THE

WORKS

OF

NATHANIEL LARDNER, D.D.

IN ELEVEN VOLUMES:

CONTAINING THE

CREDIBILITY OF THE GOSPEL HISTORY;
JEWISH AND HEATHEN TESTIMONIES;
HISTORY OF HERETICS;
AND HIS SERMONS AND TRACTS;

WITH

GENERAL CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES, AND COPIOUS INDEXES.

TO THE FIRST VOLUME IS PREFIXED

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

ANDREW KIPPIS, D.D. F.R.S. AND S.A.

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their preaching, which these Christians had heard, or the writings of apostles, which they had read, and had in their hands. Such discourses of St. Paul may be seen recorded in Acts xx. 29, 30. And he writes to the like purpose 1 Tim. iv. 1—5. and 2 Tim. iii. and iv. They who suppose, that St. Jude had seen and read the second epistle of St. Peter, must think, that he refers also to 2 Pet. ch. iii. 1—5.

There are some other expressions in this epistle, which may deserve to be here taken notice of by us. Ver. 3. It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that you should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. and ver. 5. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this. These expressions seem to imply, that now some considerable time had passed, since the whole scheme of the christian doctrine had been published to the world, and since the persons, to whom the apostle is writing, were first instructed in it.

Upon the whole, as before said, this epistle might be written in the year of Christ 64, or 65, or 66.

C H A P XXII.

THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

I. Its Genuineness shown from Testimony. II. From internal Characters. III. Its Time.

I. We are now come to the last book of the New Testament, the Revelation: about which there have been different sentiments among Christians, many receiving it as the writing of John, the apostle and evangelist, others ascribing it to John a presbyter, others to Cerinus, and some rejecting it, without knowing to whom it should be ascribed.

I shall therefore here rehearse the testimony of ancient Christians, as it ariseth in several ages.

It is probable, that Hermas had read the book of the Revelation, and imitated it. He has many things resembling it, vol. II. p. 61—64. It is referred to by the martyrs at Lyons, p. 152. There is reason to think, it was received by Papias, p. 108—114. Justin Martyr, about the year 140, was
was acquainted with this book, and received it, as written by
the apostle John. For in his dialogue with Trypho he ex-
pressly says: 'And a man from among us, by name John,
'one of the apostles of Christ, in the revelation made to him,
'has prophesied, that the believers in our Christ shall live a
'thousand years in Jerusalem, and after that shall be the ge-
'neral, and, in a word, the eternal resurrection and judgment
'of all together,' p. 126. To this very passage we suppose
Eusebius to refer in his ecclesiastical history, when giving an
account of Justin's works, he observes to this purpose: 'he
'also mentions the Revelation of John, expressly calling it
'the apostle's.' See the same page, note (a). Among the
works of Melito, bishop of Sardis, one of the seven churches
of Asia, about the year 177, Eusebius mentions one, entitled,
'Of the Revelation of John,' p. 147. It is very probable,
that Melito ascribed this book to the apostle of that name,
and esteemed it a book of canonical authority. Irenæus,
bishop of Lyons in Gaul, about 178, who in his younger
days was acquainted with Polycarp, often quotes this book,
'as the Revelation of John, the disciple of the Lord,' p. 169.
And in one place he says: 'It was seen not long ago, but
almost in our age, at the end of the reign of Doinitian.'
Ibid. And see p. 155.
Theophilus was bishop of Antioch about 181. Eusebius
speaking of a work of his against the heresy of Hermogenes,
says, 'he therein made use of testimonies, or quoted passages,
from John's Apocalypse,' vol. II. p. 190. The book of the
Revelation is several times quoted by Clement of Alexandria,
who flourished about 194, and once in this manner: 'Such an
'one, though here on earth he is not honoured with the first
'seat, shall sit upon the four and twenty thrones judging the
'people, as John says in the Revelation,' p. 229. Tertullian,
about the year 200, often quotes the Revelation, and supposeth
it to have been written by St. John, the same who wrote the
first epistle of John, universally received, p. 276, 277. Again;
'the apostle John in the Apocalypse describes a sharp two-edged
'sword coming out of the mouth of God,' p. 277. He also says,
'We have churches, that are disciples of John. For though
'Marcion rejects the Revelation, the succession of bishops,
'traced to the original, will assure us, that John is the au-
'thor.' ibid. by John, undoubtedly, meaning the apostle.
From Eusebius we learn, that Apollonius, who wrote
against the Montanists about the year 211, quoted the Reve-
lation,
lation, p. 371. By Caius, about the year 212, it was ascribed to Cerinthus, p. 378, 379. It was received by Hippolytus, about the year 220, p. 412, and by Origen about 230, p. 466—468. It is often quoted by him. He seems not to have had any doubt about its genuineness. In his commentary upon St. John's gospel, he speaks of it in this manner: 'Therefore John, the son of Zebedee, says in the Revelation, p. 483. See also p. 483, 484, and 543.

