIX.

See the observation of M. on Tertullian, respecting flight in persecution, p. 344.—and the note of G. on this occasion, note 99. c. xvi.

* Page 324, 325. † Page 533, 534. ‡ Note 56. c. xvi.

XX. Compare
(183)

XX.

Compare what is said of the Asçetics, in Middleton's preface, p. 20.—with what G. says of their origin, &c. p. 485. and note 97. c. xv.

XXI.

MIDDLETON.

See the remarks of this author on the period to which miracles are to be extended*. That each succeeding age furnishes miracles and witnesses," &c. that one "supplies a venerable Bede, whose very name carries authority," &c. †

GIBBON.

Observe what G. says of this period, that "every age bears testimony to wonderful events, &c. till we are led on to accuse our own inconstancy, if we deny to the venerable Bede, or to the holy Bernard, the same degree of confidence we had so liberally granted to Justin and Irenæus."

XXII.

Compare the remark of Middleton on Lucian. de Mort. Peregrin. p. 144,—and the words of G. p. 481. and note 84. c. xv.

XXIII.

Observe the remark on the Epistles of Ignatius, Middleton, p. 125, 126. and note 1.—and what Gibbon says of them, p. 552. note 92. c. xvi.

† Page 71. ibid. See also vol. ii. p. 59.

XXIV.
See where Mr. largely dwells on the purity of the first ages, p. 74. 76. 79. 80.—See at the same time what G. says of the virgin purity of the church, &c. p. 461. 477. 564.

XXV.

MIDDLETON.

Middleton says of the reproach of Celsus; "These artful pretend-ers, by intruding themselves chiefly in private houses, or among the ignorant populace, had been able to maintain their ground," &c. p. 79.

And again, "Celsus," says he, "represents all the Christian wonder-workers as mere vagabonds and common cheats, who rambled about to play their tricks at fairs and markets, not in circles of the wiser and better sort, for among such they never ventured to appear; but where ever they observed a set of raw young fellows, slaves or fools, there they took care to intrude themselves, and display all their arts. Cecilius,

† Orig. con. Cels. l. 1. p. 8, 9. † Page 514.
also calls them a lurking nation, shunning the "light, mute in public, prating in corners"."

Having given such evident proofs of our author's being greatly indebted to the Free Inquiry of Dr. Middleton, we must surely allow, that it was just and grateful in him to speak handsomely of that treatise. But it would have been still more just and grateful in him, if he had acknowledged where he had borrowed from him. He has, indeed, sometimes mentioned the name of Middleton; once or twice with an additional remark; but he has never directly owned the assistance he has received from him. We may, however, rest satisfied, that Christianity has little to fear from this fresh attack on miracles, when its foe, being stripped of his glittering armour, appears to wield only such weapons as have been already blunted and shattered against its repelling shield.

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Instances of Plagiarism from Barbeyrac.

As our author found the Free Inquiry of Middleton very useful to him on the subject of miracles, so, with regard to the morality of the Fathers, Barbeyrac's treatise has proved a source of information.

* Page 144.

1 Mr. G. says, (p. 476.) "The miracles of the primitive church, after obtaining the sanction of ages, have been lately attacked in a very free and ingenious inquiry, which though it has met with the most favourable reception from the public, appears to have excited a general scandal among the divines of our own, as well as of the other Protestant churches of Europe."
mation equally fruitful; and, as Barbeyrac has drawn rather a dark and dismal picture of the earliest Christian writers, by selecting and exposing their blemishes; to copy his remarks, in preference to those of other writers less prejudiced on the subject, admirably suited the purpose of Mr. Gibbon.

He has indeed, with great propriety, given us a general reference or two to the treatise De la Morale des Péres; but as the particular passages which he has servilely extracted from that work are very numerous, it would have been too humiliating a task to have required of our diligent and accurate historian, who consults only original materials, an exact and faithful acknowledgment of all his obligations to the Dutch professor.

I shall introduce the following extracts by observing, that Barbeyrac thus speaks of the origin of the mistaken notions of the Fathers, with regard to the unlawfulness of pleasure; and that our author discovers the same source for their opinions on this subject.

I.

Barbevray.

"Remontons à la première origine de toutes ces fausses idées.—On se figurait les plaisirs les plus naturels, comme ayant quelque chose de mauvais en eux-mêmes; et la permission, que Dieu donnait de les goûter, comme une

Gibbon.

Our devout predecessors, vainly aspiring to imitate the perfections of angels, disdained, or affected to disdain, every earthly and corporeal delight.

The first sensation of pleasure was marked as the
Barbevraç.

une espèce de tolérance, & d'indulgence, à laquelle l'infirmité humaine l'avoit forcée en quelque manière pour éviter un plus grand mal.*

"De là est née la vie monastique : de là tant d'austerité & de mortifications inutiles : de là ces vœux de Célibat, si témérairement formez, & qui, étant mal gardez, ont produit tant des déorders," &c. ||

Gibbon.

the first moment of their abuse †.

"Such are the early traces of monastic principles and institutions, which, in a subsequent age, have counter-balanced all the temporal advantages of Christianity ‡."

II.

"Les Péres vouloient faire entendre que les secondes & troisièmes noces ne pouvoient plus avoir une véritable ressemblance au mariage de Jésus-Christ avec son Eglise, qui est le grand modèle des mariages Chrétiens.

Que le noyau du mariage soit indissoluble,—le droit canon n'excepte pas même le cas d'adultère, &c.§

* C. iv. sect. 34. 4to edit. Amsterdam, 1728.
† Page 483. || Sect. 35. † Page 485.
§ Sect. 36. See also sect. 10. ** Page 484, 485.
Barbeyrac. "Chacun de nous," dit Athenagoras, (Legat. cap. 28,) "ou demeure tel qu'il est venu au monde, ou ne se marie qu'une fois. Car les secondes noces sont une honte. Nête adultere."

I

Gibbon. "The practice of second nuptials was branded with the name of legal adultery."

II

"Athenagoras pretend ailleurs que le célibat unit d'avantage les hommes avec Dieu." Si cela est, comme chacun doit ne rien négliger de ce qui peut entrer ou augmenter l'union avec Dieu, chacun devra aussy aspirer au célibat.

III

IV

"Since desire was imputed as a crime, and marriage was tolerated as a defect, it was consistent with the same principles to consider a state of celibacy as the nearest approach to the divine perfection."

IV

"Since desire was imputed as a crime, and marriage was tolerated as a defect, it was consistent with the same principles to consider a state of celibacy as the nearest approach to the divine perfection."

§ Page 48. Mr. G. in a note (91. c. xv.) on this place says, "See a chain of tradition from Justin Martyr to Jerome, in the Morale des Peres, c. iv. 6—26." Yet willing to make his reader believe that he had himself consulted the original authors, he transcribes the references of Barbeyrac in the notes which he subjoins: Thus, for a proof of his assertion that "the primitive church was filled with a great number of persons of either sex, who had devoted themselves to the profession of perpetual chastity," he quotes, at note 93. c. xv. "Athenagoras in Legat. c. 28. Minucius Felix, c. 31. and Justin," &c.—In such a general reflection they must all agree, but this particular part of Athenagoras and of Minucius Felix would have been more pertinently quoted at note 91. or 89, 90. c. xv. where Mr. G. introduces the subject on which Barbeyrac has quoted them. But our author has altered the arrangement, lest we should discover that he has transcribed these references from the Morale des Peres.
Barbevrae.

"Minucius Felix dit, qu'" un Chrétien ou ne se "marie jamais, ou ne se "marie qu'une fois."

Part of his note on this passage is,

"Cupiditatem pro-
creandi aut unam sici-
mus, aut nullam." c. 31.

Gibbon.

"The primitive church was filled with a great number of persons of either sex, who had devoted themselves to the profession of perpetual chastity."

His note is,

"Cupiditatem procre-
andi aut unam scient, aut
nullam." Minucius Felix, c. 31, &c.

VI.

"Le chapitre iv. (de l'ouvrage de CLEVER
បន Alexantric, qui a pour titre le Pédagogue) enseigne, comment on peut se réjouir dans les Fêtes. CLEVER en bannit tout instrument de musique, & toute chanson*," &c.

"Clement commence le ii. (livre) par prescrire la qualité & la quantité des alimens, dont on doit user. — Pour ce qui est de l'usage légitime des alimens & de la Boisson, il le borne si fort à ce que demande la conservation de notre vie, qu'il exclut toute vue de plaisir. — Il met au rang des

* Chap. v. sect. 15. p. 49.
Barbeyrac.
des excés de bouche condamnables, l’usage du pain blanc : c’est, dit-il, "effeminer & tourner un aliment nécessaire en op- probre de volupté *.

"Il blâme sans distinction tous ceux qui font venir des vins agréables de quelque Pays étranger," &c.—"Il passe de là † aux vases, & autres meubles, dont il fait une longue enumeration. Il condamne absolument tout ce qui est d’or, d’argent, ou de quelque autre matière, dont l’emploi n’est pas nécessaire pour les besoins de la vie ‡. " &c.

"Clement règle letens du Sommeil, & la manière dont on doit se coucher §. Il ne veut rien ici de précieux, ni de moû. Il tourne en exemple à imiter par obligation, ce que Jacob rit par nécessité : & il dit, que ce Patriarche fut jugé digne d’une vision céleste, pendant qu’il avait une Pierre pour oreiller ||.”

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Gibbon.
doubtful of his salvation. In their censures of luxury, the Fathers are extremely minute and circumstantial; and among the various articles which excite their pious indignation, we may enumerate false hair, garments of any colour except white, instruments of music, vases of gold or silver, downy pillows (as Jacob repose his head on a stone) white bread, foreign wines, public salutations, the use of warm baths, and the practice of shaving the beard, which, according to the expression of Tertullian, is a lie against our own faces, and an impious attempt to improve the works of the Creator. Tertullian de Spectaculis, c. 23. Clems Alexandrin. Pædagog. l. iii. c. 8.”

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Il condamne ici absolument toute teinture d’Eioffes.—Il n’y a que le Blanc, qui convienne à la candeur du Chretien.—Il defend de porter aucun or, aucunes Perles, aucunes Piereries.

Il continue, à censurer en detail les excès ou les Femmes tombent sur cette article.

De là il vient aux Hommes, & non content de blamer en eux tout ce qui a quelque chose d’effeminé, il va jusqu’à taxer de crime ceux qui se font raser la barbe. Il y trouve même de l’impiété, &c. §—Il revient aux bains, dont il condamne tout usage, point de Bains chauds; parce, dit il, qu’il y a d’autres moiens de se rechauffer.

Il traite de grande impiété l’usage des faux-cheveux, &c. **

Il ne veut pas, que les Chrétiens se saluent en vué, comme si c’etoit une liberté inenée," &c.

It is now plain beyond a doubt, that Mr. G.’s description of the severe morality of the Fathers, is fervilely copied, from what Barbeyrac had extracted from Clemens; though he has cited, and

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* Seft. 18. † Livre iii. c. ii.
‡ Dans le chap. iii.
§ Seft. 20. I before promised to inform my reader whence Mr. G. had borrowed this observation, respecting the impiety of shaving the beard, and I doubt not but he will be satisfied that it was from Barbeyrac; who, as he quotes in this page Tertullian de Spectaculis, c. 23, and is treating of Clemens Alexandrin, l. iii. c. 3. in this particular section, might readily furnish our author with his references to Tertullian de Spectaculis, c. 23. and Clemens Alexandrin. l. iii. c. 8.
|| Chap. ix.
** It is observed, p. 120, 121. that this custom is condemned by Cyprian, and by Tertullian de cultu Femin. c. 6, 7. p. 156, 157.

O 2 would
would persuade us, that he has consulted, "a work of Clemens of Alexandria entitled the Pedagogue," and has made a different arrangement from that in Barbeyrac, in hopes of disguising the plagiarism.

VII.

BARBEYRAC.

"Tertullien condamne absolument tout métier, toute profession, tout commerce qui regarde des choses dont les payens peuvent faire quelque usage pour des actes d'idolatrie; quand même on n'aurait pas d'autre moyen de subsister." Traité de l'Idolatrie, c. 11, 12.

GIBBON.

"It was the first but arduous duty of a Christian to preserve himself pure and undefiled by the practice of idolatry. Every art and every trade that was in the least concerned in the framing or adorning of idols, was polluted by the stain of idolatry." Tertullian de Idolatria, c. 10. &c 11.

VIII.

"Faut il s'étonner, après cela, si Tertullien regarde la vie militaire comme absolument incompatible avec les règles de l'Evangile." §

"Il est vrai qu'il semble (de coron. milit. c. 11.) ailleurs permettre la profession des armes à ceux

* Note 87, c. xx.
† C. vi. 68. 5.
‡ P. 464. and notes 39. 45. c. xv.
§ Ex. 6.
¶ P. 485, 486.
à ceux qui y étaient déjà engagez avant leur bataille.*

"L’Apologie du Christianisme n’en demandait pas davantage, quelle que fût l’opinion de Tertullien. Bien loin de là : s’il eut insinué, que l’Evangile défendait de porter les armes, il aurait lui-même donné lieu aux Païens d’accuser les Chrétiens d’être de mauvais sujets, qui refusèrent d’aller à la guerre, même pour la défense de l’État †.

"Il faut dire la même chose du crime que Tertullien trouva dans plusieurs autres choses, hors de la guerre, comme à orner la porte de sa maison de lampes & de lauriers, dans une réjouissance publique ordonnée.

\* Sect. 8. \* Sect. 7.

† Mr. G. constantly finds some expedient to disguise his plagiarism; thus he does not make this reference immediately after writing the sentence borrowed from Barbeyrac, but in the following one (at note 100.) and makes some addition to the note, to have the honour of calling it his own.


\* xiv. I shall account for this shortly.
Barbeyrac.

La raison, qu'il en donne, est, que les Payens reconnoissoient & adoroient de fausses divinités, ou des démons, comme présidant aux portes & aux porteurs des maisons." De Idolat. c. xv. *

"Il est faux d'ailleurs, que,—après Tertullien, toutes fortes de couronnes, & principalement celles de laurier, contre lesquelles il déclame, eût ent du rapport à l'idolatrie. Quoi que le laurier fût regardé par les Paiens, comme un arbre consacré à Apollon, ou à Bacchus, il n'en suit nullement de là, que, toutes les fois, qu'on mettoit sur sa tête, une couronne de laurier, on la prit en vuë de cette con-secration religieuse †.

* Sect. 11. † Sect. 17. c. vi. This is particularly applied to the soldiers on account of their attendance at these idolatrous ceremonies at sect. 9.

‡ Page 465, 466. § Note 49, c. xv. This

Gibbon.

doors with lamps and with branches of laurel, and to crown their heads with a garland of flowers. This innocent and elegant practice might perhaps have been tolerated as a mere civil institution. But it most unluckily happened, that the doors were under the protection of the household gods, that the laurel was sacred to the lover of Daphne, and that garlands of flowers, though frequently worn either as a symbol of joy or mourning, had been dedicated in their first origin to the service of superstition §.

Tertul. de Idol.

"Tertullian has composed a rash defence, or rather panegyric, of the rash action of a Christian soldier, who, by throwing away his crown of laurel, had exposed himself and his brethren to the most imminent dan-ger §."
Our author, in confirmation of some of these remarks, has cited *Origen contra Celsum* as follows: l. v. p. 253. l. vii. p. 348. l. viii. p. 423—428*.

I appeal to the reader if we can otherwise account for his having pointed out not only the same passages, but even the very same pages, which, we shall see Barbeyrac has done; than by supposing that he has transcribed his references. We shall see also that he is furnished hence with his references to Tertullian.

**Barbeyrac.**  
"C'est ainsi qu'il a toujours regardé la profession militaire, comme interdite aux Chrétiens: il (*Origen*) se déclare là-dessus, de la manière la plus forte, à la fin de son traité *contre CELSE*, où il dit, que "les Chrétiens se contentent de prier DIEU pour l'Em- pereur, mais qu'ils ne portent point les armes pour lui, quand même il voudroit les y con- traindre, lib. viii. p. 427."  
† Il condamne, un

**Gibbon.**  
"It was acknowledged that, under a less perfect law, the powers of the Jewish constitution had been exercised, with the approbation of heaven, by inspired prophets, and by anointed kings. The Christians felt and confessed, that such institutions might be necessary for the present system of the world, and they cheerfully submitted to the authority of their pagan governors. But while they inculcated

* Note 99. c. xv.  
† Ημιθι ὑπὸ μάλλοι, &c.

Laëntianus is cited as corroborating this opinion; *Instit. Divin.* l. vi. c. 20, & seqq. by Barbeyrac c. ix. § 3, and is appealed to by Mr. G. (at Note 86.) *Institut. Divin.* l. vi. c. 20, 2, 22.
Barbeyrac.

un peu plus bas, l'exercice de tout magistrature: & ailleurs il rend raison, à la manière, de la difference qu'il-y-a, selon lui, à cet égard, entre les Juifs, & les Chrétiens. Lib. v. p. 253. lib. vii. p. 348. 349.

"C'est le même système, que Tertullien, & autres Pères, se sont fait ici. Ils croient que les Magistratures, & les guerres, étoient nécessaires, pour l'entretien de la Société Civile, & la defense des peuples. Ainsi ils en tenoient l'usage légitime par rapport aux anciens Juifs, & aux Paeins, mais non pas pour cela par rapport aux Chrétiens, à qui ils s'imagineoient que l'Evangile le défen- doit."

"Tertullien—condamne absolument la recherche &

cated the maxims of passive obedience, they refused to take any active part in the civil administration, or the military defence of the empire.—it was impossible that Christians, without renouncing a more sacred duty, could assume the character of soldiers, of magistrates, or of princes." Tertullian. Apolog c. 21. de Idololatria c. 17, 18.

"Their simplicity was offended by the use of oaths, by the pomp of magistracy, and by the active contention of public life, nor could their humane ignorance be convinced, that it was lawful on any occasion to shed the blood of our fellow creatures either by the sword of justice or by that of war; even though their criminal or hostile attempts should threaten the peace and safety of the whole community."

* Page 486. Tertullian is referred to by Mr. G. in the preceding part of this sentence, note 99, c. xv.

† Page 486. Mr. G. here very concisely says, in a note (98, c. xv.) See the Morale des Pères," &c.

‡ Chap. 7. p. 104. Note 1.
(197)

Barbeyrac.

L'exercice des emplois publics, surtout de ceux qui imposant la nécessité de condamner à mort les criminels. "On demande, (dit Tertullien)" Si un "serviteur de Dieu peut se charger de quelque "dignité, ou de quelque magistrature," &c. * de idol. c. 17. 18.

Barbeyrac then enumerates the almost insurmountable difficulties, as Mr. G. calls them, and proceeds with this remark:

Tertullien met en ce rang non seulement l'obligation de faire serment †, dont il semble condamner entièrement l'usage: mais encore la nécessité de juger dans les cas où il s'agit de la vie ou de l'honneur, de prononcer quelque sentence de condamnation ou de faire des lois qui l'autorisent, d'ordonner qu'on met quelqu'un aux fers, ou en prison, ou à la torture: toutes choses, qu'il suppose par la manifestement être incompatibles avec la qualité de Chrétien ‡.

"Ce Père, dit, que le seul appareil des marques de dignité qui sont attachées aux charges publiques, les doit faire fuir à un Chrétien, comme des choses originellement consacrées à l'idolâtrie: outre qu'on les emploie aussi en l'honneur des idoles §" de Idol. c. 18.

"Il n'y a sujet de s'étonner, que Tertullien ait regardé comme incompatibles, la qualité d'Empereur, & celle de Chrétien‖.

* Sect. 21.
† Sée also c. ii. sect. 5. 15. where Justin is represented as teaching the same doctrine; and c. iii. sect. 6. the same is said of Irenæus.
‡ Sect. 22.
§ Sect. 24.
‖ Sect. 26.
IX.

Barbeyrac.

See what this author says further on the above subject, and his remarks on the apology of Tertullian, respecting the information of Pontius Pilate given to Tiberius, of the unjust death of Jesus, and the conduct of that emperor on the occasion*. I shall extract some of the more striking passages.

"Tibère, selon que l'affure Tertullien, reconnut dans son cœur la divinité de Jésus-Christ, il alla même jusqu'à proposer sa croissance au sénat," &c.

Et n'ayant pu lui persuader de mettre Jésus-Christ au nombre des divinités reconnues par autorité publique, il se réduisit à défendre, sous menaces de son indignation, de dénoncer les Chrétiens pour être punis commes tels."

"Il y a, dit M. Dupin, plusieurs savans, qui

§ Page 556.
Barbeyrac.

qui doutent de la vérité de cette histoire, qui dans le fond à très-peu de vraisemblance. Car quelle apparance, que Pilate écrivit à Tibère ces choses d’un homme qu’il avait condamné à mort ? Et, quand il les lui aurait écrites, est-il vraisemblable que Tibère eût proposé au sénat, de mettre cette homme au nombre des dieux, sur la simple relation d’un gouverneur ? Et s’il l’eût proposé, qui peut douter que le sénat ne se put aussi tôt rendu à son sentiment *?

Gibbon.

edict of Tiberius) “is attended with some difficulties which might perplex a sceptical mind †.”

X.

“The Christian, with pious horror avoided the abomination of the circus, or the theatre §.”

Mr. G. here adds this note:

“See Tertullian, de Spectaculis. This severe reformer shews no more indulgence to a tragedy of Euripides, than to a combat of gladiators. The dress of the

* Sect. 29.

† Page 556. My reader should be told that Mr. G. does not refer to Barbeyrac at this place. I would point out likewise his singular expression, “We are required to believe,” &c. as if this were an article of the Christian faith; and, no doubt, he meant it was sufficiently superstitious to deserve a place in our creed. † Sect. 20. p. 81. § Page 464.
Gibbon.
the actors particularly
offends him; by the use
of the lofty buskin, they
impiously strive to add a
cubit to their stature,
c. 23 †.

Barbeyrac.
"Sic et tragœdios co-
tburnis extulit (diabo-
lus) quia nemo potest ad-
jicere cubitum unum ad
saturam suam. Men-
dacem facere vult
Christmas." De Spec-
taculis, cap. 23 *

XI.
"On peut dire la
mêmes choses de la con-
damnation de la fuite
en temps de perécu-
tion. Tertullien a dé-
veloppé, et poussé de
toute sa force dans de
livre qu'il fit tout exprès
là dessus, étant Monta-
niste, cette opinion ri-
gide et saussë, dont on
voit l'ébauche dans les
ouvrages écrits avant sa
spéulation §," &c.

Tertullian considers
flight from persecution,
as an imperfect, but
very criminal, apostacy,
as an impious attempt to
elude the will of God,
&c. &c. He has writ-
ten a treatise on this
subject, which is filled
with the wildest fanati-
cism, and the most in-
coherent declamation §.

XII.
"Even the common
language of Greece and
Rome abounded with
familiar but impious ex-
pressions, which the im-
prudent Christian might
not

* Note 2.
† Note 41, c. xv.
§ See 31, p. 89.
ǁ Note 99, c. xvi.
Barbeyrac.

vains, qu’autant que nous contribuons par là au culte des idoles. Il permet seulement quelques-uns de ces expressions : mais en même temps il en condamne d’autres, qui ne font pas plus mauvaises.” — pourquoi, en parlant d’Es- culape, d’Isis, de Jupiter, &c. ne pourra-t-on pas les appeler Dieux, sans ajouter auffitôt quelque chose par où l’on déclare expressément qu’on les tient pour faux ? C’est néanmoins ce que Tertullien défend.” — De Idololatr. c. 20, &c.

Gibbon.

too carelessly utter, or too patiently hear †.” Tertullian de Idololatria, c. 20, 21, 22.

“If a pagan friend used the familiar expres- 
sion of “Jupiter bles
“you,” the Christian was obliged to protest against 
the divinity of Jupi-
ter ‡.”

XIII.

“Tertullien rapporte un mot, d’un Procon-
sul d’Asie, qui, las de condamner à mort les 
Chrétien d’une ville de 
la province, qui venoient en foule se déclarer à lui 
ce qu’ils étoient ; après en avoir vouloir quelques-
uns au supplice, dit aux autres : “Ilé malheu-

“reux! si vous voulez 
“tant mourir, n’avez-
“vous

“Unhappy men,” exclaimed the proconsul 
Antoninus to the Chris-
tians of Asia, “unhappy 
“men, if you are thus 
“weary of your lives, is 
“it so difficult for you to 
“find ropes and preci-
pices §.” Tertullian ad 
Scapul. c. 5. ¶.

Compare also what Mr. G. says, of “their impatient zeal, that they

* Sect. 15. p. 78.
† Page 565.
‡ Note 47. c. xix.
§ Page 552.
|| Note 95. c. xvi.
BARBEYRAC.

"vous pas des précipices,
"ou des cordes?" ad Sca-
pul. cap. ult. *

GIBBON.

rushed in crowds round the
tribunal of the magistrates;
and that the proconsul,
having condemned a few,
dismissed the rest."

XIV.

Mr. G. has extended the remarks which Barbeyrac,
in the words of Le Clerc †, makes on the conduct
of Cyprian, to other bishops. Some of the sen-
tences, which bear a great similarity, I have ex-
tracted.

"Cyprien soutient,
qu'il n'y a dans l'Eglise,
qu'un seul Pontiffe, &
qu'un seul Juge, établi
pour un temps en la place
de Jesus Christ. Après
le jugement de Dieu,
ajoute-t-il, après le suf-
frage du peuple, après
le consentiment des
autres évêques, per-
sonne ne se rendroit
juge, je ne dirai pas d'un
évêque, mais de Dieu.
—Notre martyr, irrité
par les schismatiques,
ne se possède presque
pas, dès qu'il tombe
fur cette matière, & ou-
blie

* Sedl. 8. p. 18.
This reference gave our author a fair opportunity of citing Le Clerc.
‡ P. 491, 492.
Gibbon.

"From the imperious declamations of Cyprian, we should naturally conclude, that it was much less dangerous for the disciples of Christ to neglect the observance of the moral duties, than to despise the censures and authority of their bishops. Sometimes we might imagine, that we were listening to the voice of Moses, when he commanded the earth to open and to swallow up, in consuming flames, the rebellious race which refused obedience to the priesthood of Aaron; and we should sometimes suppose that we heard a Roman consul asserting the majesty of the republic, and declaring his inflexible resolution to enforce the rigour of the laws."

See also p. 501, 502.

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Barbeyrac.

blie souvent les règles du bon raisonnement, de même que celles de la bienfaisance, comme lorsqu'il dit dans la même lettre, "Qu'il n'est pas de la dignité ni de la majesté de l'Eglise Catholique, de s'informer de ce que l'audace des hérétiques & des schismatiques entprend."

Un senateur Romain n'aurait pas parlé avec plus de gravité de la Majesté de l'empire; mais il faut avouer que l'humilité & la douceur du Christianisme n'éclatent pas beaucoup dans ces paroles.

—St. Cyprien applique à ceux qui se rebellent contre les évêques, divers passages de l'Ecriture sainte touchant les orgueilleux, & ceux qui s'élevoient contre les Sacrificateurs de l'ancienne loi."

See also c. vii. sect. 4. 8.

* C. viii. sect. 47.

† Page 501.
See what this author says on celibacy, and the disorders that accrue from its being held in esteem, p. 116.

Also his remarks on those women who, professing continency, cohabited with men, yet maintained their chastity to be still unpolluted; and that this custom was forbid by several councils *.

"Quelle prie, surtout, l'orgueil n'a-t-il pas, dans le coeur de gens qui se flattent d'une perfection extraordinaire, par laquelle ils se croient fort élevés au dessus du commun des Chrétiens ? L'esprit de domination fur les confidences, ou le trouve-t-on, si ce n'est chez ces prêtres & ces reclus, qui ont renoncé au mariage?" †

"It was consistent with the same principles to consider a state of celibacy as the nearest approach to the divine perfection.

"The loss of sensual pleasure was supplied and compensated by spiritual pride §."

† P. 118, 119.
‡ Page 485.
§ Page 485.
XVII.

Barbevrac.

Read what this writer says on the toleration of paganism, and the reason he assigns for the Romans having persecuted the Christians; also his reflection on the mutual persecutions of the Christians. See c. xii. p. 191. &c.

experienced from the zeal of infidels.” See p. 519, 520, 523, 585.

Gibbon.

Compare what Mr. G. tells us of the universal toleration of polytheism, and the reasons he assigns for the persecution of the Christians by the Romans; and “the melancholy truth,” he mentions, “that the Christians have inflicted far greater severities on each other, than they had

See what is said on vigils, and their abuse, c. xv. § 20, 21. “Cet abus s’augmenta si fort, que le concile d’Elvire fut obligé de defendre aux femmes d’aller la nuit dans les cimetières,” &c. Canon. 35. See also § 22.

XVIII.

Part of note 22, in the xvith chapter, is, “The 35th canon of the council of Illiberis provides against the scandals which too often polluted the vigils of the church.”

XX.

“Les premiers Chrétiens à la vérité s’assemblaient de nuit; mais c’était par nécessité, à cause des persécutions, qui ne leur permettoient pas de le faire de jour.

Mais, “The precautions with which the disciples of Christ performed the offices of religion, were at first dictated by fear and necessity; but they were continued from choice.

P
Barbeyrac.

Mais, sous les empeureurs Chrétiens, cette coutume, comme plusieurs autres, s'introductit, par une imitation du paganisme, d'où fortoient un grand nombre de Chrétiens." c. xv. p. 258.

Gibbon.

By imitating the awful secrecy which reigned in the Eleusinian mysteries, the Christians had flattered themselves, that they should render their sacred institutions more respectable in the eyes of the pagan world."

p. 527.

XX.

Barbeyrac speaks of the very insipid and strange allegories of the Fathers, c. vii. p. 95.—104. and the pious frauds made use of by them, p. 82.

XXI.

Lastly, I shall point out their similar remarks on the conduct of the holy martyr Ignatius.

"Louons le zéle en lui-même, & contentons nous d'excuser ce qui a eu besoin d'indulgence. Il n'y a pas moyen de regarder autrement ces instances véhémentes que failoit Ignace au Romains, de ne pas travailler, quand il les en prieroit lui-même, à le garantir du supplice, comme si par là ils lui envoyaient la couronne Ignatius composed as he was carried in chains through the cities in Asia, breathe sentiments the most repugnant to the ordinary feelings of human nature. He earnestly beseeches the Romans, that when he should be exposed in the amphitheatre, they would not, by their kind, but
Barbeyrac.

but unreasonable interference, deprive him of the crown of glory; and he declares his resolution to provoke and irritate the wild beasts which might be employed as the instruments of his death †. Epist. ad Romanos, c. 4, 5. ap. Patres Apostol. tom. ii. p. 27.

I have now traced, at a great length, the passages in Barbeyrac from which our author appears to have collected many of his observations; the greater part of them, as we have seen, relate to the morality of the Fathers. But surely his second-hand reflexions can no more impair or vilify their conduct, than his former stale objections to miracles can prejudice the truth of Christianity. It argues indeed no small degree of presumption in Mr. Gibbon, to think that his engaging language will atone for obtruding on the world, as his own, these antiquated cenfures of the Fathers, the severity of many of which can be exceeded only by their injustice.

Instances of Plagiarism from Daillé.

The mode in which Barbeyrac has treated the writings of the Fathers, is very different from that

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* C. viii. sect. 37.  † P. 552. note 92. c. xvi.
in which Daillé has pointed out their use†; who as a generous opponent, and as a good Christian, with regret exposed the failings and errors of such truly venerable men, while he takes every opportunity of pointing out the excellencies of their works, and the claim they have to our esteem and credit*. Our author, therefore, could not expect to find so much that suited his purpose, in the treatise of Daillé: Yet I shall now shew, though he has quoted it but once, and that only in his third edition †, that he is obliged to it for several remarks, which he has not been candid enough to acknowledge. Middleton and Barbeyrac have been equally forgetful of their obligations to the same author.

I.

DAILLÉ. GIBBON.

"Ego (inquit Justinus) "The testimony of "et qui per omnia reliè Justin, of his own faith "sentiunt Christiani, et that of his orthodox "carnis resurrectionem brekten in the doctrine of "futuram novimus, et a Millennium, is deliver-

mille annos in urbe ed in the clearest and Hiero-

† I have made use of the Latin translation of Daillé’s Use of the Fathers.