Dionylius, bishop of Alexandria, about the year 247, or somewhat later, wrote a book against the Millenarians, in which he allows the Revelation to be written by John, a holy and divinely inspired man. But he says, 'he cannot easily grant him to be the apostle, the son of Zebedee, whose is the gospel according to John, and the catholic epistle,' vol. III. p. 105. He rather thinks it may be the work of John, an elder, who also lived at Ephesus, in Asia, as well as the apostle, p. 107. See likewise p. 128, 129, 131. Moreover, it appears from a conference, which Dionylius had with some Millenarians, that the Revelation was about the year 240, and before, received by Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, and by many others in that country, p. 68, 103, 104, and that it was in great reputation, p. 128, 129. It was received by Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, about 248, and by the church of Rome in his time, p. 175, 176, and by divers Latin authors, whose history is written in the third volume of this work. As may be seen in the alphabetical Table of principal matters, in the article of the Revelation.

The Revelation was received by Novatus, and his followers, p. 245, 246, and by divers other authors, whose history is written in that volume.

It is also probable, that it was received by the Manichees, p. 507.

It was received by Laëntius, vol. IV. p. 80, and by the Donatists, p. 102, by the latter Arnobius, about 460, p. 24, and by the Arians, p. 117.

In the time of Eusebius, in the former part of the fourth century, it was not received by all. And therefore it is reckoned by him among contradicted books, vol. IV. p. 227. Nevertheless it was generally received, p. 234 and 255. Eusebius himself seems to have hesitated about it. For he says, 'It is likely, that the Revelation was seen by John the elder, if not by John the apostle,' p. 256. It may be reckoned probable, that the critical argument of Dionylius, of Alexandria.
Alexandria, was of great weight with him, and others of that
time. See p. 257, 258. The Revelation was received by
Athanafius, p. 283—286, and by Epiphanius, p. 313—316.
But we also learn from him, that it was not received by all
in his time, p. 316, 317. It is not in the catalogue of Cyril
of Jerusalem, about 348, and seems, not to have been re-
ceived by him, p. 300—302. It is also wanting in the cata-
ologue of the council of Laodicea, about 363, p. 309. Ne-
evertheless I do not think, it can be thence concluded, that
this book was rejected by the bishops of that council. Their
design seems to have been to mention by name those books
only, which should be publicly read. And they might be of
opinion, that upon account of its obscurity, it should not be
publicly read, though it was of sacred authority. And some
may be of opinion, that this observation should likewise be
applied to Cyril’s catalogue just taken notice of.

The Revelation is not in Gregory Nazianzen’s catalogue,
vol. IV. p. 408. Nevertheless it seems to have been re-
ceived by him, p. 409. It is in the catalogue of Amphil-
chius. But he says, it was not received by all, p. 414. It
is also omitted in Ebedjesu’s catalogue of the books of
scripture, received by the Syrians, p. 439, 440; nor is it
in the ancient Syriac version, p. 441.