† Iraque etiam patribus defuisset summa illa ingenii atque eruditionis excellentia qua atheos facile superarunt, illorum tamen vel nudæ voces horum testimonio essent antepœndæ. Apparet enim & horum contra Christianam veritatem judicium odii merito suspectum esse; & illorum de Christi & evangelii divinitate voces ab omni studio puras & immunes esse.

See also his encomiums on the Fathers, p. 356. 363. &c.

† See note 64. c. xvi. 3d edition.
Daille.

"Hierusalem instaurata
"ta agen dos."

"His verbis omnes suo tempore catholicos in eo errore versatos, fol-
losque haereticos ab eo alienos fuisse testatur. Scio ipsum supra dixisse, multos esse qui sunt in pia & pura Christianorum sen-
tentia qui hoc non agnos-
cunt. Verum hae adeo discrepantia conciliet qui potest. Omnes qui repta sentiunt, sunt in ea opinione, & multi qui repta sentiunt sunt ab ea opinione alieni. Inquirat etiam, cui vacabit, an nullum sit in Justini codicibus mendum.*

Gibbon.

most solemn manner (Dialog, cum Tryphonte Jud. p. 177, 178. edit. Benedictin.) If in the beginning of this impor-
tant passage there is any thing like an inconsistency, we may impute it, as we think proper, either to the author, or to his trans-
scribers †.

"The assurance of such a Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of the Fa-
thers, from Justin Martyr and Irenæus, down to Lactantius," p. 471.


"Quod si ad secula inferiora descendas—Hier-
onymus scribit hoc delirium a multis receptum fuisse, & ad superiores, quos jam nominavimus, Lactantium addit," &c. p. 288. See also p. 255, &c.

II.

"Cyprianus quidem docet ecclesiam sui tem-
poris magnam variis in locis

* Page 287.

† Note 65. c. xv. 3d edit. Daille is not appealed to in this note.
Daille, 

locis ejus rationem habuisse, adeo ut nihil quod esset alicujus momenti absque fideliem sententiam Torres, ut in ejus epistolis videre esset. Certè quaestio de baptismo hereticorum, de qua supra nonnihil jam diximus, in synodo, Carthagine, presenti etiam plebis maxima parte agitata fuit." p. 195.

III,

"Hujus (Tertulliani) unicus admirator Cyprianus, ut etiam eum, propitius excellentiam, magistrum vocitare soleret," &c.

Daille here gives us the following note:

"Hieron. l. de Script. Eccl. in Tertull. t. i. p. 365. Vidi ego quendam Paulum—quise B, Cypriani notarium,—Romæ vidisse diceret, referrique sibi solitum, nunquam Cyprianum absque Tertulliani lectione unum die praterriisse; ac siibi crebro dicere, Da

Mr. G. in his third edition, has inserted the following words as part of a note: "in order to ascertain the degree of authority which the zealous African had acquired, it may be sufficient to allege the testimony of Cyprian, the doctor and guide of all the western churches. As often as he applied himself to his daily study of the writings of Tertullian, he was accustomed to say, "Da mibi magistrum." Give me my master."
Da magistrum, Tertullianum videlicet significans."

IV.


"Non enim comminiscendi fingendique artes novæ sunt; harum fraudum artifices ante quatuordecim secula extiterunt." Hegesip. ap. Euseb. l. iv. c. 22.

Gibbon. "It has been remarked, with more ingenuity than truth, that the virgin purity of the church was never violated by schism or heresy before the reign of Trajan, about one hundred years after the death of Christ." Hegesippus ap. Euseb. i, iii. 32. iv. 22. ||

V.

"Extant etiam Acta Synodi Carthaginensis in qua 87 episcopi, unanimi suffragio, id ipsum conc.

† Note 72. 3d edit. Our author, in this and some other instances, seems to have adopted a new expedient. Having found a remark, that he wishes to insert, with a reference to some learned writer, he then consults a different edition, and varies the page, in order to disguise his plagiarism.

VI.

Observe what he says of Justin's words, that "Socrates and other pagans who lived according to reason are to be esteemed as Christi­ans." See p. 256.

It is also Mr. G.'s remark, that "a charitable hope might perhaps be indulged in favour of Socrates, &c. who had consulted the light of reason," &c. p. 473, and note 69.

VII.

See his remarks on the wild notion of Gregory, that Ætna, and the other burning mountains in Sicily, and in that neighbourhood, are the beginnings of the conflagration, and the places of infernal torment, p. 242.

See also what our historian observes, that "the country which had been chosen for the origin and principle scene of the conflagration, was best adapted for that purpose by natural and physical causes, p. 473.

It is now plain, that several of our author's remarks, were selected from this excellent treatise. But I cannot help observing, with the learned Cave, "what regret it would have caused to the pious Daille, had he been now alive, to see even one single argument which he had urged to over­throw the superstition of popery, and thereby purify and strengthen the Christian religion," thus
thus perverted, to undermine and sap its foundation.

I shall close this article with a quotation from Mr. de la Croze, in which justice is done to Mr. Daillé; and a character is drawn of certain vilifiers of the Fathers, among whom I wish the candid reader may not rank our Historian.

"Parmi ceux, qui méprisent les Pères, il peut y avoir d’habiles gens, qui le font, ou par préjugé, ou parce qu’ils craignent qu’on ne donne trop à leur autorité.—On ne cherche ordinairement dans leurs ouvrages que l’histoire des dogmes, & celle de l’Eglise. Pendant qu’on n’ira point sur ce sujet plus loin que Mr. Daillé, dans son traité de l’emploi des Pères, on se tiendra, ce me semble, dans des bornes assez raisonnables. Mais il y a des gens qui ne sont forts, ni en raïsonnement, ni en critique, qui n’on jamais lu une page des pères, & qui ne les connaissent que par le Medulla Scultetii, par l’Histoire littéraire de Mr. Cave, & par la Bibliothèque Ecclesiastique de Mr. du Pin. Il est dangereux de se trouver devant ces gens-là, quand ils commencent leurs invectives contre les pères : ils croiroient leur faire grace s’ils leur laissaient une once de savoir & de probité." &c.

Entretiens sur divers sujets d’histoire, p. 212.

* "At si in vivis jam esset, quam ægrè ferret vir pientissimus, si aliqui reperientur, qui argumentis, quibus ipse causam pontificiam adeo feliciter debellavit, ad labefacqildam & subjacentem Nicæam sibem, abuterentur." Epist. Apol. p. 18.
Instances of Plagiarism from Beausobre.

The extensive reading and uncommon erudition of Beausobre have enabled Mr. G. to display great parade of learning. And as this author openly avows a design to apologize for the heretics, which consequently induces him frequently to handle the Fathers rather severely; nothing could more aptly coincide with the wishes of Mr. Gibbon.

At one note, where he has quoted Beausobre, he seems inadvertently to furnish proofs of the charge I bring against him, that he has transcribed Beausobre's reference to another learned publication. The instance is as follows:

Beausobre.

"l'espere, que bien loin d'ennuyer le lecteur, je le délaîserai, si avant que continuer l'histoire de Manichée, je lui raconte l'origine de la religion Chrétienne en Perse," &c. See also p. 183. 193.

"On peut voir, sur l'origine de Christianisme dans la Perse, la I. Differention de M. Asseman touchant les Nestoriens, laquelle est à la téte de la II.

Gibbon.

BEAUSOBE. Gibbon.
II. Partie de son III. *Orientalis of Asemanti.*
1 tome. Voyez auffi la I.
Partie, p. 611.*

I.

"Il n'est pas aisè de
qualifier au juste le zèle
de ces anciens évèques,
qui les premiers portèrent
les empereurs Chrétien
t à condamner au feu
les livres des hérétiques,
& à décerner des peines
de mort contre ceux qui
les l'iroient, ou qui les
garderoient dans leurs
maisons." p. 218.

He then gives us this
note. "Voyez Socrat. de H. E. c. i. 19. La Loi
que Constantin donna contre ceux qui ecritroient, ou
qui garderoient, les livres d'Arius, est d'une sévérité
inexcusable." He refers to Codex Theodosian. at
C. xiii.

II.

"Ces livres, (des Si-
byllés) tout favorables
qu'ils étoient à la reli-
gion Chrétienne, méri-
toient d'être supprimés,
parce

* Liv. ii, c. iii. § i. p. 189. Though the Bibliotheca Ori-
talis is not here specified as the work of Asemanti which is al-
cluded to, yet the frequent mention made of it by Beausobre,
must assure Mr. G. that it was no other.

† Note 180, c. xv. ❧ Note 142, c. xvi.
BEAUSOBE.

parce qu'au fond ils a-
voient été supposée par
des imposteurs, & que
celui, qui portoit le
nom d'Hystaptes préditoint
la ruïne de l'empire.”

p. 218.

“Sublatum iri ex orbe
imperium, nomenque
Romanum.” Laëntant.
Instit. I. vii. 15. note 5.

P. 472.

“Laëntantius (Institut.
Divin. vii. 15. &c.) relates the dismal tales of futuri-
ty with great spirit and eloquence.” note 66. c. xv.

III.

What our author has urged, as the objections of
the Gnostics to the Mosaic law, is abstactred from
Beausobre. I shall produce some of the parallel
passages, which it is obvious are copied. He does
indeed refer to him on this occasion *.

BEAUSOBE.

“Nos Hérétiques—
trouvoient, que Moïse
& les Prophétés avoient

eu

GIBBON.

mities were denounced
against an unbelieving
world. A regular series
was prepared of all the
moral and physical evils
which can affect a flou-
rishing nation; all these
were only so many pre-
paratory and alarming
signs of the great cata-
strophe of Rome,” &c.

* Our author thus indirectly acknowledges his obligation,
“Beausobre, Histoire du Manicheisme, l. i. c. 3. has stated their
objections, particularly those of Faustin, the adversary of Au-
gustin, with the most learned impartiality,” note 25. c. xv.

† Notwithstanding Mr. G. has added the epithet impiously,
it is plain from the words with which he introduces these objec-
tions of the Gnostics, that he is no more a friend to the Mosaic
dispens
Beausobre.

eu de fausses idées des perfections divines : qu'ils avoient attribué à Dieu des passions tres-indignes de lui, la colère, la vengeance, la jalouïe, le repentir.” p. 286. 287.

“Ils jugeoient de même de l'ordre, que Moïse donne aux Israêîtes de massacrer les peuples de Canaan, sans épargner ni âge, ni sexe. Ils concluoient de là, que le Dieu de l'Hébreux n'étoit pas le vrai Dieu, ou que leurs prophètes n'étoient pas de véritables prophètes, ou enfin que leurs livres avoient été corrompus par les Juifs.” p. 271.


“Les promesses temporelles du V. Testament ouvroyent
dispensation than they were. "There are some objection," says he, "against the authority of Moses and the prophets, "which too readily present themselves to the sceptical mind," &c. "These objections were eagerly embraced, and as petu- "lately urged by the vain science of the Gnostics." p. 459.

Gibbon.

liable to passion and to erro-ror, capricious in his fa-vour, implacable in his resentiment, meanly jea- lous of his superstitious worship, and confining his partial providence to a single people, and to this tranitory life.” p. 460.

“The conquest of the land of Canaan, and the extirpation of the unsus- pecting natives, they were at a loss how to re-concile with the common notions of humanity and justice: when they re-collected the sanguinary lift of murders, of execu-tions, and of massacres, which stain almost every page of the Jewish an-nals,” &c. p. 459.

“Passing from the sectaries of the law to the law itself, they asserted that it was impossible that a religion which consisted only of bloody sacriinces and trifling cere-
monies,
Beausobre.


"Ces hérétiques n'avoient que de l'horreur pour les sacrifices, & du mépris pour toutes les cérémonies Judaïques, soutenant, qu'il étoit impossible, que le vrai Dieu eût jamais ordonné un tel culte.—Mais pour les sacrifices sanglans, ils étoient persuadés, qu'il n'y avoit que les démons qui les exigeaient." p. 276, 277.

"Entre ces turpitudes Judaïques, il n'y en avoit point qui les choquât davantage que la circoncision." Sect. 6. p. 277.

"Ces Hérétiques s'étant fait un système de la création du monde, de la tentation, & de la chute d'Adam très-different de celui de Moïse, ils exerçoient leur critique sur les trois premiers chapitres de la Genèse, dans

Gibbon.

monies, and whose rewards as well as punishments were all of a carnal and temporal nature, could inspire the love of virtue, or restrain the impetuosity of passion." p. 460.

"A variety of trivial though burthensome observances, were so many objects of disgust and aversion for other nations," &c. p. 454.

"The painful and even dangerous rite of circumcision was alone capable of repelling a willing profylete from the door of the synagogue," P. 454.

"The Mosaic account of the creation and fall of man was treated with profane derision by the Gnostics, who would not listen with patience to the reproof of the Deity after six

* See these objections answered, § 7. p. 278; 279.
Beausobre.
See also p. 281.
“Les trois premiers chapitres de la Genèse, qui contiennent l’Histoire de la Création du Monde, celle d’Adam & d’Eve, de leur tentation & de leur péché, ont toujours fait beaucoup de peine aux interprètes de l’Écriture, soit Juifs ou Chrétiens. Un auteur moderne* qui a beaucoup d’esprit & de savoir, mais qui pense d’une manière qui paroit un peu trop libre, n’a pas diffusé ces difficultés. Je ne parle à présent que de celles qui se présentent dans l’histoire de la tentation †.”

Is it not surprising, that Mr. G. as an Englishman, should know nothing of Burnet’s Archæologia but from the works of a foreigner?

“ Ils déclamoient contre les plus illustres patriarches, dont ils relevaient les défauts avec la malignité la plus in-

* Thom. Burnet, Archæologia, l. ii. 7. † Livr. viii. c. 3. sect. 2.
Beausobre. of the patriarchs, the
In a note in this pas-
gage we have the fol-
lowing words:
"On peut voir au
long les declamations
de Faufl—l. 22. 5. 32. 4. Et quos maxime
Entheos credas, millenis & centenis voluptari cum
scortis, tanquam David & Solomon."

"Que quand il se-
roict vrai, que Moife, &
les prophêtes des Juifs,
auroient prédit le Seign-
eur, leur témoignage
ne pouvient servir, qu’a
la conversion des Juifs
qui reconnoissent leur
"Les pères — gênez
par de faux principes, ont
nié quelquefois ce qu’il
falloit avouer, avoué ce
qu’il falloit nier: Et
alors, ne pouvant se tirer
des difficultez, qu’en tor-
dant les ecritures, & en
recourant à de misérables
allégories, ils trahissoient,
pour ainsi dire, la cause
qu’ils vouloient défendre." c. iv. § 1.
"Ils éludent les ob-
jections par de frivoles
allégories." p. 284.

Gibbon.
"Their favourite ar-
gument (of prophecy)
might serve to edify a
Christian, or to convert
a Jew, since both the one
and the other acknowledge
the authority of those pro-
phecies, and both are
obliged, with devout re-
verence, to search for
their sense and their ac-
complishment. But this
mode of persuasion loses
much of its weight and
influence, when it is ad-
dressed to those who nei-
ther understand nor re-
spect the Mosaic dispen-
sation and the prophetic
style. In the unskilful
hands of Justin, and of
the succeeding apolo-
gists, the sublime mean-
ing of the Hebrew
oracles evaporates in
distant
Gibbon.

distant types, affected conceits and cold allegories."

p. 517.

Beausobre.

"St. Augustin cède visiblement la victoire aux Manichéens: il leur abandonne Moïse & le Vieux Testament lorsqu'il avoue, qu'il n'y a pas moyen de conserver le sens littéral des trois premiers chapitres de la Genèse sans blesser la piété, sans attribuer à Dieu des choses indignes de lui; qu'il faut abolument, pour sauver Moïse & son histoire, recourir à l'Alégorie. On passe les allegories, qui laissent substituer le sens littéral, mais on ne souffre point celles qui le détruisent, à moins qu'il ne s'agisse de paraboles, & non d'histoires." p. 285. § 4.

"Il faut pourtant excuser S. Augustin; il ne fait que suivre l'exemple d'Origène," &c. § 5.

See also § 6.

V.

"Ce que Faußé trouve étrange dans le système catholique, c'est que des Chrétiens,

Gibbon.