It was received by Jerom, vol. V. p. 32, 33, 41, 44.
But he says, it was rejected by the Greek Christians, p. 50.
It was received by Rufin, p. 76, by the third council of
Carthage in 397, p. 79, and by Augustine, p. 86, 104. But
it was not received by all in his time, p. 102. It is never
quoted by Chrysostom, and, probably, was not received by
him, p. 137. It is in the catalogue of Dionysius, called the
Areopagite, about 490, p. 247. It is in the Alexandrian
manuscript, p. 254—256. It was received by Sulpicius
Severus, about 401, p. 164, and by J. Damascenus, p. 316,
and by Æcumenius, p. 325, and by many other authors,
whose history is written in the fifth volume. Andrew,
bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, at the end of the fifth
century, p. 250, and Arethas, bishop of the same place in
the sixth century, wrote commentaries upon it, p. 274. But
it was not received by Severian, bishop of Gabala, p. 161;
nor, as it seems, by Theodoret, p. 195, 196.

Upon the whole it appears, that this book has been gene-
rally received in all ages: though some have doubted of it,
or rejected it, particularly, the Syrians, and some other
Christians
Christians in the east. However, for more particulars, see St. John, and the Revelation, in the alphabetical table, which is in the eleventh volume of this work.

It may not be improper for me here to remind my readers of the sentiments of divers learned moderns, concerning this book, which were put together in vol. III. p. 126, 131, after having largely represented the criticals of Caius, and Dionysius of Alexandria, in the third century upon the style of this book, and of the other writings ascribed to St. John. Where also is proposed this observation, p. 131: 'It may be questioned, whether their exceptions, founded in the difference of style, and such like things, or any other criticals whatever, can be sufficient to create a doubt concerning the author of this book: which was owned for a writing of John, the apostle and evangelist, before the times of Dionysius and Caius, and, so far as we know, before the most early of those, who disputed its genuine-

efs.'

II. Having thus represented the external evidence of the genuineness of the book of the Revelation, or of its being written by St. John, I should proceed to consider the internal evidence. But I need not enlarge here, because the objections taken from the style, and some other particulars, were stated, and considered, in the third volume, in the article of Dionysius, above-named, bishop of Alexandria.

I now intend therefore only to take notice of a few things, of principal note, which learned men insist upon, as arguments, that the Revelation has the same author with the gospel, and epistles, that go under the name of the apostle and evangelist John.

1. Ch. i. ver. 1. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things, which must shortly come to pass. And be sent, and signified it by his angel, unto his servant John.

Hence it is argued, that John styles himself the servant of Christ, in a sense not common to all believers, but peculiar to those, who are especially employed by him. So Paul, and

* —— sed esse se inter notabiles Christi Jesu ministras, quos ad Ecclesiâm suam docendam, regendam, et curandam adhibebat.—Hoc seseus Moyses, David, Jesaias, et Prophe-
other apostles, call themselves servants of God, and of Christ. Particularly Rom. i. 1. Paul a servant of Jesus Christ. James i. 1. James a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. i. 1. Simon Peter, a servant, and an apostle of Jesus Christ. Jude v. 1. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ. So Moses is called the servant of God. Numb. xii. 7. and Heb. iii. 2. And in like manner divers of the prophets. And in this very book, ch. x. 7. is the expression: as he has declared unto bis servants the prophets.

This observation may be of some weight for showing, that the writer is an apostle. But it is not decisive. And in the same verse, whence this argument is taken, the phrase is used in its general sense. Which God gave unto him, to beon unto bis servants.

2. Ver. 2. Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that be saw.

Some suppose, the writer herein to refer to the written gospel of St. John, and to say, that he had already bore testimony concerning the word of God, and Jesus Christ. But, as formerly e ob served, these words may be understood of this very book, the Revelation, and the things contained in it. The writer says here very properly, at the beginning, and by way of preface, that he had performed his office in this book, having therein faithfully recorded the word of God, which he had received from Jesus Christ.

For certain, if these words did clearly refer to a written gospel, they would be decisive. But they are allowed to be ambiguous, and other senses have been given of them. By some they have been understood to contain a declaration, that the writer had already borne witness to Jesus Christ before magistrates. Moreover, I think, that if St. John had intended to manifest himself in this introduction, he would

b See vol. III. p. 118.