"The most learned of the Fathers, by a very singular condescension, have imprudently admitted the sophistry of the Gnostics. Acknowledging that the literal sense is repugnant to every principle of faith as well as reason, they deem themselves secure and invulnerable behind the ample veil of allegory, which they carefully spread over every tender part of the Mosaic dispensation." p. 460.

See also page 565.

Mr. G. here adds this note.

"See Beausobre Hift. du Manichéisme, 1. i. c. 4. Origen and St. Augustin were among the allegorists."
Beausobre.

Chrétiens, qui sortoient d'entre les Gentils, acco-
draissent la vie éternelle aux pères des He-
dreux, & la refusaient à leurs propres ancêtres.
"Ce qui me choque dans votre sentiment, dit
encore ce Manichéen, ce n'est pas que notre
libérateur ait déployé sa grâce sur les pères
des Juifs, mais c'est qu'il ne l'a pas déployée
que sur eux, & non sur les pères des Gentils, quoique la plus grande
partie de l'Église Chrétienne descende de ces der-
niers, & non d'Abraham, d'Isaak, & de Jacob."
p. 291.

Plusieurs des pères considéraient l'esprit, la
raison humaine, comme un rayon, comme une lumière, qui sort du
verbe, ou de la raison divine, & qui éclaire généralement tous les hom-
mes. C'est ce qui a fait dire à "Justin Martyr" que "le Christ a été con-
nu en partie de Socrate, parce que le Christ est le
verbe, & que le verbe est dans tous les hom-
mes." Et ailleurs,
"Nous avons dit ci de-

Gibbon.

on account of their ig-
norance or disbelief of
the divine truth seems to
offend the reason and the
humanity of the present
age. But the primitive
church, whose faith was
of a much firmer con-
sistence, delivered over,
without hesitation, to
eternal torture, the far
greater part of the hu-
man species." p. 473.

"A charitable hope
might perhaps be indulg-
ed in favour of Socrates,
of some other sages of
antiquity, who had con-
sulted the light of reason
before that of the Gospels
had arisen." p. 473.

"Justin and Clemens of
Alexandria allow, that
some of the philosophers
were instructed by the Lo-
gos; confounding its dou-
ble signification, of the hu-
man reason, and of the
divine word," note 69.
c. i. v.

"vant
Beausobre.
"Vant, que le Christ étant le verbe, tous le genre humain y participe. Car tous ceux, qui vivent selon la raison, sont Chrétiens. Tels ont été parmi les Grecs Socrate, Héraclite," &c. p. 307.
Justin Mart. Apolog. Clemens Alexandrin. is also quoted here.

VI.

Beausobre.
"Ces gens-là croyaient que le péché d'Adam a été l'incontinence: que l'amour charnel, quelque réglé qu'il soit, n'est point innocent: qu'il a été la cause de la mort, & des douleurs de la mort: Que si l'homme étoit demeuré vierge: si la partie de lumière, qui est en lui, n'avait point été souillée de la concupiscence, elle se seroit séparée de la matière sans difficulté.—Divers pères ont donné aveuglement dans le piège, que les hérétiques leur avoient tendu.

Gibbon.
"It was their favourite opinion, that if Adam had preserved his obedience to the Creator, he would have lived for ever in a state of virgin purity, and that some harmless mode of vegetation might have peopled Paradise with a race of innocent and immortal beings." p. 484.
"Since desire was imputed as a crime, and marriage was tolerated as a defect, it was consistent with the same principles to consider a state of celibacy as the nearest approach to the divine perfection." p. 485.


Q 2
Beausobre.

les vertus il n'y en a point de plus sublime, de plus angélique, de plus divine, que celle de surmonter des devoirs naturels.

VII.

Beausobre.

"Ces fabuleux écrivains ont voulu persuader au monde, que tous les apôtres avoient souffert le martyre, ce qui n'est apparemment point vrai, & ce qui n'est nullement nécessaire à la religion."

Gibbon.

"If indeed we were disposed to adopt the traditions of a too credulous antiquity, we might relate the distant peregrinations, the wonderful achievements, and the various deaths of the twelve apostles." p. 531.

"In the time of Tertullian and Clemens of Alexandria, the glory of martyrdom was confined to St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. James." note 27. c. xvi.

VIII.

"Le pères s'éleverent avec véhémence contre un sentiment, qui n'étoit propre qu'a discourager les martyrs, & à les flétrir. Ils accusèrent même Basilide, d'enseigner que c'est une folie de souffrir le martyre, & qu'il vaut mieux renoncer Jésus-Christ." See also c. iii. § 14. p. 41.

"It should seem that some of these Gnostics (the Basilidians) declined, and even refused, the honour of martyrdom. Their reasons were singular and abstruse." c. xv. note 33.

Beausobre.

"S. Irenée dit que Basilide mit au rang des choses indifférentes les plus sales débauches: & S. Epiphane, qu’il n’y a point de vices, point d’impudicités, qu’il ne permet à ses disciples. Épargnons au lecteur un plus grand nombre de citations."


"De tout temps les sectes rivales se sont mutuellement accusées de mystères profanes ou ridicules. Les payens en ont accusé les Juifs, les Juifs en acculent les Chrétiens, & publièrent partout, que les incestes d’Oedipe, et les Festins de Thyeste, étoient leurs cérémonies sacrées. Les Chrétiens rejettèrent ces crimes sur les Gnostiques."

"Il y eut beaucoup de licence dans certains mystères du paganisme. Mais"

Gibbon.

"It was sometimes faintly insinuated, and sometimes boldly asserted, that the same bloody sacrifices, and the same incestuous festivals, which were so falsely ascribed to the orthodox believers, were in reality celebrated by the Marcionites, by the Carpocratians, and by several other sects of the Gnostics, who, notwithstanding they might deviate into the paths of heresy, were still actuated by the sentiments of men, and still governed by the precepts of Christianity."

"But the perusal of the ancient apologies was sufficient to remove even the"

* Livr. iv. c. iii. § 15.

† Mr. G. thus cites Beausobre in this place, "M. de Beausobre (Hist. du Manichéisme, l. ix. c. 8, 9.) has exposed with a great spirit the disingenuous arts of Augustin and pope Leo I." but I appeal to my reader if this is a sufficient acknowledgment of his great obligations.

† Liv. ix. c. viii. § 2.
Beausobre:
Mais ces infidèles, bien loin de croire en J. Christ, ne connaissoient ni lui, ni sa doctrine, ou ne les connaissoient que pour les condamner. Le Manichéen croit en J. Christ—Il reçoit l'évangile & l'apôtre; (S. Paul)—S'il rejette quelques endroits de ces livres facéz, ces endroits ne concernent point la morale;—pour les preceptes, ils en reconnaissent la justice, la beauté, la perfection, & sont confissier l'essentiel de la religion à les suivre. Cela est-il compatible avec des prostitutions érigées en parties du culte divin?"

"Cette méthode de défendre les Manichéens est la même dont les apologistes des Chrétiens se servoient pour se justifier des faux crimes dont les payens les accusoient. Ne citons que le seul Athenagore. "Afin d'â- voir des prétextes de nous persécuter, on nous accuse, dit ce philo-

Gibbon:
the slightest suspicion from the mind of a cand
did adversary. The
Christians urge with
equal truth and propri-
ty, that the charge is not
leis devoid of probabili-
ty, than it is destitute of
evidence; they ask, whe-
ther any one can seriously believe that the pure
and holy precepts of the
Gospel, which so frequent-
ly restrain the use of the
most lawful enjoyments,
should inculcate the prac-
tice of the most abominable
cri mes; that a large so-
ciety should resolve to
dishonour itself in the
eyes of its own members;
and that a great number
of persons of either sex,
and every age and cha-
acter, insensible to the
fear of death or infamy,
should consent to violate
those principles which na-
ture and education had
imprinted most deeply in
their minds. Nothing,
it should seem, could
weaken the force or de-
stroy the effect of so un-
answerable

* Liv. ix. c. viii. § 2.
Beausobre.
"Ilophè Athénien, de faire des Feftins détèsta-bles, & de commettre des incestes dans nos assem-blées."—Athenagore fait voir ensuite, que "les principes & les Mœurs des Chrétiens suffisaient seuls pour dé-truire les calomnies qu'on répandait contre eux.—Que des gens qui s'abstenaient des voluptez permises parmi toutes les nations, ne se livraient pas à des voluptez que toutes les nations condamnaient.—D'où il s'ensuit qu'ils étoient innocens des crimes qu'on leur imputoit." p. 732.

Gibbon.
answerable a justification, unless it were the inju-dicious conduct of the apo-logists themselves, who betrayed the common cause of religion, to gratify their devout hatred to the domestic enemies of the church." p. 527—529.

X.
Compare what this author says, on Vigils, and their abuse.

See also what he says of their abuse of the Agapæ, p. 635.

Q. 4

"Les
XI.

Beausobre.


Gibbon.

"A generous intercourse of charity united the most distant provinces, such an institution, which paid less regard to the merit than to the distress of the object, very materially conduced to the progress of Christianity. The Pagans, who were actuated by a sense of humanity, while they de- rided the doctrines, acknowledged the benevolence of the new sect." p. 498.

"Julian (epift. 49.) seems mortified, that the Christian charity maintains not only their own, but likewise the heathen poor." note 141. c. xv.

XII.

Consult liv. ii. c. i. Compare this with what our author says of the legend of Abgarus, note 179. c. xv.

* Page 639. The observation that Beausobre makes on this occasion shews a very different turn of mind from that of our author. He says, "Ce fut effectivement à des vertus, non feintes, mais réelles, que la religion du Sauveur fut redevable en partie
XIII.

Compare Beaufobre's Remark on the disputes between the Jew Orobio and Limborch, and his quotation of the Amica Collatio*; with Mr. G.'s observation on that subject, and his reference to that treatise †.

I surely need not again remind my reader, how evident it is that our author shines with learning not his own; as a planet owes its light to the effulgence of a superior luminary.

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Instances of Plagiarism from Dodwell.

Of all the learned moderns, from whom Mr. G. has purloined his citations of the ancients, there is not one perhaps who has been of more general use to him than Dodwell: whose treatise on the small number of martyrs, has furnished our author with almost every fact he relates, and every observation he makes, in executing the design of his sixteenth chapter; "to separate a few authentic as well as interesting facts from an undigested mass of fiction and error, and to relate, in a clear and rational manner, the causes, the extent, the duration, and the most important circumstances of the perfections to which the first Christians were exposed ‡."

* Page 438. § 2. † Page 455. 466, note 14. c. xv. ‡ Page 520.

6
It would perhaps make no improper beginning, were I to point out the similarity which discovers itself in the motives which both Dodwell and Gibbon assign as incitements to martyrdom; but I have already observed, how proper a compliment our author pays to Dodwell and Middleton on this occasion*, which may, in some measure, atone for the great liberty he has taken in transcribing their remarks at large on this subject. I shall only add, that Mr. G. might as well have referred us to the xi. dissertation of Dodwell; for he has taken, to my certain knowledge, more of these reflections from that, than from the xii. and xiii. Neither needed he have been ashamed, after quoting the two dissertations by wholesale, to have added a third to the number, though it is a little extensive †.

I.

DODWELL.

"Sed de paucitate primum erat nomen, qui, from his experience as well as reading, was intimately acquainted with the history of the Christians, declares, in the most express

GIBBON.

Origen's testimonium, quod miror haec genus esse animadversum. Osi

* See p. 550, 551. and note 89. c. xvi.

† This is a practice which our author has frequently adopted; and a good artifice it is to escape detection. I have already noticed one instance in his quoting Grosier; without any distinction of his voluminous works. I shall here give another instance. At note 135. c. xv. he speaks of "a refutation of Diocletian, which," says he, "is only a declaration of an old law." We have no reference at all to inform us where this law is to be found. We may find it however, after turning over a few pages of the Codex Theodosian, lib. vi. tit. 24. l. 8. This is much the same, as if a divine should tell us of a verse of St. Paul's without quoting the epitaph and chapter.
DODWELL.

GIBBON.

† Page 546.
‡ Note 71. c. xvi.

II.
II.

We meet with the same general reflections respecting the persecutions, in Mr. Dodwell and Mr. G. That not only the most distinguished persons among the Christians, but even women and slaves were crowned with martyrdom: "Felicitas and Perpetua, and, among the martyrs of Lyons, the slave Blandina," are examples fnged out by both *.

They mention the indifference, nay even the favour, shewn by some of the emperors towards the Christians †. They have the same quotation from Tertullian to shew that Trajan frustrated in some degree the laws enacted against the Christians, "quas Trajanus ex parte frustratus est, Apolog. c. 5. ‡" They both inform us, that Trajan restrained "the popular clamours, which condemned the Christians " to the lions;" that he forbade the magistrates to make search after the Christians; that, by the edicts of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, those informers, who falsely accused men as being Christians, suffered in their stead; And reference is made by each to "the Apology of Melito apud Eufeb. l. iv. c. 26. and to Justin Apolog. ii. §"—Hence they both draw a general inference, that many of the persecutions which arose in the provinces were owing to the disposition of the governors: In describing these persecutions, the same kinds of punishment are specified by each of these writers §§.

* Compare Dodwell Dissertat. xi. sect. v. with Gibbon, p. 546, and note 70. c. xvi.
† See Dodwell, sect. viii. x. Gibbon, p. 555. 541, 542.
‡ Dodwell, sect. viii. Gibbon, note 58. c. xvi.
After these general reflections, Mr. Dodwell descends to a particular examination of the several persecutions and martyrdoms which happened under the reigns of the emperors, as they succeeded respectively to the throne. Sect. 13. "Age itaque breviter percurramus has, quas ita sanguinarias existimant persecutiones." The following instances will shew, that in this part of his history at least, Mr. G. chiefly consulted the original materials, which the learning of Mr. Dodwell had stored up.

III.

We find in Dodwell's account of Nero's persecution, on the authority of Tacitus, the great number of the Christians expressed by the words "ingens multitudo." The religion styled "exitii-" "abilis superstition,"—the effects of the persecution confined to the walls of Rome *. These are circumstances which particularly distinguish Mr. G.'s description †.

IV.

Mr. D. says of the Mr. G. observes, persecution of Domitian, "The persecution of "Erat enim ea persecutio brevissima ut vix that epithet) was of no unum annum implere long duration §," &c. potent †."

Compare what Mr. G. says of the execution of Clemens the Conful, by Domitian, and the banishment of Domitilla, for Atheism and Jewish manners, together with a great number of other persons ‡; and his reference to Eusebius iii. 18. and to

* Sect. 13. † P. 509. 532, &c. note 34. 165. c. xvi. † Sect. 16. p. 236. § Page 539. ‡ Page 539. Dion,—
Dion*,—with Mr. Dodwell's words, and quotation of Eusebius, iii. 18. †

V.

Mr. G. has introduced the above account with a story about the grandsons of St. Jude, which he tells us, is taken from Hegecippus. But the reader will be inclined to think he took it from Dodwell.

DODWELL.

"Consentit cum Tertulliano, de hac Domitiani, mutatione, Hegecippus. Cum enim in Davidicam familiar ille inquisivisset, & pro locupletibus metuendisque paupertes illos spernendo &que reperisset; illum hujus inquisitionis eventum ita descriptit Hegecippus, Domitianum eleytheus men autem aenimai, katapanautai de dia th prostagmatos ton kata tis ekklesias diwymou. Euseb. iii. 20.

GIBBON.

"Among the Christians, who were brought before the tribunal of the emperor,—were the grandsons of St. Jude the apostle.—Their natural pretensions to the throne of David, might perhaps attract the respect of the people, and excite the jealousy of the governor; but the meanness of their garb, and the simplicity of their answers, soon convinced him that they were neither desirous nor capable of disturbing the peace of the Roman empire.—The grandsons of St. Jude were dismissed with compassion and contempt ‡. "Euseb. iii. 20. The story is taken from Hegecippus §.

* Note 52. c. xvi.
† Dodwell, sect. 16.
‡ Page 538.
§ Note 49. c. xvi.
VI.

DODWELL.

"Jam si Laetantium audimus, a Domitiano ad Decium usque nulla erat omnino persecutio. Ita enim ille: " Resciissis igitur aetis tyranni ||, non modo in statum pristinum ecclesiae restituta est, sed etiam multo clarius ac floridius enuit. — Sed enim postea longa pax rupta est. " Extitit enim, post annos plurimos, execrabile animale Decius, qui vexaret eclefsiam *. " Laetant. de mort. persecut. c. 3, 4.

GIBBON.

"The condition (of the Christians) ever since the time of Domitian, was represented as a state of perfect freedom and security, if compared with the rigorous treatment which they experienced under the short reign of Decius †."

"Laetantius, de Mortibus Persecutorum, c. 3, 4. After celebrating the felicity and increase of the church, under a long succession of good princes; he adds, " Extitit post annos plurimos, execrabile animal, Decius, qui vexaret ecclesiam ‡."

VII.

In sect. 25, 26. Mr. D. makes several observations which correspond with those of our author, " on the conduct and character of Pliny, and on the praise bestowed on him by Tertullian for his fair and honourable testimony §."

* Sec. 17. page 238.
† Page 560.
‡ Note 120. c. xvi.
§ P. 507. 540. notes 15, 23. c. xvi.

VIII.
VIII.

We come now to the state of the Christians, in the reign of Commodus, which our authors thus describe.

DODWELL.

"Sub Commodo pacem ecclesiæ fuisset diuæono testis et illorum temporum scriptor Asterius Urbanus *, quam pacem cunctas orbis ecclesias complexam esse scribit Eusebius †. Nempe Marciam Christianorum fuisse patronam ait, Dione suo fortasse auctore, Xiphilinus ‡. Xiphilin. in Commodo.

GIBBON.

"The Christians were protected by the lenity of Commodus. The celebrated Marcia entertained a singular affection for the oppressed church, and declared herself the patroness of the Christians §."

In a note our author refers to "Dion Cassius, or rather, his abbreviator Xiphilin. l. Ixxii. p. 1206." ||

IX.

The next persecution was that of Severus, of which we have this account.

"Quintam deinde persecutionem Severo tribuent Eusebius, &c.—Nec tamen illum ipsum inchoatam putant ante X. ejus annum.—Tempus enim notavit

† Euseb. Hist. Eccles. v. 29.
‡ Sept. 40.
|| Note 106. c. xvi.
§ Page 557.
notavit accuratissime in Severi vita Spartanus.—
"In itinere Palæstinis plurima jura fundavit.
"Judeos fieri sub gravi †
"pana vetuit. Idem etiam de Christianis sanxit ."

"Est etiam id observatone dignum, Christianos fieri duxisset vetuisset Severum, nihil autem esse quo jam faétos posset colligi ejus esse justu puniendo.

"Populi itaque potius quam Severi furore nata hæc videtur percutio, & quanquam cessit populo in emittendo persecutionis decreto, restitution tamen eidem in os Christianos amicos ad supplicium poscenti.—"Populo "surrenti in os palam restitutioni," ut ait Tertullianus ad Scap. c. 4.

Compare Mr. D.'s remark at this place, that the Christians often suffered with the Jews, as the heathens made little distinction between them —and Mr. G.'s observations, p. 530. 537, 538. Each of them notice the same passage of Sueionius ††.

* Spartan. Sever. c. 16, 17. sect. 40. † Sect. 46.
† Page 558. § Note 110. c. xvi. || P. 557.
** Sect. 42. †† Dodwell, sect. 42, and Gibbon, note 25. xvi.

R Mr.
Mr. G. gives us no account of the persecution of Severus, which Dodwell ingenuously acknowledges.

X.

With regard to Caracalla we read as follows.

DODWELL.


See what he observes of the peaceable, nay friendly disposition of the successors of Severus, towards the Christians.

GIBBON.

"The nurse as well as the preceptor of Caracalla were Christians; and if that young prince ever betrayed a sentiment of humanity, it was occasioned by an accident, which, however trifling, bore some relation to the cause of Christianity." Compare the life of Caracalla in the Augustan history, with the epistle of Tertullian to Scapula.

XI.

We come next to Alexander Severus.

DODWELL.

"Ab illa Severi xxxviii. annorum intervallum interponis Sulpicius. Recte nimium ille, pro communis sententia, modo decadem, quae intercident reponas," &c. "Nec sane aliter tam longa"

GIBBON.

"But the laws which Severus had enacted, soon expired with the authority of that emperor; and the Christians, after this accidental tempest, enjoyed a calm of thirty-eight years."

* Sect. 43, 44. † Sect. 47. ‡ Page 557. § Note 107. c. xvi. ¶ Sect. 52. ** Page 558.
DODWELL.

*g. iilla fuisset pax de qua meminit in libro de lapsis, Cyprianus,* &c.


* Sed & Mammæa mater (cui nimium in reipub. administratione permittum esse queruntur)—ipsa quoque Christiana fuit, & Origene accer-

GIBBON.

* Sulpicius Severus,
  l. ii. p. 384."

*This computation (allowing for a single exception) is confirmed by the history of Eusebius, and by the writings of Cyprian.*

*They were now permitted to erect and consecrate convenient edifices for the purpose of religious worship; to purchase lands, even at Rome itself, for the use of the community; and to conduct the election of their ecclesiastical ministers in so public, but at the same time in so exemplary a manner, as to deserve the respectful attention of the Gentiles.*

The emperor Alexander adopted their method of publickly proposing the names of those persons who were candidates for ordination," &c.

See the Augustan history, p. 130. ||

Afterwards we read, "The sentiments of Mammæa"
Dodwell.

Mammæa were adopted by her son Alexander. In his domestic chapel he placed the statues of Abraham, of Orpheus, of Apollonius, and of Christ.*

See the Augustan history, p. 123†.

"When the empress Mammæa passed through Antioch, she expressed a desire of conversing with the celebrated Origen, the fame of whose piety and learning was spread over the east. Origen obeyed so flattering an invitation," &c. ‡ Euseb. Hist. Ecclef. I. vi. c. 21. Hieronym. de Script. Ecclef. c. 54. §

XII.

The conduct of the emperor Maximin is thus represented by our two authors.

Dodwell.

"In odio Philipporum persecutus est Decius, in odio Alexandri Maximinum."

"Successit deinde Alexandro Maximino. — Hanc in ecclesiarum sacerdotes factam a Maximino, ait Eusebius. — Orontius persecutionem hanc in

Gibbon.

"After the death of Alexander, when the inhuman Maximin discharged his fury on the favourites and servants of his unfortunate benefactor, a great number of Christians, of every rank and of both sexes, were involved in the prominent extremities of the persecution."* Page 559

† Mr. G. always refers to the page, not to the chapter, of the Augustan history; another way of disguising favours received. It is a pity he did not alter the reference to Eusebius, and not suffer it to stand the same in his quotation, as in Dodwell's.

‡ Page 559. § Note 114. c. xvi. || Sect. 10.
Dodwell.

in Sacerdotes & Clericos, i.e. doctores, motam esse tradit.—Præcipue prop-ter Origenem presbyterum persecutionem hanc a Maximino esse concita-

"Ita non ad multos pertinebat illa persecutione.—Cui etiam confen-
tit Firmilianus, quod persecutione illa non per to-
tum mundum, sed localis fuisset, si tamen de eadem persecutione sit intelli-
gendus *." Sulp. Sever. Sacr. Hist. l. 2. Firmi-
lianus Ep. apud Cypri-
an. 75.

"Necessse erat hanc persecutionem omnino fu-
isse brevissimam †." 

Gibbon.

uous massacre, which, on their account, has im-
properly received the name of persecution.”

Eusebius, l. vi. c. 28 ‡.

"Notwithstanding the cruel disposition of Max-
imin, the effects of his resentiment against the
Christians were of a very local and temporary na-
ture, and the pious Ori-
gen, who had been pro-
scribed as a devoted vic-
tim, was still reserved to
convey the truths of the
Gospel to the ear of
monarchs §.

"Orosius, l. vii. c. 19.
mentions Origen as the
object of Maximin's re-
sentiment; and Firmili-
anus a Cappadocian bi-
shop of that age, gives a
just and confined idea of
this persecution (apud Cyprian. epist. 75.) †"  

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* Sect. 48. As I have before censured Mr. G.'s quotation of Firmilianus, it is proper to observe that my charge does not affect Mr. Dodwell, as he speaks of this persecution, not with that confined idea in which our author represents it, as relating only to bishops and priests; but as extending itself to the Christians in ge-
neral (sect. 51.) However closely Mr. G. copies the dissertation, he seldom is so liberal as to specify facts that make against his hypoth-

† Sect. 49. ‡ Note 116. E. xvi.  
§ Page 559. || Note 117. c. xvi.
The severe persecution of Decius is the next in order.

**DODWELL.**
Iniquissimi quidem illi, ut longe alium nobis Decium repraesentent quam suopte fuerit ingenio.—Plane innuant, praeterquam in Christianos, non tam fuisse, quam putatur, sanguinolentum Decii imperium.—Deimus aliquid superstitio. At cum ita crederet pro bono reipublicae in Christianos esse faeviendum,” &c. *—“Primum legimus martyrem Fabianum sub finem Januarii. Sub discessum constat Decii, nec enim diu ille Romae est moratus.—Poftea paulo plus quam annuere internexit intervallum antequam in Fabiani locum sufficeretur Cornelius. Inde colligimus ea usum esse arte in ecclesiae persecutione

**GIBBON.**
“ The virtues of that prince (Decius) will scarcely allow us to suspect that he was actuated by a mean resentment against the favourites of his predecessor †, and it is more reasonable to believe, that in the prosecution of his general design to restore the purity of Roman manners, he was desirous of delivering the empire from what he condemned as a recent and criminal superstition.

“ The bishops of the most considerable cities were removed by exile or death; the vigilance of the magistrates prevented the clergy of Rome, during sixteen months, from proceeding to a new election,” &c ‡.

* Seft. 52.
† We have already seen that Eusebius, as here cited, has imputed this persecution “to the resentment by which Decius was actuated against the favourites of his predecessor.” We have seen that Dodwell also says, “in odium Philipporum persecutus est Decius,” lect. 10. Yet our author contradicts their authority, without appealing to any other testimony to prove his assertion.
‡ Page 560.
DODWELL.

secutione Decium qua usus antea fuerat Maximinus ut in ecclesiae sacerdotes præcipue persecutionem intentaret, &c.—“Et vero totum opprimendæ Christianitatis præsidium in eo esse positum à Decio, si sedem Rome vacuam servasset, ex illis nostri martyris (Cypriani) verbis colligimus quæ scriptit ad Antonianum. “Multa “(inquit) patientius & tolerabilius audisse Decium levari adversus se eamulum principem quam constituui Romæ eamulum sacerdotem.” Quorum illud, ni gravius aliquod momentum in ea situm credidisset Romanæ sedis vacatione?”

Cyprian. epist. 52 *.

GIBBON.

Our author here makes the following note:

“The see of Rome remained vacant from the martyrdom of Fabianus, to the 20th of January, A. D. 250 †, till the election of Cornelius, the 4th of June, A. D. 251. Decius had probably left Rome, since he was killed before the end of that year †.”

Euseb. l. vi. c. 39 §.

“It was the opinion of the Christians, that the emperor would more patiently endure a competitor for the purple, than a bishop in the capital ||.”

Cyprian. epist. 55 **.

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* Sect. 53.

† As Mr. Dodwell observes with regard to the date, “si te men refle tempus consignatum à viturum pontificialium concilia natoribus;” it was an easy matter from any martyrology or chronological table to point out a particular day.

‡ Note 121. c. xvi.

§ This citation of Eusebius occurs at section 55. where Dodwell is speaking of the effects of this persecution in Palestine.

|| Page 560.

** Note 121. c. xvi.
Had our author fairly copied from Dodwell, he might have informed us, from sect. 54—57. of the extent and rigour of this persecution.

XIV.

The administration of Valerian is next treated of.

DODWELL.

"Quem (Valerianum) tamen primis imperii annis Christianum amicissimum fuisse testetur coaeusus Dionysius. Tam fuisse Christianis amicum ait quam fuerint ieiuntes anaphagonon Christi anos genovenei. (Alexandrum, ni fallor, intelligit arque Philippus) quin & illos benevolentia superasse; familiam praeterea totam Christianis abundasse, ut ecclesia Dei esse videreetur. Accedebat forasse & alia ratio. —Quod nempe magicis operationibus Christiani adversissimi baberentur. —Ideo Valerianum Macrianus Magus ad persecutionem adegit."


GIBBON.

"The administration of Valerian was distinguished by a levity and inconstancy, ill suited to the gravity of the Roman cenfor. In the first part of his reign, he surpassed in clemency those princes who had been suspected of an attachment to the Christian faith. In the last three years and a half, listening to the insinuations of a minister addicted to the superstitions of Egypt, he adopted the maxims, and imitated the example of his predecessor Decius."

Eu. feb. 1. vii. c. 10.

"The mention of those princes who were publickly supposed to be Christians, as we find it in an epistle of Dionysius of Alexandria (ap. Eu. feb.

† P. 560, 561. We have no particular account of this persecution given us by Mr. G. but we find it in Dodwell, sect. 59—63.  † Note 122. c. xvi.
Gibbon.

Feb. 1. vii. c. 10.) evidently alludes to Philip, and his family.*

XV.

Of Gallienus, the next emperor, we have this account.

Dodwell.


Gibbon.

"The accession of Gallienus restored peace to the church; and the Christians obtained the free exercise of their religion by an edit addressed to the bishops, and conceived in such terms as seemed to acknowledge their office and public character ‡."—"Eusebius (l. vii. c. 13.) gives us a Greek version of this Latin edit, which seems to have been very concise §."

XVI.

The conduct of Aurelian is now to be considered.

Dodwell.

"Inde nemo est de persecutione suspectus ulque ad Aureliannum.—Intentata duntaxat erat ab Aureliano, non item executioni mandata. Id satis manifeste indicant scriptores"

Gibbon.

"The ancient laws, without being formally repealed, were suffered to sink into oblivion,—some hostile intentions are attributed to the emperor Aurelian‖. "Euseb.

* Note 118. c. xvi. † Sect. 63.
‡ Page 561. § Note 123. c. xv. ‖ P. 561.
DODWELL.


"Nelciò tamen an integrioribus Hieronymi codicibus usus fuerit Orosius, propius certe accessit ad mentem Eusebii," &c §. Oros. l. vii. c. 23.

GIBBON.


"Their language is in general so ambiguous and incorrect, that we are at a loss to determine how far Aurelian had carried his intentions before he was assassinated ‖."
The persecution of Diocletian is thus introduced.

DODWELL.

"Ab Aureliano deinde ad Diocletianum neminem habent imperatorum de persecutione fuisse. — Sed vero haec ut omnium longissima erat, ita etiam forte sãvissima, certe martyrum provenitu erat copiosisima. Inde factum ut Æram Diocletiani recentiores Græci Æram martyrum appellant.*"

"Quod itaque per to tum bujus imperii persecutionem fuisset potent, longe abiit ut verum fuerit. "Multa erant è contra prolixissimae imperatorum in Christiianos benevolentia indicia. Regendas Christianis provincias crediderunt, omni sacrificandi metu, qui praefectis provinciarum ex officio imminebat, illos liberabant. Quin & in ipsis imperatorum pala tiis, liberi versati sunt. Ipsæ eorum uxores & liberi"

GIBBON.

"Amidst the frequent revolutions of the empire, the Christians still flourished in peace and prosperity.—A celebrated era of martyrs has been deduced from the succession of Diocletian†."

"The principal eunuchs,—who attended the person, possessed the favour, and governed the household of Diocletian, protected by their powerful influence the faith which they had embraced. Their example was imitated by many of the most considerable officers of the palace,—and though it might sometimes be incumbent on them to accompany the emperor, when he sacrificed in the temple, they enjoyed, with their wives, their children, and their slaves, the free exercise of the Christian religion. Di ocletian and his col leagues

* Sect. 65.
† Page 563.
DODWELL.