Ver. 2. Qui testatus est sermonem Dei, et testimonium I. C. et quae vidit.] Duplici modo haec accipi possunt, vel Joannem confessionem veritatis solennem coram tribunali Praefecti Alae Romani edisse, ob quam ipsa missus fuerit in exilium: vel ipsum Evangelio a fe edito solenne de Christo, ejusque dictis et getisis edisse testimonium. Priore senfu vox μαρτυρίς scriptoriibus Græcis posterioris temporis recep-

tissima est, et manifeste etiam fumi
tur a Paulo, 1 Tim. vi. 13—Veni igitur utro in illam sententiam, quæ haec Joannis verba referat ad Evangelium non prædicatum tantum a Joanne solenniter, sed et scriptis confirmatum.—Quæ si fane sit hujus loci interpretatio, certò finito testabitur de illius auctore, Joanne Apollolo, ac prout de libri hujus divinitate, et summa autoritate. Vitrting. in Apoc. cap. i. ver. 2.
have more plainly characterized himself in several parts of this book, than he has done.

This observation therefore appears to me to be of small moment for determining, who the writer is.

3. Farther, it is argued, in favour of the genuineness of this book, "that there are in it many instances of connexion, formity, both of sentiment and expression, between the 'Revelation and the uncontested writings of St. John.'

Divers such coincidences, or instances of agreement, were taken notice of formerly, and remarks were made upon them, vol. III. p. 121—125. That which is at p. 124, appears to me, as striking, as any. I shall therefore enlarge upon it here. Our Saviour says to his disciples John xvi. 33. Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world. Christian firmness under trials is several times represented by overcoming, or overcoming the world, or overcoming the wicked one, in St. John's first epistle, ch. ii. 13, 14. iv. 4. v. 4, 5. And it is language peculiar to St. John, being in no other books of the New Testament. And our Lord says Rev. iii. 21. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Compare ch. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26. iii. 5, 12, 21, and xxi. 7.

III. Concerning the time of writing this book, I need not now say much, having before shown, in the history of St. John, that it is the general testimony of ancient authors, that St. John was banished into Patmos, in the time of Domitian, in the latter part of his reign, and restored by his successor Nerva. But the book could not be published till after St. John's release, and return to Ephesus in Asia.

As Domitian died in 96, and his persecution did not commence, till near the end of his reign, the Revelation seems to be fitly dated in the year 95, or 96.

Mill places the Revelation in the year of Christ 96, and the last year of the emperor Domitian. At first, he supposed, that

"See before, p. 174—186.

"Eodem ordine septem iis Aias civitates enumeratur, quo ex Patmo insulâ adiri deebant. Witten. in Apoc. i. 11. tom. II. p. 750.

"Paecis potr consistesis has epistolas annis, exorta el Christiianorum perffcutio sub Domitiano.
that the Revelation was written in Patmos. But afterwards he altered his mind, and thought, it was not written until after his return to Ephesus from Patmos. He builds upon the words of Rev. i. 9. If so, I apprehend, it might not be published before the year 97, or, at the soonest, near the end of the year 96.

Balfage placeth the Revelation in the year of Christ 96.

Le Clerc likewise, who readily admits the genuineness of this book, speaks of it at the same year.

Mr. Lowman supposed, St. John to have had his visions in the isle of Patmos in the year 95.

But Mr. Wettstein favourable the opinion of these, who have argued, that the Revelation was written before the Jewish war. He moreover says, that if the Revelation was written before that war, it is likely, that the events of that

manifestum est, visionem non modo Joanni factamuisse, sed etiam ab eo literis traditam in insula Patmo.

— Scriptamuisse ex prædictis confit anno vulgaris xxv. feb Domitianii xvi. et quidem ad finem ejusdem imperii, inquit Irenæus, febre tempore ætivio æd. vulg. xxvii. Proleg. num. 157.