"..." His ea quæ religiosis suæ erant, tam verbis quam factis libere exequendi coram semetipsis potestatem dederunt; ipsis ob hanc fidei suæ libertatem gloriari ac te oportetare quodammodo permittentes; eoque præ cæteris omnibus ministris præcipuo quodam amore complectebantur. Id genus exempla aliqua profert Eusebius. Quin & singulis ecclesiis antistitibus summus honor, cultus ac benevolentia ab omnibus tam privatis quam provinciarum rectoribus delatus est. Innumerabilem praeterea hominum quotidie ad fidem Christi confugientium fuisset urbem, inmensum ecclesiis in singulis urbibus numero, illustres populorum in facris ædibus concursus, quo factum est ut priscis ædificiis jam non contenti in singulis urbibus spatiofas ab ipsis fundamentis

GIBBON.

leagues frequently conferred the most important offices on them.—The bishops held an honourable rank in their respective provinces, and were treated with distinction and respect, not only by the people but by the magistrates themselves. Almost in every city, the ancient churches were found insufficient to contain the increasing number of proselytes; and in their place more stately and spacious edifices were erected for the public worship of the faithful."

"..." The leisure of the two empresses, of bis wife Prisca, and of Valeria bis daughter, permitted them to listen with more attention and respect to the truths of Christianity *.

Laetantius de M. P.
c. 15.†.

* P. 564.
† Note 131. c. xvi.

DODWELL.


Mr. Dodwell then relates the cause which Laetantius (de Mort. Perf. n. 10.) gives for Diocletian's persecution; "because the Christians interrupted his religious rites and enquiries into futurity." But this chapter Mr. G. has unhappily referred to as a proof of the favour of Diocletian to the Christians.

We thus read of the effects of the persecution:

DODWELL.

"Primum persecutionis gradum in Milites fuisset tradit Eusebius." Hiift. Eccles. viii. 1. * * *

"Emissae itaque sunt adversus milites persecutionis edicta, nondum tamen janguinaria.—Passos tamen aliquos, licet non pro imperatoris edicto,

GIBBON.

"Maximian and Garius,—in the general administration of the provinces, obeyed the laws which their benefactor had established; but they frequently found occasions of exercising within their camps and palaces a secret persecution," &c. Euseb. l. viii. c. 4—17. "He.

* Sect. 66. Our author has cited Laetantius only, as if all this passage was taken from him; whereas we see it is taken from Eusebius, l. viii. c. 1. but he is not quoted till Mr. G. speaks of "the corruption of manners and principles," note 134. Then we read, Eusebius, l. viii. c. 1. &c.

† Sect. 66. ‡ Sect. 68, 69. See also sect. 30.
§ Note 133, c. xvi. ** Sect. 68. || Page 566.
Dorwell.

to, at pro ministri propria saevitia, docet Eusebius, sed ita docet, ut innuat omnino fuisse paucissimos." Euseb. Hift. Eccl. viii. 4.

"Ego neutron interpretatione Eusebii mentem existimo affecutum esse Valefium.—Huic itaque persectionis illius quae in milites exercenda erat, curam committer imperator. Ita recte vererit Hieronymus. Hos verberibus animadverteri jussarat Diocletianus. Ex his verberibus nonnullos mortuos fuisse crediderim, quos tamen cum iuva tv xai deuterov et oun dicat Eusebius, id palam innuit fuisse pau- cissimos §.

"Dimitfus à Diocletiano Galerius—primo vere movit in Persas, quos uno praelio penitus debellavit.—Ita ut reverfus a Diocletiano—cum ingenti honore fulceptus fuerit. Rediit—in Bithyniam

Gibbon.

"He limits the number of military martyrs by a remarkable expression (σπανίως τούτων εις τω και δευτερον), of which neither his Latin nor French translator have rendered the energy *.

"After the success of the Persian war had raised the hopes and reputation of Galerius, he passed a winter with Diocletian in the palace of Nicomedia; and the fate of Christianity became the object of all their secret consultations. The experienced emperor was still inclined to pursue measures of lenity; and urged, on the strongest terms, the danger as well as cruelty of shedding the blood of those deluded fanatics †.

"The oracle of Apollo at Mileus was consulted by Diocletian, before he published his edicts of persecution. Laetantius de M. P. c. 11 ‡.

"Galerius

† Page 567. ‡ Note 136. c. xvi.
Galerius at length extorted from him the permission of summoning a council,—and those ambitious courtiers easily discerned, that it was incumbent on them to second, by their eloquence, the importunate violence of the Caesar,—Who proposed, that every one refusing to offer sacrifice should immediately be burnt alive †.

“Arguments, like these, may seem to have determined the reluctant mind of Diocletian to embrace a new system of persecution §.”

“The pleasure of the emperor was at length signified to the Christians.

—The twenty-third of February, which coincided with the Roman festival of the Terminalia, was appointed (whether from accident, or design) to set bounds to the progress of Christianity. At the earliest dawn of day, the

—See also sect. 67.
† Sect. 70.
‡ P. 567, 569. Our author has not inserted this passage as it stands connected in Dodwell, but postponed it for a page or two.
§ Page 568.
DODWELL.

funt, "ut quasi termi-
" nus imponeretur Chrif-
" tianæ religionis." Is erat vii. Kal. Mart. Feb. xxiii. Eo itaque die ec-
clesiam diruebant, scriptu-
turas incendebant Nicó-
mediae, quod reliquo de-
inde imperio foret in ex-
emplum. Proximo die Feb. xxiv. edictum Ni-
comediae propositum est,
quo, "cavebatur ut re-
ligionis illius homines
" carerent omni honore
" ac dignitate, tormen-
tis subjécti essent ex
" quocunque ordine aut
" gradu venirent, ad-
" versus eos omnis actio
" caleret, ipsi non de in-
juria, non de adulterio,
" non de rebus ablatis
" agere possent, liberta-
" tem dénique ac vocem
" non haberent." Lac-
tantius, de M. P. n.

12, 13.

"Erat & alid ex
Eusebii Testimonio edic-
tum per ou πολύ non
muto post superius emis-
sum, quo mandatum est
prospérous omnes ubicum-
que

GIBBON.

the doors of the church
of Nicomedia were broke
open; and they com-
mitted to the flames the
volumes of holy scri-
pture †.

"The next day the
general edict of persecu-
tion was published; per-
sons of a liberal birth
were declared incapable
of holding any honours
or employments. The
judges were authorized
to hear and to determine
every action that was
brought against a Chris-
tian. But the Christians
were not permitted to
complain of any injury
which they themselves
had suffered.—It was
enacted, that their
churches, in all the pro-
vinces of the empire,
should be demolished to
their foundations †.”

The governors of the
provinces were directed
to apprehend all persons of
the ecclesiastical order; and
the prisons destined for
the vilest criminals, were
soon

* Sect. 71. † Page 568. † P. 569, 570.
que Ecclesiærum, primum quidem ut conjicerentur in vincula, deinde vero ut Diis sacrificare omnibus modis coegeruntur. Προς εκείνων omnes cujusque ordo clericos intellexisse Imperatores, è decreti executione manifestum est. —Pro primo hujus edicti gradu, ita carceres fuisse repletos Episcopis, presbyteris, diaconis, lectoribus, atque exorcisis, ut nullus iis qui ob alia crimina condemnati essent, jam locus superesse [...].

Cruciatibus potius quam eadem sævitus sit, ut qui martyrium passi sunt, eorum plerique ipso cruciatuam dolore extinquet fuerint, [...]. Euseb. de Mart. Palæst. c. 2.

Successerunt deinde, si Eusebio credimus, edicta sæviora quibus παντας παυδημας τυς κατα πολιν συνει τε και σπειρειν τοις ειδολοις εκελευτο. De Mart. Pal. c. 3. §.

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* Sect. 72. † Page 311. § Sect. 74.
† Page 574. || Page 572.
DODWELL.

Multos equidem periculorum involvebant hujusmodi edita, cum quicunque synaxibus interfuissent de vita illis effect periclitandum.

Inde etiam est quod secundo persecutionem anno purpuram depositisse Diocletianum atque Maximianum constat et Lac-tantio. de M. P. n. 19.

persecution, he divested himself of the Imperial purple.

GIBBON.

The punishment of death was denounced against all who should presume to hold any secret assemblies for the purpose of religious worship.

Diocletian had no sooner published his edicts against the Christians, than, as if he had been desirous of committing to other hands the right of persecution, he divested himself of the Imperial purple.

XVIII.

After the resignation of Diocletian, our author, according to the plan of Dodwell, “separately considers the state of Christianity in the different parts of the empire.”

DODWELL.

“Eodem spectat quod, tertio tandem persecutionis anno, persecutionem dicat a Maximino suisse refuscatam.”

“Videamus itaque jam qualis fuerit in reliquis

GIBBON.

“Maximin gratified his own inclination, by yielding a rigorous obedience to the stern commands of his benefactor.”

“When Galerius had gained

* Page 319.  † Sect. 73.  † Page 569.
|| Page 575.  § Page 314.  ** Page 579.
liquis eadem illa persecutio. In Galerii imperio omnino probable est, pro severissimi principis ingenio, fulsi etiam severissimam."

XIX.

Of Constantius we find this account.

DODWELL.

"Constantium ab initio amicissimum tuum " καθ" συνοικισμον μισάσαν συναπασματικών ἀλλα και των υπ" αυτω συνεχεις αξιωτικων και αναπεραιτητως φυλαξαντα και μπε των εκκλησιων των συνα αυτως καιελλων μεθ' ἐντον τι καθ" συνοικισμον καιαναπασαν τα τη Eusebius i. viii.

Discrepit nonnihil Laetantius †, cujus hae sunt verba: "Constantius, ne dissentire a majorum"

GIBBON.

"The mild and humane temper of Constantius was averse to the oppression of any part of his subjects. The principal offices of his palace were exercised by Christians.—But as long as Constantius remained in the subordinate station of Caesar, it was not in his power openly to reject the edicts of Diocletian, or to disobey the commands of Maximian. His"

* Page 578. † Our author says in a note (164. c. xvi.) Dodwell Dissertat. Cyprian. xi. 75. represents them "(Eusebius and Laetantius) as inconsistent with each other. "But the former evidently speaks of Constantius in the station "of Caesar, and the latter of the same prince in the rank of "Augustus." The difference is thus reconciled by Dodwell himself. "Discrepit nonnihil laetantius—Nec id temere. Infra "enim de Constantino jam Augusto ita scribit," &c. Mr. D. speaks of the difference as trivial.

S 2
DODWELL.

"majorum preceptis vi-
"deretur, conventicula,
"id est, parietes, qui
"restitui poterunt, dirui
"passus est, verum au-
"tem Dei templum,
"quod est in homini-
"bus, incolumne serva-
"bat." Nec id temere.
Infra enim de Constant-
"rio Constantius Au-
gustus nihil egit prius
quam Christianos cul-
tui ac Deo suo red-
dere. Hæc fuit pri-
ma ejus sanctæ sanctæ
religionis restituta."—
De M. P. c. 14, 15. In
ceto tamen uterque con-
venit nullam fuisset quæ
martysres fecerit in Con-
stantii ditione persecutionem.—Cuncta autem
quæ trans Alpes erant
Constantio credita—Er-
gone non Britannias modo,
& Gallias, sed Hispa-
nias regebat †.

† Sect. 75. • Page 575. † Page 576.

GIBBON.

His authority contribut-
ed, however to alleviate
the sufferings which he
pited and abhorred
He consented, with re-
lucence to the ruin of
the churches; but he
ventured to protect the
Christians themselves
from the fury of the
populace and from the
rigour of the laws *.

The provinces of Gaul
(under which we may
probably include those
of Britain) were in-
debted for the singular
tranquility which they
enjoyed, to the gentle
interposition of their so-
vereign. Eusebius I. viii.
c. 13. Laetantius de M.
P. c. 15.

The elevation of Con-
stantius to the supreme
and independent dignity
of Augustus, gave a free
scope to the exercise of
his virtues, and the
shortness of his reign
did not prevent him
from establishing a sy-
stem of toleration, &c †.

We
XX.

We read the same account of Maxentius in both these authors.

Dodwell.
"Eodem tempore de-sit (persecutio) & in Italia. Valedicturus enim imperio Maximianus eam, ni fallor, gratiam subditis faciebat quo gratior illis acceptiorque esset ejus memoria. Sequabantur temporae turbulentae usque ad imperium Maxentii. Is autem in initio captandae benevolentiae causa revocavit persecutionis editum Christianumque se simulavit. Ita Eusebius:

—Hist. Eccles. viii. 14.*

XXI.

The persecution of Maximin is the next which is treated of by them.

Dodwell.
"Prodiit tandem edictum Galerii, quo persecutione illa penitus extincta est—et quamquam invito Maximino, a Sabino praef. Orientis, praefectis provincialibus urbicisque

Gibbon.
"Galerius desirous of repairing the mischief that he had occasioned, published—a general edict (of toleration)§.

In the first six months, of his new reign, Maximin

* Sect. 77. † Page 577. ‡ Note 167. c. xvi.
§ Page 579.
Dodwell.

cisque magistratibus communicatum, cum et ipse verbo tenus judicibus mandasset, ut ab oppugnatione Christianorum abstinerent. Duravit haec pax ne sex quidem mensibus.—Fatetur à se aliquid illis fuisset indultum pro more superiorum Imperatorum †. Inde ad novas artes prætextuali que quaerendos restaurandæ persecutionis se convertit Maximinus.—Subornavit civitatum ad se legationes magni quas beneficii loco id à fepe tium ut Christiani pelle rentur, imprimis Antiochiae, &c. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. ix. 3. Tum civitates, quæ ad gratum Maximino fore intellectissent, sua etiam ἴηρισ ματα adversus Christianos emiserunt. Euseb. ix. 9 †. Rescriptis ad illa civitatum decreta, pellendos esse Christianos. Qualis fuerit rescripti forma, con-

Gibbon.

imin affected to adopt the prudent counsels of his predecessors.—Sabinus his pretorian praefect addressed a circular letter to all the governours and magistrates of the provinces,—directing the officers of justice to cease their ineffectual persecutions,” &c. Euseb. c. ix. 1. §.

But this treacherous calm was of a short duration.—By the influence of the magistrates, and of the sacerdotal order, a great number of dutiful addresses were obtained, particularly from Nico media, Antioch, and Tyre, which artfully represented the well known intentions of the Court as the general sense of the people;—expressed their abhorrence of the Christians, and humbly prayed that these impious sectaries might at least be excluded from the limits

* Sext. 82. † Sext. 84. § Page 581. Note 174, c. xvi.
DODWELL.


—Judices nonnullos in Christianos fæviisse ipse innuit Maximinus, sed præcepta ejus perperam intelligentes. Euseb. ix. 10 §.

GIBBON.

limits of their respective territories.

The answer of Maximin to the address which he obtained from the citizens of Tyre is still extant—his edicts were engraved on tables of brass †. Eusebii l. ix. c. 2—8. Laclant. de M. P. c. 36 ‡.

Maximin imputes all the severities which the Christians suffered to the judges and governors, who had misunderstood his intentions. See the Edict in Eusebii l. ix. c. 10 ||.

XXII.

We find also that the difference in the accounts given us by Eusebium and Laclantius of Maximin's persecution is pointed out to us by Mr. Dodwell as well as by Mr. Gibbon.

DODWELL.

Quod autem, ait Eusebium, hanc Maximini persecutionem priori fuissent multo acerbiorem, nisi candide intelligatur, verum esset vix potest, &c. Hist.

GIBBON.

We read in a note.

"See Euseb. l. viii. c. 14. l. ix. c. 2.—8. Laclant. de M. P. c. 36. These writers agree in representing the arts of Max-

* Page 328. § Sect. 87. † Note 175. c. xvi. ‡ Page 581, 582. || Note 170. xvi.
DODWELL.
Hift. Eccles. ix. 6**.
—Una tamen cum illis rescriptis etiam alia ad praefeclios provinciarum judiciaque data esse verissime est, sed nec illa eadem imperantia. "Nam cum clementiam" (inquit Laëctantius), "specie tenus profiteretur, occidi servos Dei vetuit, debilitari "jussit." Laëctant. de M. P. n. 35*.

We thus read of the end put to Maximin’s persecution.

DODWELL.

"Jamque persecutioni matura erant omnia ni Constantinus illum (Maximinum) deteruifset.

Duravit hæc ipsa dissolutioni (Maximinus) usque ad nuncium de profugato à Constantino Max-

GIBBON.

Maximin: but the former relates the execution of several martyrs, while the latter expressly affirms," occidi servos Dei vetuit †."

But a few months had scarcely elapsed, before the edicts published by the two western emperors obliged Maximin to suspend the persecution of his designs †.