At nemo de auctoritate ejus dubitatur ante Caian, Romanum Prefbyterum, qui circa finem ii. seculi vixit. Cum Cataphryges eo libro abutentur—factum hunc esse Apostolii negare, atque a Cerinho, prescripto ejus nomine, editum dicere maluit. At Juvinus, et Irenæus, eo antiquiores, et qui cum Joannis discipulos veritati erant, Apostolo hoc opus tribuerunt. Similiter, cum medio seculo iii. Nepos in Ægypto Episcopus, Chiliastarum deliria eodem libro tueretur, Dionysius Alexandrinus eadem caufa Joanni cum abjudicavit. aliter senferant, quicumque Apocalypfios ante mentionem fecerant, excepto Caio, quos sequi etiam posuerunt omnes ad annum. —


* Nos quidem, omnibus expensis, cum iis facimus, qui status, Apocalypsum ante bellum Judaicum fuisset scriptum. Wett. N. T. tom. ii. p. 746. m.

* Quidio est non levis momenti, cum vera Apocalypseos interpretatio maximam partem inde pendat. Si enim scripta est ante bellum Judaicum, et bella civilia in Italia; nullo modo probabile est, tantum rerum conversionem omnino præteriri atque neglixi potuisse. Sine autem poet illos motus compositos scripta est, probabiler erit eorum sententia, qui eventus in Apocalypsem prædictos in seculorum sequentiam historia quærendos existimant. 1d. ib. time
time should be foretold in it. To which I answer, that though some interpreters have applied some things in this book to those times, I cannot say, whether they have done it rightly, or not, because I do not understand the Revelation. But to me it seems, that though this book was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, there was no necessity, that it should be foretold here: because our blessed Lord had in his own preaching at divers times spoken very plainly, and intelligibly, concerning the calamities coming upon the Jewish people in general, and the city and temple of Jerusalem, in particular. And his plain predictions, and symbolic prefigurations of those events, were recorded by no less than three historians and evangelists, before the war in Judea broke out.

Grotius, who, as formerly seen, placeth this book in the reign of Claudius, was of opinion, that the visions of this book were seen at several times, and afterwards joined together in one book: in like manner, as the visions and prophecies of some of the prophets of the Old Testament.

Concerning this opinion it is not proper for me to dispute: though there appears not any foundation for it in the book itself, as Vitringa has observed. But that the book of the Revelation,
Revelation, in its present form, sent as an epistle to the seven churches of Asia, ch. i. ver. 4, was not composed, and published before the reign of Domitian, appears to me very probable from the general, and almost universally concurring testimony of the ancients, and from some things in the book itself.

Now therefore I shall transcribe a part of Lefranc's and Beaumobre's preface to the Revelation, at the same time referring to Vitringa in the margin, who has many like thoughts.

Having


1 Preface fur l' Apoc. de S. Jean. p. 613, 614.

2 Primo dubium non est, quin si testimoniiis Veterem res conficiendi sit: communis antiqua Ecclesiæ traditio, firmata autoritate Irenœ, hic multum praeponderet testimonio Epiphanii. Irenœus enim temporibus Joannis Apostoli-propriet proprii, tanquam qui eodem adhuc seculo cum Joanne vixerit, et traditionem nobis retulit suo ætate communem, et omnibus notissimam.