** See also Sæt. 90. 81, 86, 87.

* Sæt. 84. Mr. Dodwell, however desirous of making the number of martyrs appear small, has scorn’d to have recourse to those arts of misrepresentation, by which our author supports his Hypothesis. Mr. G. should have remembered that Mr. Docwell says, "Non itaque audebat palam, quod "ecerat anexa, (Maximinus) Christianos laniare," &c.

† Note 175. c. xvi. † Page 582.
entio—inde pro auctoritate egit cum Maximino Constantinus.*

XXIII.

There is a striking resemblance in what these authors say of the conduct of the magistrates during this persecution.

DODWELL.

"Ipsa cædium fatietas atque affectatio illa quam diximus incruenti imperii ad sæviora quidem persecutores confilia, minus tamen martyrum proventu copiosa, convertit."

"Hæc autem non tantum ideo faciunt, ut gloriaris possint, nullum fe innocentiium peremissæ, nam & ipse audivi aliquos gloriantes, quia administratio sua, in hac parte, fuerit incruenta"

"Ut gloriaris possint nullum fe innocentiium peremissæ, nam & ipse audivi aliquos gloriantes, quia ad-
ministratio sua, in hac parte, fuerit incruenta"

GIBBON.

"There were some governors who from a real or affected clemency had preserved their hands unstained with the blood of the faithful §.

"Ut gloriaris possint nullum fe innocentium peremissæ, nam & ipse audivi aliquos gloriantes, quia ad-
ministratio sua, in hac parte, fuerit incruenta"

§ Page 583.
¶ Note 183. c. xvi. Mr. Dodwell has fairly given us the passage from Laëntius; Mr. G. as I have before shewn, has shamefully distorted and mangled it.

Another
Another particular circumstance is noticed by both these writers.

**Dodwell.**

"Inde anno viii. tanta crevit Christianis in metallis constitutis fiducia ut palam collectas celebrarent, extruēris e-tiam Ecclesias."*

**Gibbon.**

"The confessors who were condemned to work in the mines, were permitted by the humanity or negligence of their keepers, to build chapels, and freely to profess their religion in the midst of those dreary habitations†."

As to the remark on Eusebius with which Mr. G. closes this account of the persecutions, I shall content myself with pointing out a sentence or two and beg leave to refer my reader to Mr. Dodwell for the rest.

**Dodwell.**

"An tamen magnus revera fuerit martyrum in hac universa persecutione numerus, ita optime judicabimus, si quos inflictus"

**Gibbon.**

"Eusebius, de Martyr. Palest. c. 13. He closes his narration by assuring us that these were the martyrdoms inflicted"

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* Page 326.
DODWELL.

quia ille numeros pro magnis habuerit, intelligamus, &c. Euleb. de Mart. Pal. c. i3.

"Videamus—quia ille numeros reputarit magnos in ipsa Thebaide—
te meli pleionei η δεκα,
te de ύπο της εικοσι—
αλαλε δε ουχ' ηττου και
τριακοντα. ηδη de εργυς τη
και εξικοντα, και παλιν
αλλητε εκατον εν ημερα μι
— εκτελοντα—ΙΣΤΟΡΗ-
ΣΑΜΕΝ δε και αυτοι επι
ην τους γενομενοι,
ΠΛΕΙΟΤΕ αθροις κατα
μιαν ημεραν, της μεν ηυς
κυφαλης αποτομην ΤΡΙ-
ΜΕΙΝΑΝΤΑΣ, &c. Euleb.
Hist. Eccles. viii. 1ο*.

heard; either the expectation, or the execution of
the punishment †.”

GIBBON.

inflicted in Palestine,
during the whole course
of the persecution. The
vth chapter of his viii
book, which relates to
the province of Thebais
in Egypt, may seem to
contradict our moderate
computation, &c.—He
relates, that in Thebais,
from ten to one hundred
persons had frequently
suffered martyrdom in
the same day.—Instead
of a large, but definite
number, he speaks of
many Christians (πλειον)
and most artfully selects
two ambiguous words
(ιστορησαμεν and υπομει-
ναντας) which may sig-
nify either what he had
seen, or what he had

I shall conclude the whole of these extracts from
Doddwell, by pointing out the following observa-
tion, which occurs in each of these authors.

DODWELL.

"—ita metuebant illi
(Christiani) ne corona
illa

* Sect. 90.

GIBBON.

"So great was—the
fervour of the first Chris-
tians,

† Note 181, c. xvi.
illa martyrii exciderent. Sed infinitum est exempla congerere. Id unum satis est, quod diu eft ex quo observavit Sulpicius Severus, avidius expedita effe ea atate martyria quam postea episcopatus *.

“Certatim gloriosa in certamina ruebatur; multique avidius tum martyria gloriosis mor- tibus querebantur; quam nunc episcopatus pravis ambionibus appetuntur.” Sulpicius Severus, 1. ii. †

There are some other passages in Dodwell, which Mr. G. seems to have borrowed; but I have been obliged to dwell so long on this subject, by comparing their words on the conduct of each emperor, that I shall pass over the rest. I flatter myself that I have fully proved to my reader, that the concise account which Dodwell has given us of the persecutions of the emperors, has been the chief guide and pattern of our author in this part of his history. It is by his assistance, that he has shewn forth his skill in gracing matters of fact with the beauties of language, while by these beauties he might hope to disguise the many remarks for which he stands indebted to the learning of Dodwell. It is thus, that the creeping ivy entwines itself round a tree, and is enabled to display its verdant foliage, while it hides from our sight the trunk which supports it.

* Page 374. † Page 551.

† Note 91. c. xvi. My reader must instantly perceive that it was no hard task to trace out the passage of Sulpicius, when so much was marked out by Dodwell. Plagiarism
Plagiarism from Lardner.

I have already animadverted on a misrepresentation of Eusebius by Mr. G., and shewn that there is no mention made of Bruttius Præsens at the place he refers to. My present design is to fulfil my promise of shewing the probable cause of this error.

Dr. Lardner, in his xiith chapter on the Testimony of Bruttius Præsens, refers to Eusebius iii. 18.; but yet speaks of Bruttius as mentioned by Eusebius in his Chronicon. p. 164. in the 15th year of Domitian. This difference our historian seems to have overlooked, and referred to the History, instead of the Chronicon.

Lardner.

"Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History, speaking of the persecution under Domitian, says, "Moreover at this time the Doctrine of our faith was so conspicuous, that writers, adverse to our sentiments, have not forborne to insert in their histories an account of his persecution, and the martyrdoms that happened in it."

Gibbon.

"They have likewise exactly marked the time of it, relating, that "in the fifteenth year of Domitian Flavia Domitilla, niece by the sister's side to Flavius Clemens, then one of the consuls of Rome, with a great many others"
LARDNER.

"others, was banished to the island Pontia, for
the profession of the Christian religion."

LARDNER.

"In his chronicle, at
the fifteenth year of Do-
mitian, Eusebius says:
"And Bruttius writes,
"that many Chris-
tians suffered martyr-
dom under Domitian.
"Among whom was
Flavia Domitilla, niece
by the sister's side to
Flavius Clemens the con-
sul, who was banished
to the island Pontia, be-
cause she confessed her-
self to be a Chris-
tian."

"There were several
eminent men of this
name (that is Bruttius
Præfens) in the second
century. There is a let-
ter of the younger Plinie to
Præfens, whom some
think to have been also
called Brütius or Brutti-
us." I. vii. epist. 3.

Tillemont says, "he may have been Bruttius
Præfens, who was consul in the year 139. or Præ-

GIEBON.

"But he had scarcely
finished the term of his
annual magistracy, when
on a slight pretence he
was condemned and exe-
cuted; Domitilla was ba-
nished to a desolate island
on the coast of Campa-
nia," &c. č.

"Bruttius Præfens
(ap. Eufeb. iii. 18.) ba-
nishes her to the isle of
Pontia, which was not
far distant from the o-
ther." That is, from
the isle of Pandetaria.

"If the Bruttius Præ-
fens, from whom it is
probable that he collect-
ed this account, was the
correspondent of Pliny,
(epistol. vii. 3.) we may
consider him as a con-
temporary writer."

* The Greek passage is here transcribed by Lardner from
† Page 539. § Note 53. c. xvi. ¶ Note 53. c. xvi.
LARDNER.

Again we read, "Dion Cassius, to be hereafter quoted, will inform us of a Flavia Domitilla, wife of the consul Clement, who was banished by Domitian for Christianity into the island Pandateria, which lay near to Pontia, upon the same coast of Italy. This has given occasion to a dispute whether there were two of this name, who suffered for Christianity about the same time. Some supposing one and the same person to be intended, others again contending, that there were two. The matter is of no great importance. Nevertheless, perhaps, we may give it some farther consideration, in the chapter of Dion Cassius." Tillemont Mem. Eccles. tom. ii. p. 126.

We here trace the several remarks which our historian has made on the execution of Clemens, on the banishment of Domitilla, and on Bruttius Præfens: And as he makes mention of them in the manner, and on the same occasion which Dr. Lard-

* Lardner's Testimonies—Histothem Authors, vol. ii. c. 12.
† Note 52. c. xvi.
ner has done, it gives my charge an appearance more stable than that of conjecture.

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**Plagiarisms from Abauzit.**

I bring the first instance, not so much as a proof of plagiarism, for our author has indeed referred to Abauzit, as to shew how servilely he has translated him, and that Abauzit has given him the reference to *Epiphanius*.

**ABAUZIT.**

"Les Alogiens, selon S. Epiphanes, s'élevent contre l'Apocalypse qu'ils vouloient ôter à S. Jean, parce disoient-ils entr'autres raisons, que du tems de cet apôtre, il n'y avait point d'Eglise Chrétienne à Thyatire : ce que S. Epiphanes ne craint point de leur accorder, & il supposse en même tems, que lorsque S. Jean écrit à l'Eglise de Thyatire, il parle, non comme si elle existoit alors, mais par un esprit de prophétie."

*Epiphanes Hæres. 51.*

**GIBBON.**

"The Alogians (Epiphanius de Hæres. 51.) disputed the genuineness of the Apocalypse, because the church of Thyatira was not yet founded. Epiphanius, who allows the fact, extricates himself from the difficulty, by ingeniously supposing, that St. John wrote in the spirit of prophecy. See Abauzit Discours sur l'Apocalypse†."

* Discours Historique sur l'Apocalypse.
† Note 152. c. xvii.
A bare comparison will prove, that what our author has advanced on the subject of the Apocalypse is chiefly taken from Abauzit.

**I.**

**ABAUZIT.**

"Mais ce qui prouve que l'Apocalypse n'était pas dans le canon des écritures, c'est le concile de Laodicée, le premier que nous connaissons qui ait dressé le catalogue des livres sacrés, tenu vers l'an 360. — L'Apocalypse est omise, ce qui est assez surprenant, elle que S. Jean (comme on le croit aujourd'hui,) avait rédigée par écrit à la prière des Chrétiens d'Asie. — Cette même Apocalypse est méconnue dans le lieu de sa naissance, bannie & proscrite par ces mêmes évêques d'Asie qui se défioient les hérétiers & les successeurs de S. Jean, assemblés à Laodicée, au milieu des sept Églises à qui le livre était adressé, & à qui il rendoit même un si glorieux témoignage."

**II.**

**ABAUZIT.**

"On ne saurait non plus faire fonds sur une petite vivacité de Sulpice Sévère, lorsqu'il traite de fous & d'impies ceux qui rejettent l'Apocalypse. — Faut-il être furieux que Sévère ait taxé de folie & d'impie ceux qui doutoient de l'Apocalypse? Mais ce qui est plus à remarquer,

**GIBBON.**

"In the council of Laodicea (about the year 360) the Apocalypse was tacitly excluded from the sacred canon by the same churches in Asia to which it is addressed."

"We may learn from the complaint of Sulpicius Severus, that their sentence had been ratified by the greater number of Christians of his time."
ABAUZIT.

remarquer, c'est que ces fous & ces impies fai-
soient le plus grand nombre. La plupart dit Sé-
vère, rejettent l'Apocalypse,” &c.*

The above extract from Abauzit evidently
proves, that I happened to discover the right pas-
sage, when I pointed out Mr. G.'s misrepresen-
tation of Sulpicius Severus: and, at the same time it
demonstrates the reason that he did not make any
particular reference to that author. Abauzit had
not specified the place, and as Mr. G. consulted
no other original, he knew not how to give us a
better direction. Indeed if he had looked at the
passage, and found that Sulpicius Severus there
expressly tells us, that the Apocalypse was the work
of St. John, he could not have committed so unfor-
tunate a blunder as to cite this Father as saying that
the greater number of Christians denied its canonical
authority.

III.

ABAUZIT. GIBBON.

"Environ ce temps-là, un Grec inconnu se cou-
vroit du beau nom de S. Denys l'Aréopagite, pour
donner à ses fictions le poids & l'âge de la vé-
rité.—Cependant comme
La supposition étoit grossi-
fière, elle ne fut pas d'
abord goûtée dans son pays natal: mais elle trou-
va un climat plus favorable en occident. Papes,

* Sect. 81, p. 297, 298.  † Note 65, c. xv.

conciles,
Abauzit.

conciles, souverains, la recurent avec grand respect, & le monde Latin admira la profonde doctrine du pretendu Aretopagite.

I had passed over this reason which Mr. Gibbon affigus for the reception of the Apocalypse in the Greek church; because, as he had cited no testimony for his assertion, it was foreign to my purpose to take notice of his remark: But now I have more effectually proved my point by shewing whence he gained his information.

In the advertisement prefixed to Abauzit's discourse on the Apocalypse it is very frankly acknowledged, that "he undertook it with the view of pointing out the difficulties that may be raised against it, and the contests occasioned by a doubt of its authenticity, and to overthrow the testimony of the Fathers concerning it." We need not wonder, therefore, that our author should readily adopt his remarks, nor, after so long a series of Plagiariums as I have exposèd, that he should endeavour to conceal his obligations.

From Dr. Middleton's letter to Dr. Waterland, our author has gained the subsequent passage:

**Middleton.**

"Herodotus tells us,—

"that the Phœnicians and Syriads who inhabited Palestine, (that is, the Jews) confessed, that they had received the custom of circumcision from...

**Gibbon.**

"Herodotus, who visited Asia whilst it obeyed the last of those empires, slightly mentions the Syrians of Palestine, who, according to their own confession, had re-

MIDDLETON.  
"from the Egyptians." received from Egypt the rite  
Vid. Herod. l. 2. c. of circumcision."  
104.*"  
See l. 2. c. 104†.

Our author has adopted many of Dr. Middleton's opinions respecting the Jews; I shall give one specimen.

MIDDLETON.  
"The Jews, on the other hand, were an obscure contemptible people, famed for no kind of literature; scarce known to the polite world, till the Roman empire dispersed them; and then the more despised only for being known."  
Tacit. Hist. v. 3.  
Justin. Hist. l. 36. c. 2. ‡

GIBBON.  
The Jews, who under the Assyrian and Persian monarchies, had languished for many ages the most despised portion of their slaves, emerged from obscurity under the successors of Alexander; and—soon excited the curiosity and wonder of other nations.§.

Justin. 36. 2, 3 ‖

  See the refutation of this opinion by the late Bp. Pearce in his Reply to the Letter to Dr. Waterland, p. 13.
† Page 451.
‡ P. 29 Letter to Dr. Waterland.
§ I have already fully shewn the assistance Mr. G. has received from the Free Inquiry of his friend Dr. Middleton; yet great as his opinion is of him, it has not prevailed on our historian to profit by his admonition. Speaking of the infidel author of "Christianity as old as the Creation," he says, "And this may serve withal to shew his ignorance of antiquity, in magnifying, as he does on all occasions, the moderation of pagan govern-
ments, in opposition to Christian; that they indulged an universal liberty, never persecuted for religion, never quarreled
It was agreeable to our author's design to adopt such a dark character of the Jews: He indeed discov-
ers his inclinations by the choice of his au-
thors.