Sed quod plus etiam momenti causæ nostra addit: non nititur nostra haec sententia de tempore scriptæ Apocalypsis fola traditione Veterem. Potœ illa ex ipso hoc libro, etiam abique uilla traditione veteris Ecclesiæ demonstrari. Quam secundo obvisari velim, ex ipfa Apocalypsi evidenterim adducæ posse probationes, ex quibus evisceru, hunc librum non utique sub Claudio, sed omnino post Claudii et Neronis tempora, quina imo sub Domitianum demum in lucem editum esse.—Quo tempore scripta est Apocalypsis, ecclesiæ jam per Asiæam inferiorem in celeberrimos locis non tantum erant fundato nostro et cons. stabilitate, sed jamdua fundatio et stabilitate suisse supponuntur. Redarguuntur enim plerque a Domino gravium vitiorum et criminum, quæ tradu longioris temporis ecclesiæ illas obreperant. Ephefina jam reliquerat primum suam caritatem. Sardicensiis dicibus, nominis nomine, sed vere mortua esset. Laodicæam magnus occupaverat tepor, eratque ærumnosa et miserabilis. Hæc vero quam belle conveniunt temporibus Claudii! Ex ecclesiis enim sepulent, qui hic memorantur, in Achaæiis Apostolorum, aliarum mentio non est, quum Ephefinae et Laodiciæ. Ephefinae autem a Paulo Apostolo demum fundata est, secundum Annæas Cefnienis, anno Claudii Imperatoris extremo.—Liget ex illisdem epistolis Joannis, illo tempore, quo edita est Apocalypsis, Gnosticos hæreses, quæ dicuntur, in florentissimis Aœæ ecclesiis alteriam ejus radices. Ad illas enim carnalium hominum doctrinas sub mycicinis nominibus Bileamitarum et Nicolaitarum in variis locis additur. Illam hæresem prœvidebat Petrus in Ecclesiæ brevi exoritam, quando epistolam suam scribavit postieriorum, non longe ante Hierofolymorum excidium. Judæa, qui epistolam suam edidit, ut probabilis ratio suadet, post Hierofolyorum illud excidium, hoc semem in primo vidit herba. Sed quo tempore scripta est Apocalypsis non nata tantum, sed confirmata erat hoc hæreis, et præ. cipuas Aœæ ecclesiæ inquinaverat. Quare si Judæa Apollos epistolam suam scripstat sub Vespasiano: quis neget, Apocalypsin editam esse sub Domitianam? In ipsis illis Epistolis pafsim supponuntur afflictiones graviores, quas Ecclesiæ Chrisli religionis suæ
Having quoted Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, and divers other ancients, placing St. John’s banishment in Patmos in the latter part of the reign of Domitian, and saying, that he there saw the Revelation, they say: ‘To these uncontestible witnesses it is needless to add a long list of others, of all ages, and of the same sentiment: to whom the authority of Epiphanius is by no means comparable.’ And then they go on: ‘We must add to so constant a tradition other reasons, which farther show, that the Revelation was not written, till after Claudius, and Nero. It appears from the book itself, that there had been already churches for a considerable space of time in Asia: forasmuch as St. John in the name of Christ reproves faults, that happen not but after a while. The church of Ephesus had left her first love. That of Sardis had a name to live, but was dead. The church of Laodicea was fallen into lukewarmness and indifference. But the church of Ephesus, for instance, was not founded by St. Paul, be-
fore the last years of Claudius. When in 61, or 62, St. Paul wrote to them from Rome, instead of reproving their want of love, he commends their love and faith, ch. i. 15.

2. It appears from the Revelation, that the Nicolaitans made a sect, when this book was written, since they are expressly named; whereas they were only foretold, and described in general terms by St. Peter in his second epistle, written after the year sixty, and in St. Jude’s about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Vespasian. 3. It is evident from divers places of the Revelation, that there had been an open persecution in the provinces. St. John himself had been banished into Patmos for the testimony of Jesus. The church of Ephesus, or its bishop, is commended for their labour and patience, which seems to imply persecution. This is still more manifest in the words directed to the church of Smyrna, ch. ii. 9. I know thy works, and tribulation. For the original word always denotes persecution, in the scriptures of the New Testament: as it is also explained in the following verse. In the thirteenth verse of the same chapter mention made of a martyr, named Antipas, put to death at Pergamus. Though ancient ecclesiastical history gives us no information concerning this Antipas, it is nevertheless certain, that according to all the rules of language, what is here said, ought to be understood literally.—All that has been now observed concerning the persecution, of which mention is made in the first chapters of the Revelation, cannot relate to the time of Claudius, who did not persecute the Christians, nor to the time of Nero, whose persecution did not reach the provinces. And therefore it must relate to Domitian, according to ecclesiastical tradition.

The visions therefore here recorded, and the publication of them in this book, must be assigned, so far as I can see, to the years of Christ 95, and 96, or 97.