After so long a detail of convincing proofs, I think no doubt can remain, that our author, with all his pretensions to originality, must stand con-
vinced as a servile plagiary. Nor let any one fancy, that it cost him much labour or skill to make such a display of erudition: nothing more was requisite than to drop one single link of the chain; to omit mentioning the name of his modern friends, through whose channel he had any acquaintance with the ancient writers on the subjects he treated of, and to make the boldest and most frequent ap-
peals to those ancients, as if he himself had pain-
fully turned over all their works. I have, I hope, suf-
ciently established the certainty of this his mode of proceeding; but I cannot dismiss this charge against him without informing the reader, that in one instance, by an unaccountable over-
fight, he has, unfortunately for himself, forgot to drop the modern, and modestly disclaims all know-
ledge of Athanasius, but what he has picked up from Tillemont.

TILLEMONT.

“Dieu fit aussi eclat-
ter à la honte des mau-
vais Chrétienls la gener-
sité de quelques infideles,
qui

GIBBON.

“Heavy penalties were denounced against all who should presume to have a proscribed sec-
tary

“led about their Gods; for he quite mistakes the matter; it is not the believers of religion, but infidels and atheists, who in every country have always been the fewest persecutors, and cruellest oppressors of all civil as well as religious liberty.” He proves his assertion by several examples. Letter to Dr. Water-
land, p. 54. See also p. 64.
Tillemont.

qui ayant receu chez eux
des Chrétiens que l'on
cherchoit, eurent autant
de soin de les cacher
qu'ils en eussent pu avoir
pour eux-mêmes, & ne
craignirent point de perdre
de l'argent, de souffrir
la prison, & de s'exposer même à la mort,
plutost que de trahir ceux qui s'ettoient con-
fiez à leur foy." Atha-
nas. fol. p. 853 *

Gibbon.

tary from the just indig-
nation of the Gods, and
of the emperors. Yet
notwithstanding the se-
verity of this law, the
virtuous courage of ma-
ny of the pagans, in con-
cealing their friends or
relations, affords an ho-
nourable proof, that the
rage of superstition had
not extinguished in their
minds the sentiments of
nature and humanity †.

Athanasius, p. 833. ap.
Tillemont Memoires Ec-
clesiastiques, tom. v.
part i. p. 90 ‡.

These proofs of our author's plagiarism which I have produced, as undeniable as they are numer-
ous, I might still extend, by tracing him more closely. But I trust that I have sufficiently con-
vinced every unbiassed person, within how narrow a compass the boasted extent of Mr. G.'s reading
is contained. It might be very proper to present
his readers with a body of notes, stuffed with a
disgusting farrago of ancient learning; but he could
employ his time better than by really examining
the mighty Fathers, whose writings he so frequently
appeals to. Middleton could afford some topics of
abuse; Barbeyrac had others ready prepared for his
purpose; and Dodwell, in one dissertation, had
collected erudition enough to furnish the far

† Page 575.
‡ Note 163. c. xvi.

greater
greater part of the materials for his sixteenth chapter. And I think I may boldly assert, that if I had added Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, and Dupin's Bibliothèque, to my list of Mr. G.'s modern friends, I should hardly have left him a single sentence of his own to boast of in his two famous chapters, which were to give the death-wound to Christianity. In short, were I to restore to each of them the passages which Mr. G. has purloined, he would appear as naked as the proud and gaudy daw in the fable, when each bird had plucked away his own plume. The witty poet tells us what censure such proceedings merit,

——“Moveat cornicula risum
    Furtivis nudata coloribus.”——

I have now completed the task I proposed to execute, which was not to confute Mr. G.'s arguments against the divine original of Christianity; but to expose the indefensible arts to which he has recourse in supporting them; and to strip them of their boasted novelty, by restoring his pilfered erudition to their proper owners. Before I conclude, however, it may not be without its use to quiet the apprehensions of many a sincere, but, I must add, ill-instructed Christian, who, imposed upon by our historian's parade of quotation and elegance of composition, have done him, what I must think, the unmerited honour of considering him as an adversary who had produced something of importance, unknown to his predecessors in the cause of infidelity, and which the friends of the Gospel would find it difficult to confute.—Be it observed, therefore, that Mr. G. does not give

* Mosheim, de rebus Christianorum ante Constantin. M.
himself the trouble of starting any new objection against the truth of Christianity, but that his whole plan of accounting for its progress from secondary causes is a stale infidel topic, urged and confuted long before he was born*. As a proof of this, the reader will, I believe, thank me for the following extract from a sermon of bishop Atterbury.

"Miraculous it certainly was (to use the bishop's words), because the natural and visible causes which concurred to the production of this great effect, were not any ways equal to the effect produced; and therefore, some supernatural and invisible cause must needs have given birth to it.

"But let us hear what causes, they say, conspired together to produce this wonderful effect." From the weaknesses and insufficiency of these the bishop thus deduces the proof of the miraculous propagation.

"In which truth (viz. the miraculous propagation of the Gospel) that we may be yet farther confirmed, let us consider what shifts the enemies of the gospel make use of, to evade the force of

* The following concise passages from M. Scheim, (who is spoken of so highly on many occasions by our historian,) may with propriety be given to my readers, to shew that his sentiment on this subject is as widely different from Mr. G.'s, as it is more rational, more pious, and more grateful. They are thus translated by Maclaine.

"When we consider the rapid progress of Christianity among the Gentile nations, and the poor feeble instruments by which this great and marvelous event was immediately effected, we must naturally have recourse to an omnipotent and invisible hand; as its true and proper cause," &c.

"Such then were the true causes of that amazing rapidity with which the Christian religion spread itself upon the earth; and those who pretend to assign other reasons of this surprizing event, indulge themselves in idle fictions, which must disgust every attentive observer of men and things." Sect. 8. &c.
this pressing argument. And the utmost that any of them pretend to say, is as follows: It is true, they will own, Christians multiplied very fast, and the increase of them was, in some sense, miraculous: That is, it was wonderful; as every unusual thing is to those, who do not know, or consider the causes of it. But to a man, they say, who dares go out of the common road, and to think for himself, it will appear, that there was at that time a set of natural causes on foot, sufficient to account for this effect, without any recourse to a divine and supernatural agent. The apostles indeed were twelve plain illiterate men, who had not, of themselves, force or skill enough, to bring about such an event: But their natural inability was supplied by a favourable juncture, by a happy coincidence of such conspiring causes, and accidental advantages, as mightily helped on the work.

"For example——

"The purity of the Christian morals was a mighty argument to bring the men of probity and virtue into the interests of the Gospel.

"The distribution of goods, which the first Christians made, and their living together in common, was a good reason for many men's embracing that faith, which, they were sure, would maintain them.—In the mean while, the rulers of the world overlooked, and neglected to crush, a doctrine, which was so harmless in itself, and so unlikely to succeed on the account of its abettors; till, through their connivance, it was at last universally received among the vulgar sort, and the number of its votaries was grown so formidable, that even princes themselves were forced, for their own ease and interest, to come into it, and profess it.

"And thus, say they, several extraordinary and unheeded advantages concurring, to favour the growth of Christianity, it grew indeed mightily, and prevailed;
prevailed; as a little river will swell high, and spread itself wide, and run far, when swoln by casual rains, and by many other streams, which have emptied themselves at once into it. Such is the account they pretend to give of the rise and progress of our faith, from second causes, without calling a first, to solve the appearance.

"The purity of the Christian morals, and the answerable lives of Christian converts, did indeed very naturally lead men to admire and value the doctrine of Christ, but by no means to come under the yoke of it: for though most men have an esteem for strict rules, and strict lives; yet few care to practice the one, or to imitate the other. And nothing, I think, could be contrived so effectual (next to the former wife motive from the sufferings of the martyrs) to deter men from Christianity, as to tell them, that, when they took it upon them, they must renounce their dearest appetites and passions, and deny their very selves. And I desire the men, who raise these objections against the divine original of the Gospel, to tell us fairly, whether, if they had lived at that time, they would have come in upon this principle? I am sure they would not; because it is this principle alone (that they must part with their unlawful satisfactions and pleasures, if they do) which keeps them out of it now. Therefore neither can this be any sufficient reason for the sudden and wide growth of Christianity.

"Again, neither can any probable account be given of this matter, from the charitable distribution of their goods, which the first Christians made. For, supposing that some of the poorer sort might be tempted by this motive; yet, surely, those who had wherewithal to sustain themselves, and were easy in their circumstances, did not come in upon it: It will not be said, I hope, that such as made this
this distribution of their goods (which will be found to have been an inconsiderable number) came in themselves to partake of it. Nor could these hopes have any great influence, even on the meaner sort; since there was something in the Christian religion, of far more force to frighten them, than this was to allure them; the strict rules of honesty and temperance, according to which they were bound to live, and the great calamities and persecutions which they were sure to undergo.

Lastly, No weight can be laid in this case, on that contempt, which the heathen princes are said to have had of the Christian religion, and the little care they, therefore, took to restrain it; for it is not true, that they stood by unconcerned at its growth; on the contrary, it is certain, that they looked upon it with a jealous eye, from its first rise; and the early persecutions of Nero (not to mention those of Domitian, which were after the destruction of Jerusalem) shew that he took great notice of it, and endeavoured to extirpate it. However, let the Roman emperors have been never so regardless of its increase; yet it is certain, that they did no ways countenance it; and that every one, who turned Christian, was sure by that means to forfeit the favour of his prince, and to be looked upon as an apostate from the religion of his country. And how, even under such a pressure as this, could Christianity have made so rapid and astonishing a progress, if He, who is mightier than the mightiest, had not bid it go forth and prosper against all human discouragements? Had this counsel, or this work been of Men, it would, even without any direct opposition from the temporal power, have certainly come to nought, as Gamaliel argued; but being of God, nothing could overthrow it.
I do not deny after all, but that every one of these particulars might in a natural way contribute somewhat, either to the planting, or spreading of the Gospel. But I think it is evident, from the short hints I have suggested to you, that all of them together were not able to do the thousandth part of that work, which is allotted to them. And, therefore, to resolve this great event into a conspiracy of second causes, as it is called, without any regard to the first, is an absurd and senseless attempt; and only shews us, how very strong an inclination and bias there is in some minds towards infidelity, which they can be brought to espouse upon so very slight grounds.

A man, who should see an acorn put into the earth, and perceive in a few weeks, or months, an oak shooting up from it to a prodigious height, and spreading its branches to an amazing extent, so as to overtop the loftiest mountains, and even to cover the whole field where it grew; might as well say, that there was a strange conspiracy of natural causes, an extraordinary degree of warmth, moisture, and so forth, which concurred to produce this effect; as affirm, that the vast success of the Gospel was owing to those petty principles, from whence some men pretend to derive it.

And now, upon a review of the charges which I have urged against Mr. G., I think I cannot better address him than in the words of bishop Pearce, on a similar occasion, to Dr. Middleton.

By this time, Sir, the reader I believe has fully seen how little credit your writings deserve in their appeals to the authors which you cite. — You have hardly made one original quotation of an author in his true sense, very often in the sense most...

* Bp. Atterbury, serm. iii. vol. i.
† Reply to the Defence of a Letter to Dr. Waterland, p. 46.
opposite to his true one; and have represented not only passages, but facts too, in so wrong a light, that, whatever you searched for, it is plain you missed of truth. — But in God’s name, Sir, is any cause worth such a proceeding? can a good one want falsehoods? or does a bad one deserve them? Let facts, of whatever kind, be sifted thoroughly, and examined freely; but let impartiality always go along with the search, and let it always be thought one ingredient in free-thinking, to follow truth in every inquiry: He that suffers himself to be imposed upon, or tries to impose upon others, has no right to the title of a free-thinker.

With what justice I have applied these words to our author, I leave those to determine who have perused my Examination. One would think that Mr. G. had deemed his studied elegance of style alone sufficient to compensate for unfair quotation and false assertion. But surely it is not the lengthened period, the flow of polished words, the harmonious diction, which can of themselves constitute the character of a good historian. These indeed serve to amuse the fancy, and delight the ear: Yet they conduce little to our information or instruction; but, rather, beguile the judgment of the unwary. It is the indispensable duty of an historian, to give a fair and impartial relation of facts, and to support this relation by citing the testimony of credible authors. I might add to this, that accuracy and impartiality are peculiarly requisite in a writer whose subject leads him to enter upon an investigation of the truth of religion, which is so intimately connected with the most important interests of mankind.

"The historian," says the ingenious and elegant author of the History of America, "who deline-

† Reply to a Letter to Dr. W. p. 7.  ‡ Ibid. p. 40.
ates the transactions of a remote period, has no title to claim assent, unless he produces evidence in proof of his assertions. Without this, he may write an amusing tale, but cannot be said to have composed an authentic history." Excellent and just reflection! how unhappily applied to Mr. Gibbon!

"In these sentiments," continues Dr. Robertson, "I have been confirmed by the opinion of an author, (Mr. Gibbon) whom his industry, erudition, and discernment, have deservedly placed in a high rank among the most eminent historians of the age."

Will the reader of the foregoing sheets agree with the Doctor in his compliment? What industry can Mr. G. lay claim to, whose researches, we see, notwithstanding all his pretences, have been lazily confined within so narrow a circle? What erudition can he boast of, whom we have convicted of inaccuracies so striking as to be scarcely pardonable in any one who would pass for a scholar? And what discernment can he be said to possess, who, not satisfied with "being placed in a high rank among the most eminent historians of the age," chose to relinquish that superiority of fame, and to be handed down to posterity, as a very inidious, but a very superficial advocate of infidelity, the retailer of obloque sneers against sacred truths, the misrepresenter of venerable antiquity, and the plagiarist of modern compilers?

Mr. G. has indeed written "a tale amusing" enough to Unbelievers and Free thinkers, but "he cannot be said to have composed an authentic history: he has no title to claim assent, unless he produces evidence in proof of his assertions." What pity is it then that the reverend and courtly historian, through politeness, should have made a

* See the preface to Dr. Robertson’s History of America.
needless digression, to bestow applause, before he had examined whether censure was not rather due?

I mean not to represent Dr. Robertson as singular in this high tone of compliment to Mr. Gibbon. He has only spoken the language of others who have professedly answered him.

May I be permitted, before I conclude, to hazard it as my opinion, that this civility has been carried beyond all due bounds; and that our historian is entirely indebted for his supposed eminence among the enemies of the gospel, to the over candid encomiums of some of its friends? When men of learning, and good Christians, tell us, that he is "respectable for his great merits, —of real eminence in learning as well as composition,"—and applaud the erudition with which "the materials (of his history) are compiled," it consequentially elevates his fame, and bestows upon him an unmerited consequence, which may puzzle the ignorant, and seduce the unwary believer. It is thus that the credulous superstition of former ages, arising from their ignorance of philosophy, attributed to the glaring comets a malignant influence, and caused them to be viewed with a groundless horror as tokens of impending danger.

* When we reflect on the great credit, which has been given to Mr. G. chiefly, for his elegance of style, we may justly apply to him the words of Bp. Jewell. "Ut com elegantur et copiosis ageretur, homines imperiti possent in ea aliquid esse futilicari." Jaell. Apolog. pro Eccles. Anglican.

† The same author, who pays Mr. G. these compliments, tells us, that "he has adopted an entertaining but superficial manner of writing history," and agrees with me, that he "gives himself the privilege of mutilating, and selecting, and arranging at discretion, the records of past ages."

I shall
I shall now only add, that nothing but the evident goodness of my cause, and the undeniable weakness of Mr. Gibbon's assertions, could have encouraged me to undertake this examination. But as my plan required nothing more than to have recourse to the authors he cites (with which the copious stores of learning treasured up at Oxford, and the kindness of some private friends, amply furnished me), and merely to transcribe their words; diligence and accuracy were the principal qualifications for engaging in such a task; nor was the judgment of riper years so necessary to enable me to execute it successfully.

Let me now take my leave of Mr. Gibbon by assuring him, that if, in the warmth of composition, I have made use of any expressions too harsh and severe, it is entirely owing to the indignation I could not but feel, to see him perpetually vilifying the most venerable and sacred truths with contemptuous irony. I could wish to advise him (would he accept of such humble counsel), when he favours us with his next volume, to keep close to his department as an historian, and to drop the character of a champion of infidelity, which, he may now find, has not added to his literary fame. In the prosecution of his plan, it will fall naturally in his way to treat of the corruptions of Christianity; and as his diligence and accuracy will find ample materials for accounting for the rise and progress of popery from natural causes, we trust that he will not continue to attack genuine Christianity; at least, that he will, for the future, beware of such arts as have been sufficiently exposed in the foregoing sheets.

FINIS.